

Flex Funds

What are flex funds?

Flex funds are a source of money established by the NJ Child Welfare Reform Plan, and every local CP&P office is allotted a set amount each fiscal year. Approval is based on the nature of the request and available funds. Funds are accessed through your CP&P Resource Family Support Worker (RFSW) or your child's caseworker in the CP&P office. The funds are available to a child in care, resource families (regular and kinship) and birth families to meet a temporary need. According to CP&P policy, "Flex Funds are utilized for exceptional services until sustainable services or informal resources can be put in place." Some examples are:

- Emergency respite/child care babysitting
- Tutoring for a child
- A specialized school activity (photos, proms, sports, trips)
- A task identified at a Family Team Meeting
- Furniture or required equipment purchase for a child
- A child's recreational activity fee
- Financial support to allow a child to accompany a resource family on vacation
- Fee for enrollment in a camp-type program
- Payment for certain individual child services not covered by contract

What are the service principles for consideration of flex funds?

The service principles are to keep a child safe, ensure a child's well-being, prevent an out-of-home placement, stabilize a child's placement, promote reunification, and help achieve tasks established in Family Team Meetings.

What cannot be used for flex funds ?

Flex funds cannot be used:

- To support unlicensed community-based placements or unlicensed out-of-state residential placements
- To secure credit or a loan, or to satisfy any loans, debt, income taxes, credit, or other legal or financial obligations
- To supplement existing CP&P established rates or fee structure for services

Do I have any recourse if my request is denied?

There is no formal process for review; however, if you believe that your request is reasonable and funds are available, we recommend you ask to speak to the RFSW or their supervisor. You are entitled to an explanation as to why you were denied. If you need our assistance, contact **embrella** and ask to speak to an **embrella** Family Advocate. We can be reached at

800.222.0047 or www.embrella.org.

Does embrella offer programs that can help me?

Fostering Wishes grants wishes to children in care, up to \$100 annually. Some examples of wishes that have been granted are soccer registration, senior pictures, dance lessons, piano lessons, art lessons, art supplies, flute lessons, day camp and much more.

Dreamers and Believers is a larger grant that gives children from foster, adoptive or kinship homes a chance to pursue their dreams at a higher level. For example, if Fostering Wishes purchases a set of cooking utensils for a child that wants to become a chef, Dreamers and Believers will help him work towards that dream by sending him to a cooking camp. Funding is limited, however. You should first learn what is available through CP&P Flex Funds Program.

How do I apply for the Fostering Wishes for Children Program or Dreamers and Believers?

Visit www.embrella.org to complete and submit an application or call **embrellas'** Information Line at 800.222.0047 and ask for an application.

How are the Fostering Wishes For Children program and The Dreamers and Believers program funded?

Fostering Wishes and Dreamers and Believers are funded through private donations.

Are there limits to the amount of flex funds that can be received?

Flex Funds are distributed on a case-by-case basis over a 12-month period: Expenses that contribute a child's well-being cannot exceed \$500 and expenses for resource families cannot exceed \$1000. Please note that this is based on funding availability and is not guaranteed.