**Program Services**

North Carolina has been awarded funds from the CARES Act that must be used to ensure the safety of children through protective and preventative services and resources in response to coronavirus pandemic. These funds must be used by December 30, 2021.

County child welfare agencies must identify the use of these funds by September 30, 2021. These funds must be used by December 30, 2021. These funds can be used to replace any used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 prior to the effective date of the award, beginning January 20, 2020.

**Approved Activities**

Funding can be used for any allowable expenses outlined in [Title IV-B, Subpart 1, Section 421](https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title04/0421.htm) of the Act. Examples of ways this funding can be allocated are listed below:

* Purchasing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for child welfare workers in efforts to minimize exposure when conducting visits.
* To share information and educational materials in outreach to families, including foster parents and kinship providers, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) on how to prevent transmission of the coronavirus and where to access coronavirus testing.
* Use in strengthening partnerships with local and state public health authorities, and community-based organizations in efforts to offer support families at-risk because of the pandemic.
* Partnerships with community-based organizations conducting outreach and offering services and supports to prevent child abuse and neglect.
* Offering services and supports to parents, kinship providers, and at-risk youth to alleviate the effects of social isolation.
* The provision of concrete assistance to families (purchasing food or arranging for food delivery, obtaining household supplies, or paying utilities and rent) when a family is unable to access other pandemic related assistance. County agencies should ensure that assistance is not duplicative of any other aid provided by the CARES Act and other COVID-19 legislation.
* The provision of respite care services.
* Training for child welfare workers and supervisors on topics related to working with children and families during the pandemic.
* Enhancement of agency telecommunications hardware, software, and service infrastructure to support telework and remote participation by agency employees in caseworker visits, Child and Family Team meetings, court hearings, and access to other needed services. County agencies that choose to use funds to purchase supplies or equipment must meet specific conditions outlined in [45 CFR Part 75](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=16c64432562cae07cdeeabf02a6de6c3&mc=true&n=pt45.1.75&r=PART&ty=HTML#se45.1.75_12). It must be addressed whether technological devices purchased with these funds will continue to serve a program purpose over time or how the devices will be recovered or repurposed once they no longer serve that purpose. Examples include:
* Hardware: cell phones, tablets, and laptop computers
* Software: video conferencing applications, electronic case file applications, systems for secure electronic document transmission,
* Services: software subscription payments, internet services, cell phone plans
* To identify, secure, staff, and monitor emergency placements for children in foster care who have been exposed to the coronavirus.

 **Resources**

* Administration of Children and Families Program Instruction: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/pi2011.pdf>

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| **Questions? Contact** |

Please contact your Regional Child Welfare Consultants (RCWC) with any questions regarding funding allocation. Identification of your RCWC can be found at: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/county-staff-information/local-support-staff-schedules/regional-child>