

**County of Orange Social Services Agency  
Family Self-Sufficiency/Foster Care Program**

**Program/Area:** Foster Care Program

**Title:** Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

**Number:** 704

**Effective Date:** 9/17/2015

**Status:** *Signature on File*

**Revision Date:**

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**PURPOSE** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the treatment of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for children placed in Foster Care (FC).

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**OVERVIEW** SSI is a federal entitlement program administered by the Social Security Administration and provides benefits to FC children who meet the disability, income and resource requirements.

A FC child can be receiving SSI benefits prior to entering FC or may be screened by Children and Family Services (CFS) for potential SSI eligibility prior to exiting FC. CFS Senior Social Worker will provide assistance to children placed in Foster Care with applying for SSI benefits.

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**GENERAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES** Social Services Agency should be the SSI payee for all FC dependents. Relative/Nonrelated Extended Family Members (NREFM) cannot be the payee for the child's SSI benefits unless they become the legal guardians without dependency.

Exception: See [Non-Federal Cases](#) section below.

If the SSI benefit exceeds the FC payment, the excess amount goes into Conserved Funds which will be released to the child upon the court terminating dependency.

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**FEDERAL CASES** The County should be the payee and either receives the SSI benefit or suspend it.

Foster Care Eligibility Technicians (FCET) are required to evaluate the financially advantageous option for the County by completing the [SSI Screening Guide \(FC 1633B\)](#) and the [Supplemental Security Income Screening Tool](#) (WT 17).

Based on the results of the screening, placement is funded by either using Federal funds or county funds.

Case Example #1:

- FC Payment: \$1200
- SSI/SSP Amount: \$1035
- If Federal funding is used, net county cost will be:
  - $\$1200 \times \text{County Share of Cost (30\%)} = \underline{\$360}$
- If County Funds is used, net county cost will be:
  - $\$1200 - \text{SSI/SSP Amount } \$1035 = \underline{\$165}$

Since the result in calculation #2 is less than the result in calculation #1, it would be more financially advantageous for the county to fund the case with county funds due

to lower net county cost.

Case Example #2:

- FC Payment: \$1800
- SSI/SSP Amount: \$1035
- If Federal funds is used, net county cost will be:
  - $\$1800 \times \text{County Share of Cost (30\%)} = \underline{\$540}$
- If county funds is used, net county cost will be:
  - $\$1800 - \text{SSI/SSP Amount } \$1035 = \underline{\$765}$

Since the result in calculation #1 is less than the result in calculation #2, it would be more financially advantageous for the county to fund the case with Federal funds due to lower net county cost and Social Security Administration to suspend the SSI benefits to avoid “double dipping”.

To request for the suspension of SSI benefit, a [Memo to CFS SSI Liaison](#), F063-29-133 is to be completed and sent to the CFS SSI Liaison.

**Note:** A child may not receive both Federal Foster Care payment and SSI benefits at the same time.

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#### **NON-FEDERAL CASES**

The County should be the payee and the SSI benefit is paid to Social Services Agency’s accounting and State funded foster care payment is issued.

When a child is placed with a NREFM who is the SSI payee the SSI payment may be used to offset the FC payment to equal the basic FC rate. Should the County apply and become the SSI payee, the full FC payment rate is issued.

However, if the SSI benefit is more than the FC payment, the excess amount will be deposited into conserved funds account and FC state funds is issued.

**Note:** Should the NREFM choose to remain the SSI payee FC eligibility will close the FC case.

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#### **RELATIVE PLACEMENTS**

Non-Federally Eligible:

When a child is placed with a non-federally eligible relative, a CalWORKs referral is not made.

FC payments are issued in 100 percent county funds and the County will be the SSI payee.

Federally Eligible:

See **Federal Cases** section above. A child may not receive both Federal Foster Care payment and SSI benefits at the same time.

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#### **NON-MINOR DEPENDENTS**

The NMD has the option of choosing between federally funded FC payment or SSI.

See [Extended Foster Care P & P 700-F1](#) for more information.

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**FEDERAL AID CODE** To secure and maintain a child's eligibility for Supplemental Security Income benefits while receiving Federal FC payment the aid code for Federal FC cases need to be switched to State aid code (40 or 43) for one month in a twelve month period. In the following month, the case will be switched back to Federal aid code (42 or 49). Otherwise, the child may lose eligibility and has to reapply for the SSI benefit.

See Processing Guide for instructions.

[Foster Care RRR Processing Guide](#)

Prior to a minor aging out of Foster Care, CFS SSI Liaison will apply for SSI benefits on behalf of the child and submit the application to the Social Security Administration. During the month of application, CFS SSI Liaison will notify eligibility to switch the aid code from Federal aid code 42 to State aid code 40. In the following month, the case will be switched back to Federal aid code 42.

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**SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS** The County will become the payee of the child's Title II Survivor's Benefits. If the Survivor's benefits exceed the FC payment, the excess will be put into a Conserved Funds for the child that will be released to the child upon court terminating dependency.

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<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>	<b>Form Name</b>	<b>Form Number</b>
	<a href="#">SSI Screening Guide (FC 1633B)</a>	FC 1633 B
	<a href="#">Supplemental Security Income Screening Tool</a>	WT 17
	<a href="#">Memo to CFS SSI Liaison</a>	F063-29-133

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**REFERENCES** [Extended Foster Care P & P 700-F1](#)  
[ACL 08-12](#)

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**PROCEDURE** [Foster Care RRR Processing Guide](#)