CDSS
WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • *www.cdss.ca.gov*

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

August 5, 2015

COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) NO. 15/16-07

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY AUDITOR CONTROLLERS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

SUBJECT: APPROVED RELATIVE CAREGIVER (ARC) FUNDING OPTION "TRUE UP": OPPORTUNITY TO UPDATE CASELOAD SUBMISSION

REFERENCES: ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 14-89, DATED DECEMBER 16, 2014; ACL NO. 14-44, DATED JULY 28, 2014; CFL NO. 14/15-45, DATED FEBRUARY 4, 2015; CFL NO. 14/15-58, DATED MARCH 24, 2015; CFL NO. 14/15-52, DATED MARCH 20, 2015; WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (W&IC) SECTION 11461.3;

Background

The W&IC 11461.3 requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to collaborate with the County Welfare Directors' Association (CWDA) to determine the base caseload eligible for the ARC program. The purpose of establishing a base caseload is to calculate a county cost base for allocating the General Fund (GF) needed to fund the ARC program. Each county was required to follow the methodology described in CFL No. 14/15-45, dated February 4, 2015, for determining ARC eligible cases from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). The methodology satisfied the 'Eligibility Criteria for Children' detailed on page three of ACL No. 14-89, dated December 16, 2014.

As required in W&IC section 11461.3 (g)(2), this CFL provides for a one-time opportunity to ensure that the ongoing state GF appropriation for the ARC Program is sufficient to fund the base caseload of approved relative caregivers as of July 1, 2014. This process is commonly referred to as the "true-up". As stated in W&IC 11461.3, the true-up is scheduled to occur on or before October 1, 2015. To the extent that the state GF appropriation is insufficient to fund the base caseload as jointly determined by CDSS and the CWDA, and as approved by the California Department of Finance, the amount of the ongoing state GF appropriation will be increased pursuant to the above referenced W&IC section. This CFL is a continuation of the instructions and methodology provided to counties in CFL No. 14/15-45 for determining the eligible caseload for the ARC program.

Counties have an opportunity to submit updated ARC caseload data to CDSS by August 28, 2015. If counties do not have caseload updates from the original submission to CDSS in relation to CFL 14/15-45, the data submitted under that CFL will continue to be used in order to provide county allocations, similar to what was released under CFL No. 14/15-58, dated March 24, 2015. For details regarding the ARC program, see CFL No. 14/15-52, dated March 20, 2015, ACL No. 15-20, dated February 13, 2015, ACL No. 14-89 and ACL No. 14-44, dated July 28, 2014.

Methodology for Determining ARC Base Caseload from CWS/CMS

- **Step One:** Select all Approved Relative Home Placements active on July 1, 2014. These cases are coded '1421' and '1422' (tribal) within the CWS/CMS Placement Facility Type variable (PLC_FCLC).

- **Step Two:** Exclude non-related extended family members (NREFMs) from the data set produced from step one above. These are coded '1636' and '1637' within the CWS/CMS variable Substitute Care Provider Relationship (SCP_RLTC).

- **Step Three:** Exclude cases residing outside of the state of California from the data set produced from step two. California's cases are coded '1828' in the CWS/CMS Placement Home Location State variable (HMSTATE).

- **Step Four:** Exclude Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) and Emergency Assistance cases (aid codes 40, 42 and 5K) from the data set produced from step three.

- **Step Five:** Exclude AFDC-FC eligible non-minor dependents (over 18 years of age [aid codes 43 and 49]) from the data produced from step four.

In order to complete steps four and five, information may be required from the county's consortia. The resulting data set from the above methodology is the county's ARC eligible base caseload.

County data programmers can combine the above steps for efficiency.

For determining the county's base allocation, the ARC base caseload requires the following age categories: 0-4, 5-8, 9-11, 12-14, and 15-20 (please see example below). These age categories determine the foster family home rates, which vary by age, and will be used to develop individual county costs.

ARC Eligible Base Caseload (Example)	
Age Category	Number of Cases
0 - 4	50
5 - 8	30
9 - 11	25
12 - 14	20
15 - 20	10
Total ARC Cases	135

Cases receiving payments from another state through the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) are ineligible for ARC and therefore should not be included in the county's breakout of ARC cases that are submitted to CDSS.

Probation cases can be eligible for the ARC Program, and all ARC eligible probation cases as of July 1, 2014, should be included in the base caseload.

Caseload Submission

Counties should submit their ARC base caseload breakout by using the format shown in the table above. A template is provided in this CFL as Attachment I. All caseloads should be submitted by August 28, 2015, and must include the signature of the county's Fiscal Officer or a higher classification.

All counties are required to submit the base caseload using the methodology described in this CFL for CDSS to develop a base allocation should the county opt-in to the ARC program at a future date. If a county does not think their caseload needs to be adjusted, from the initial caseload amount shown in CFL 14/15-58, there is no need for submitting new data. If a base caseload is not provided, CDSS is required to develop an ARC eligible base caseload for the county. Submitting the base caseload information does not require participation in the ARC program; however, it establishes a funding base for counties that opt-in to the ARC program on a future date.

Once the adjusted amount of the ongoing state GF appropriation for the ARC Program is determined on or before October 1, 2015, it will not be adjusted again except for the annual cost of living adjustments, based on W&IC section 11461.3. New legislation will be required to increase or decrease the amount of the appropriation.

For questions regarding this CFL and to submit your county's caseload, please contact Jon Somma, Research Program Specialist III in the Fiscal Forecasting and Policy Branch, via email at Jon.Somma@dss.ca.gov or by phone at (916) 654-1768.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

LILIA A. YOUNG, Chief
Fiscal Forecasting and Policy Branch

Attachment

ATTACHMENT I

California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Base Caseload

Please see CFL 15/16-07 for instructions and submit this form to CDSS by August 28, 2015.	
County:	

ARC Eligible Base Caseload	
Age Category	Number of Cases
0 - 4	
5 - 8	
9 - 11	
12 - 14	
15 - 20	
Total ARC Cases	0

_____ _____

Fiscal Officer's Signature Date

Please submit this form to Jon Somma in Research Program Services via email at Jon.Somma@dss.ca.gov