

Level of Care Protocol Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Level of Care Protocol?

The Level of Care Protocol (LOCP) is a statewide rate structure based on the care and supervision needs of children/youth. These needs are divided into five main categories: physical, behavioral/emotional, educational, health, and permanency/family services. Within each of the five categories, there are different levels of expectations that are measured by a point scoring system. The LOCP allows a social worker to score each category based on the individual child/youth's care and supervision needs. The score determines an appropriate monthly payment rate for the child/youth's Level of Care.

When will the Level of Care rate determination occur?

Starting April 1, 2021, the Level of Care Protocol will be used to determine the monthly rate when a new placement or change of placement occurs. A resource parent may also request a Level of Care (LOC) rate determination when the needs of a child/youth in their home have changed.

Will my current rate go down if I request a Level of Care rate determination?

No, if your existing rate is higher than the Level of Care rate that is determined, your rate will remain the same.

How long does it take to determine the Level of Care rate for the child(ren) in my care?

It may take up to 60 days to complete a Level of Care rate determination. You may contact your social worker if it has been more than 60 days since you received placement and you have not received any information regarding the LOC rate that was determined. The rate determined will be paid retroactively to the date of placement or the date the LOC rate determination was requested, but not prior to April 1, 2021.

Does the Level of Care rate ever change? If so, when?

Once the Level of Care determined has occurred, the rate will remain the same. A new Level of Care determination will only occur when there is a change of placement, when there is a step down from the Intensive Services Foster Care program, or when there is a change in needs and the Resource Family requests a LOC determination.

If I am caring for more than one child, do they all receive the same Level of Care rate?

The Level of Care rate is determined based on the care and supervision needs of the child/youth and the care and supervision being provided in the resource parent(s) home. Each child will have their own rate, and that rate may change if they are moved to a new resource home.

What if I disagree with the Level of Care rate that the agency determines for the child(ren)/youth in my care?

Your social worker will use all the information available to them at the time of the determination. You can contribute to that information by completing the Resource Family Reporting Tool (56-12-625). The scoring tools used to determine the rate will be provided to you after the determination is completed. After you have reviewed these tools, you can discuss the scoring with your social worker. If you have spoken to your social worker, and you still disagree with the LOC rate, you can file for a fair hearing.

Who should I contact with questions about the Level of Care?

There are many people you can contact depending on the questions you have. You can contact your social worker if you have questions regarding a specific scoring for a child in your home. If you would like to know more about the scoring process, you can contact a placement coordinator by calling 805-289-1900 or e-mailing HSA-PLACEMENT-REQUEST@ventura.org. If you have questions regarding your monthly payment or the fair hearing process, contact the eligibility worker listed on the notice of action you received.

COUNTY OF VENTURA

Will I still receive Specialized Care Increments?

In most cases, the rate determined through the Level of Care Protocol will cover the care and supervision needs. If the rate determined does not sufficiently meet the needs, a Specialized Care Increment assessment can be completed. Specialized Care Increments are determined through a detailed assessment that is completed by the assigned social worker and is based on the needs of the child and the care that is being provided.