



Ohio Family and Children First

Updated Formal Guidance for the Family and Children First Council Flexible Funding Pool January 2020

Local public agencies have the flexibility to transfer allocated State General Revenue Funds (GRF) to flexible funding pools administered by the Family and Children First Council (FCFC). There are two types of contributions: General and Restricted.

- Funds transferred to the general FCFC flexible funding pool can be used to provide any service needed to meet identified needs of children ages 0-21, families and adults in the community. (Please refer to **Appendix A** for budget line items transferable to the general FCFC pooled fund.)
- State departments may also designate contributions to a local FCFC pooled fund. Use of these dollars is, however, restricted and must be spent in accordance with specific purposes as defined by the designating department.

Protocols for using general pooled funds and restricted pooled funds follow.

General Contributions-Protocols:

1. Pooling State GRF funds is optional. Any public entity receiving State GRF allocated funds may choose to transfer these funds to the Family and Children First Council (FCFC) General Flexible Funding Pool. (The allowable State GRF line item number and name that can be transferred are found in Appendix A).
2. The amount of funds a local public agency chooses to transfer is also optional, and at the discretion of the public agency.
3. The Director of each local public agency must approve whether to transfer the funds and the amount of the contribution to be made to the general FCFC pooled fund.
4. The Director of each local agency approving contributions to the general FCFC pooled fund shall provide written notification to the FCFC of the transfer and the amount of the transfer of funds within thirty (30) days of transfer of the funds.
5. It is recommended that the FCFC Administrative Agent establishes a separate fiscal account to effectively monitor the pooled funds.

6. The FCFC Director/Coordinator shall report, in writing to the OFCF Cabinet the amount of each contribution to the general pooled fund and identify the transferring agency within thirty (30) days of receipt of the funds.
7. Counties may combine general pooled funds across counties or regionally. When pooling funds across counties or regionally, one county FCFC shall be named as the Administrator of the pooled funds.
8. The expenditure of the general pooled funds shall be made in collaboration and agreement among all local contributing agencies, other local FCFC members, and the FCFC administrative agency.
9. The transfer and expenditure of the funds are subject to audit by the Auditor of State. Any non-compliance with expenditures of the funds in accordance with applicable regulations and guidance are subject to findings for recovery and subject to recoupment.

General Contributions-Fiscal:

1. The budget period for the pooled funds is based on a State Fiscal Year (July 1 – June 30).
2. The amounts transferred annually to the general FCFC pooled fund shall be limited to those which can be redirected without impairing the achievement of the objectives for which the initial allocation is designated.
3. For reporting purposes, upon the transfer of funds from the local public agency to the FCFC administrative agent, the amount of the contribution shall be considered spent by the local public agency.
4. General FCFC pooled funds must be spent for services to meet the needs of children, families, and adults, with the following exception:
 - a) Up to 10% of the annual amount of pooled funds transferred can be used by the FCFC to cover related administrative costs. Administrative costs are defined as those activities common to the fund in general, such as financial management, related audit costs, types and frequency of reports, and retention of records;
 - b) Where possible, the pooled funds shall be used as match for federal funds to the extent that the funds are not currently being used as match for other federal programs;
 - c) Any unspent pooled funds at the end of the budget period may be carried over to the next budget period on the condition they are solely used to provide direct services to children, families, and adults;
 - d) Pooled funds may **not** be used for capital projects; and
 - e) Pooled funds may **not** be used to supplant other federal, state or local funds.

General Contribution-Reporting and Evaluation:

1. Each FCFC administering a general pooled fund shall provide an annual report and evaluation to the OFCF Cabinet Council no later than ninety (90) days from the end of each budget period.
2. The report and evaluation shall be completed in accordance with the attached report and evaluation format.
3. Upon receipt, the OFCF Cabinet Council shall establish a meeting with staff from the representative state agencies to review and evaluate the benefits of and any needed changes to the general pooled fund.

Restricted Contributions-Protocols:

1. State departments may mandate specific GRF contributions to the FCFC Flexible Funding Pools. When doing so, the department shall identify the specific purpose for which the restricted funds must be used. (State Restricted fund details can be found in Appendix C).
2. The designating state department shall establish the amounts of the restricted contributions to the FCFC pooled fund.
3. The Director of the local respective agency must approve and facilitate the transfer of the restricted contribution and provide written notify the FCFC Coordinator of the amount to be added to the pooled fund within thirty (30) days of the transfer of funds.
4. The FCFC's Administrative Agent shall establish a separate fiscal account to ensure use of the restricted funds is aligned with its intended purpose.
5. The FCFC Director/Coordinator shall report in writing to the OFCF Cabinet the amount of each restricted contribution and identify the transferring agency within thirty (30) days of receipt of the funds.
6. The transfer and expenditure of the funds are subject to audit by the Auditor of State. Any non-compliance with expenditures of the funds in accordance with applicable regulations and guidance are subject to findings for recovery and subject to recoupment.

Restricted Contributions-Fiscal:

1. The budget period for the restricted pooled funds is based on a State Fiscal Year (July 1-June 30).
2. For reporting purposes, upon the transfer from the local public agency to the FCFC administrative agent, the amount of the restricted contribution shall be considered spent by the local public agency.

3. Restricted pooled fund contributions must be spent solely in accordance with the purposes intended as defined by the designating state department. Any unspent pooled funds at the end of the budget period may be carried over to the next budget period provided that spending continues to align with required stipulations of the restricted fund.
4. Restricted pooled fund contributions may **not** be used for capital projects; and
5. Restricted pooled fund contributions may **not** be used to supplant other federal, state or local funds.

Restricted Contributions-Reporting and Evaluation:

1. Each FCFC administering a restricted pooled fund shall provide an annual report and evaluation to the OFCF Cabinet Council no later than ninety (90) days from the end of each budget period.
2. The report and evaluation shall be completed in accordance with the attached report and evaluation format.
3. Upon receipt, the OFCF Cabinet Council shall establish a meeting with staff from the designating state agencies to review and evaluate the benefits of services provided through use of restricted pooled funds.

Refer to Appendix B for temporary statute language.

Appendix A: State GRF Funding Streams Allowable for Transfer

GRF Line Item #	GRF Line Item Name	Local Recipient of Identified GRF Funding Stream
200540	Special Education Enhancements	Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
200550	Foundation Funding	Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
600523	Family and Children Services	County Job and Family Services or Public Children Services Agencies
600533	Child, Family, and Adult Community and Protective Services	County Job and Family Services Agencies
470401	RECLAIM Ohio	County Juvenile Court
470510	Youth Services Grant	County Juvenile Court

Appendix B: Temporary Statute Language for Family and Children First Flexible Funding Pool

Section 337.180. FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST FLEXIBLE FUNDING POOL

A county family and children first council may establish and operate a flexible funding pool in order to assure access to needed services by families, children, and older adults in need of protective services. The operation of the flexible funding pools shall be subject to the following restrictions:

(A) The county council shall establish and operate the flexible funding pool in accordance with formal guidance issued by the Family and Children First Cabinet Council;

(B) The county council shall produce an annual report on its use of the pooled funds. The annual report shall conform to a format prescribed in the formal guidance issued by the Family and Children First Cabinet Council;

(C) Unless otherwise restricted, funds transferred to the flexible funding pool may include state general revenues allocated to local entities to support the provision of services to families and children;

(D) The amounts transferred to the flexible funding pool shall be limited to amounts that can be redirected without impairing the achievement of the objectives for which the initial allocation is designated; and

(E) Each amount transferred to the flexible funding pool from a specific allocation shall be approved for transfer by the director of the local agency that was the original recipient of the allocation.

Section 265.440. FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

In collaboration with the County Family and Children First Council, a city, local, or exempted village school district, community school, STEM school, joint vocational school district, educational service center, or county board of developmental disabilities that receives allocations from the Department of Education from appropriation item 200550, Foundation Funding, or appropriation item 200540, Special Education Enhancements, may transfer portions of those allocations to a flexible funding pool authorized by the Section of this act entitled "FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST FLEXIBLE FUNDING POOL." Allocations used for maintenance of effort or for federal or state funding matching requirements shall not be transferred unless the allocation may still be used to meet such requirements.

SECTION 307.120. FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

In collaboration with the county family and children first council, a county department of job and family services or public children services agency that receives an allocation from the Department of Job and Family Services from the foregoing appropriation item 600523, Family and Children Services, or 600533, Child, Family, and Community Protection Services, may transfer a portion of either or both allocations to a flexible funding pool as authorized by the section of this act titled "FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST FLEXIBLE FUNDING POOL."

FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

FLEXIBLE FUNDING FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES In collaboration with the county family and children first council, the juvenile court of that county that receives allocations from one or both of the foregoing appropriation items 470401, RECLAIM Ohio, and 470510, Youth Services, may transfer portions of those allocations to a flexible funding pool as authorized by the section of this act titled "FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST FLEXIBLE FUNDING POOL."

Appendix C: State Restricted Fund Details

Pursuant to, portions of Multi-System Youth (MSY) allocations distributed by local Public Children Service Agencies (PCSA) must be designated to county Family and Children First Councils' (FCFC) pooled fund. Local PCSAs must distribute at least 5% of the MSY funds received in SFY 20 and 10% of MSY funds received in SFY 21 to the local FCFC. Use of these funds is restricted to providing services and supports needed to prevent the relinquishment of custody of children, 0-18 and to facilitate family reunification following a custodial episode. These funds may be used in the following manner:

Categories of Services that MAY be Funded:

1. Care Coordination/Wraparound to prevent custody relinquishment or for a relinquished child/youth

To utilize the funding for FCFC Service Coordination/Wraparound, a unit rate must be established. See Appendix H on how to calculate a unit rate, or download Appendix H at: [https://www.fcf.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Home/Initiatives/System%20of%20Care%20\(FCSS\)/FCSS%20Service%20Coordination%20Unit%20Rate%20Example%2011.12.09.pdf](https://www.fcf.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Home/Initiatives/System%20of%20Care%20(FCSS)/FCSS%20Service%20Coordination%20Unit%20Rate%20Example%2011.12.09.pdf)

Allowable Expenses may include:

FCFC Service Coordination – a collaborative, coordinated, cross-system team planning process implemented to address the needs of families with multiple and complex problems. The process is family-focused and strengths-based and is responsive to the culture, race and ethnicity of the family. It results in a unique set of community services and natural supports individualized for the child and family and based on the child and family's perceptions of their strengths and needs to achieve a positive set of outcomes. The purpose of service coordination is to provide a venue for families to meet the need for services and supports across multiple systems which may not have been adequately addressed within traditional agency systems. The FCFC Service Coordination Process must meet all the statutory requirements found in ORC 121.37; must follow the OFCF Service Coordination Guidance; and must be locally described in each county Family and Children First Council's Service Coordination Mechanism.

High-Fidelity Wraparound – a comprehensive team process to develop a uniquely designed helping plan based on the child/youth and family's unmet needs and is inclusive of unique resources linked to child/youth and family strengths. It is applicable and most effective for those with complex needs and histories of extensive and costly service utilization. Ohio's Wraparound model is based on the National Wraparound Initiative. For more information, refer to the [National Wraparound Initiative website](#).

2. In-home and/or community supports to prevent custody relinquishment

AND

3. In-home and/or community supports needed to support family stability for a child returning from agency custody.

Funding requests must only be made for expenses not otherwise covered by another payer source. All expenses should directly relate to services or supports for children at risk for custody relinquishment or those who are returning home following a custodial episode.

Allowable Expenses May Include, but are not Limited to:

- Clinical services not covered by another payer / insurer
- Co-insurances and insurance deductibles for related services
- In-home parent/child coaching
- Parent support groups
- Parent education
- Parent advocacy
- Mentoring
- Respite care
- Transportation to and from allowable services (e.g., Cab/taxi fares, gas vouchers)
- Safety and adaptive equipment
- Structured interventions to improve family functioning

Non-Allowable Expenses Include:

- Services billable to other payer sources, including health insurance
- General program costs (i.e., non-individualized services)
- Classroom instruction or any required public education cost or responsibility (to include tutoring, school-based credit recovery, and/or summer school programming)

4. Residential treatment and/or room and board for treatment to prevent custody relinquishment