

Family First Prevention Services Act

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) changes the child welfare system by allowing states to use federal funds under Title IV of the Social Security Act to support families and prevent foster care placements. Georgia began phased implementation of FFPSA in Fall 2021.¹ There are two main components of the act:

- 1) optional foster care prevention services and programs
- 2) required changes to congregate care

Family First services will be offered in Chatham, Cherokee, DeKalb, and Richmond counties in the beginning of 2023. Services will include Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy, two evidence-based treatments to address behaviors of youth at risk for out-of-home placement.^{2,3}

Foster Care Prevention Services and Programs

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?



Children who are candidates for foster care, but who can safely remain at home



Children in foster care who are pregnant or parenting



Parents or kin caregivers of the children



Eligibility is **not** dependent on family income

SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

that are eligible for reimbursement for Title IV-E funds



Mental health services



Substance abuse prevention and treatment services



In-home parenting programs

For more details on who is eligible for these services and programs, see the definition for candidacy on [Blueprint for Family First](#). The Prevention Plan identified BSFT, FFT, MST, HFA, and PAT for inclusion in 5 year plan.

How does a state obtain funding for services or programs?

- State must maintain a *written* prevention plan for each eligible child and collect data on programs and services administered.
- Services or programs must be *trauma-informed and evidence-based*.
- Services or programs must be based on promising, supported, or well-supported practices.

Half of the cost of prevention services, training, and related administrative tasks can be covered by Title IV-E funds.

If Georgia postpones the effective date of congregate care changes, it must also delay requesting prevention funds until the same date.

Congregate Care

Starting September 30, 2021, FFPSA limits foster care payments for group homes for up to two weeks only. Although FFPSA limits federal reimbursement for foster care maintenance payments for group homes, the limitations do not currently impact the ability to place youth in group homes if it is determined to be the most appropriate placement.⁴

Qualified Residential Treatment Programs

QRTPs must meet the following requirements:⁵



Use a trauma-informed treatment model



Have a registered or licensed nursing and clinical staff onsite



Facilitate family outreach and participation



Document family integration into the treatment process



Provide discharge planning and family-based supports for at least 6 months after discharge



Be licensed and accredited by one of the following:

- Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
- Council on Accreditation
- Other nonprofit accrediting organization approved by the Secretary



Meet the treatment needs of children as determined by an assessment within 30 days of placement

Sources for Family First Prevention Services Act

- 1 When is Georgia implementing the Family First act?. Accessed June 28, 2022. <https://support.blueprintfamilyfirst.org/hc/en-us/articles/360034392911-How-can-I-provide-input-on-the-implementation-of-the-Family-First-Act->.
- 2 Functional Family Therapy. Retrieved November 4, 2022. <https://www.fftllc.com/>.
- 3 Title IV-E Prevention Services, Multisystemic Therapy - Prevention. Retrieved November 4, 2022. <https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/programs/422/show>.
- 4 "Prevention Services Plan" Blueprint for Family First, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://www.blueprintfamilyfirst.org/prevention-services-plan>.
- 5 "What is a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTF)?" Blueprint for Family First, accessed September 21, 2022, <https://support.blueprintfamilyfirst.org/hc/en-us/articles/360034393551>.