

SPECIALIZED CHILD WELFARE SUBJECT MATTER

Unique Service Expenditure Plans (USE)

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Policy

When traditional or currently-available services are not sufficient, DCF staff shall consider new or expanded services that might increase the prospect of success for a child and determine whether the child might benefit from a Unique Service Expenditure (USE) Plan, the mechanism through which exceptions to usual and customary spending patterns are authorized.

Cross Reference: "USE Plans Practices and Procedures Guide"

USE Plan Review Team

The development and management of USE Plans shall be overseen by a USE Plan Review Team under the direction of the DCF Deputy Commissioner for Administration. The Review Team's Central Office Program Supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that submitted USE Plans meet all minimum requirements for review (*e.g.*, completeness, satisfaction of requisite steps related to proposed providers).

Identification by Offices of Children Proposed for Unique Service Expenditure Plans

To be eligible for consideration for a USE Plan, the child must:

- have a significant history of multiple service types use, complex treatment and support needs that cannot be safely or effectively met by utilizing traditional services; or
- be at imminent risk of disruption from a family placement.

USE Plans shall not be used solely for custodial care in home settings or in congregate care when there is no potential for growth and stability.

Note: It shall be explicitly understood that the purpose of the USE Plan Review Team is to oversee the process when traditional services appear to be insufficient. There is no per se Unique Service Expenditure program. The process described here and in the "USE Plans Practice and Procedures Guide" functions within available appropriations, and the final decision to approve or deny any specific Unique Service Expenditure Plan shall lie solely within the discretion of the Commissioner.

Criteria for approval

Approval is at the discretion of the Commissioner or their designee. Any plan that is under \$15,000 may be approved at the regional level.
