

232.143 Service area group foster care budget targets.

1. *a.* A statewide expenditure target for children in group foster care placements in a fiscal year, which placements are a charge upon or are paid for by the state, shall be established annually in an appropriation bill by the general assembly. Representatives of the department and juvenile court services shall jointly develop a formula for allocating a portion of the statewide expenditure target established by the general assembly to each of the department's service areas. The formula shall be based upon the service area's proportion of the state population of children and of the statewide usage of group foster care in the previous five completed fiscal years and upon other indicators of need. The expenditure amount determined in accordance with the formula shall be the group foster care budget target for that service area.

b. A service area may exceed the service area's budget target for group foster care by not more than five percent in a fiscal year, provided the overall funding allocated by the department for all child welfare services in the service area is not exceeded.

c. If all of the following circumstances are applicable, a service area may temporarily exceed the service area's budget target as necessary for placement of a child in group foster care:

(1) The child is thirteen years of age or younger.

(2) The court has entered a dispositional order for placement of the child in group foster care.

(3) The child is placed in a juvenile detention facility awaiting placement in group foster care.

d. If a child is placed pursuant to paragraph "c", causing a service area to temporarily exceed the service area's budget target, the department and juvenile court services shall examine the cases of the children placed in group foster care and counted in the service area's budget target at the time of the placement pursuant to paragraph "c". If the examination indicates it may be appropriate to terminate the placement for any of the cases, the department and juvenile court services shall initiate action to set a dispositional review hearing under this chapter for such cases. In such a dispositional review hearing, the court shall determine whether needed aftercare services are available following termination of the placement and whether termination of the placement is in the best interests of the child and the community.

2. For each of the department's service areas, representatives appointed by the department and juvenile court services shall establish a plan for containing the expenditures for children placed in group foster care ordered by the court within the budget target allocated to that service area pursuant to subsection 1. The plan shall be established in a manner so as to ensure the budget target amount will last the entire fiscal year. The plan shall include monthly targets and strategies for developing alternatives to group foster care placements in order to contain expenditures for child welfare services within the amount appropriated by the general assembly for that purpose. Funds for a child placed in group foster care shall be considered encumbered for the duration of the child's projected or actual length of stay, whichever is applicable. Each service area plan shall be established within sixty days of the date by which the group foster care budget target for the service area is determined. To the extent possible, the department and juvenile court services shall coordinate the planning required under this subsection with planning for services paid under section 232.141, subsection 4. The department's service area manager shall communicate regularly, as specified in the service area plan, with the chief juvenile court officers within that service area concerning the current status of the service area plan's implementation.

3. State payment for group foster care placements shall be limited to those placements which are in accordance with the service area plans developed pursuant to subsection 2.

Statewide expenditure target for group foster maintenance and services for 2008-2009 fiscal year; 2008 Acts, ch 1187, § 16, 38, 79, 82, 97