



**Mendocino County**  
**Department of Social Services**  
*Healthy People, Healthy Communities*  
**Bekkie F. Emery, Director**  
**Kelsey Rivera, Assistant Director**  
**Family & Children's Services**  
**Jena Conner, Deputy Director**



**Background & Summary Information**

**Social Services- Family & Children's Services Proposed Agreement with North Coast Opportunities for FY 23/24, \$142,080**  
**Consent Item 3af on July 25, 2023, Board of Supervisors Agenda**

**History:** Senate Bill 89 (2017) established the opt-in Emergency Childcare Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program), which implemented January 1, 2018. The purpose of the program is to stabilize children in home-based foster care by providing time-limited payments up to 12 months for child care following the child's placement, or for a child whose parent is in foster care, if work or school responsibilities preclude the foster parent from providing care when the foster child is not in school or for periods when the foster parent is required to participate, without the child, in activities such as foster parent training. Eligible foster children are age birth to 12 years old, and for children and youth with exceptional needs, and severely disabled, up to age 21.

The program also requires opt-in counties to enter into a formal agreement with the local childcare Resource and Referral program to provide childcare navigator services to eligible foster parents to assist them in accessing long-term subsidized or unsubsidized childcare and offer training and coaching to childcare providers in the community to provide information about the effects of trauma, and to help build capacity for working with children who have experienced trauma.

For Mendocino County's program, the Department of Social Services, Family and Children's Services division administers the childcare payments. North Coast Opportunities, which is the local childcare Resource and Referral program, provides the childcare navigation and trauma-informed care training.

**Funding:** Through the State Budget, a capped state general fund allocation is provided to opt-in counties. Counties are not obligated to provide the resources and level of service beyond what is provided in the state general fund allocation but are encouraged to leverage other local and federal funding sources, such as Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, to tailor the availability of childcare for eligible families to the specific needs of the county. Mendocino County's state general fund planning allocation for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 is \$265,958 which includes:  
\$164,611 for childcare assistance  
\$23,849 for county administrative costs for program operations  
\$54,792 for childcare navigation  
\$22,706 for trauma-informed care training

The state general fund allocation is matched with Title IV-E of the Social Security Act funding to maximize the number of eligible foster children and foster parents served through this program. To date since the program implemented, we have not had to place any eligible Mendocino County foster children on a waiting list.

The proposed agreement covers an 11-month period (August 2023 to June 2024) for childcare navigation and trauma-informed care training and therefore, is slightly less than the full allocation listed above for these activities. Services for the month of July 2023 were covered in a Fiscal Year 2022-2023 agreement amendment.

**Numbers served through this agreement:** In Fiscal Year 2022-2023, a total of 24 unduplicated foster children and 21 unduplicated foster parents were served through this program. In addition, approximately 11 childcare providers received trauma-informed care training and/or coaching.