

Subject Northstar Care of Children Kinship and Adoption Assistance

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Overview

Northstar Care for Children, under chapter 142A, provides foster care benefits and kinship and adoption assistance payments. Foster care benefits are determined based on age (basic monthly rate) and supplemental need (difficulty of care supplemental monthly rate), assessed under a standardized system. If a child enters permanency through adoption or a kinship (transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to a relative) placement and meets statutory eligibility requirements, the child and family receive adoption or kinship assistance payments. Children entering permanency status under the age of six receive assistance under the alternate preschool entry rate, which is half of the amount the child would be eligible to receive under foster care assistance.

This bill increases the alternate preschool entry rate for children under the age of six to the full amount the child would be eligible to receive under foster care assistance, for children in the care of a relative or placed under the placement preferences of the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA). The bill also makes corresponding changes in sections related to state funding.

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Alternate rates for preschool entry and certain transitioned children.
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Amends § 142A.609, subd. 5. For a child in the care of a relative or placed under the MIFPA placement, increases the alternate preschool entry rate for kinship and adoption assistance to the full amount the child would be eligible to receive under foster care assistance. Makes technical changes.

Section	Description
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2	State share.
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Amends § 142A.611, subd. 2. Specifies that the state share of assistance payments must include the cost of modifying the preschool entry alternate rate under section 1. Makes technical changes.

3	Nonfederal share.
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Amends § 142A.611, subd. 4. Requires the commissioner to account for the cost of eliminating the preschool entry alternate rate under section 1 when adjusting the initial percentage of state and local shares for Northstar assistance. Specifies that the costs of modifying the alternate preschool entry rate are borne by the state.



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