

County and Local Funds Policy

1 OVERVIEW OF LOCAL FUNDS

Each year Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) county offices proactively seek out additional funding from local entities to supplement their budgets to meet specific needs. Local entities include municipal governments, county governments, local hospitals, boards of education, and others. Funds received from these local entities are referred to as “County Funds” and/or “Local Funds”.

1.1 REQUEST AND RECEIPT OF LOCAL FUNDS

Each year the DFCS County Director will request from the County Commissioners that their annual budget and prior year fund balance be used at the DFCS Director’s discretion and will be used in a prudent business fashion. Line-item specific budgets require approval by the County Commissioners for any changes in the use of a line-item specific budget. The dates of a county’s fiscal year are aligned with either the State Fiscal Year, Federal Fiscal Year, or Calendar Year.

The local DFCS office receives funds from the local entities in one of two ways:

1. Local Entity Reimbursement:
 - a. Generally, DFCS Field Fiscal Services/Regional Accounting prepares a monthly statement/invoice detailing approved county expenditures made during the month and submits to the applicable local entity for reimbursement.
 - b. The local entity then sends the DFCS office a check for the amount requested.
 - c. The reimbursement should be received the following month since state funds are used initially to pay for these expenditures.
2. Cash Advance:
 - a. The local entity can decide at the beginning of the fiscal year to advance approved budget funds, either monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.

1.2 FUND DEFICITS AND SURPLUSES

A Local Funds Deficit at end of the county’s fiscal year is a result of the DFCS office spending more than the amount budgeted by the local entity. In the case of a local fund deficit, there are two options to remedy:

1. The local entity can agree to reimburse for the amount overspent.
2. The DFCS office will have to cover the overage with monies from their Fund Balance account.

A Local Funds Surplus (often referred to as “Fund Balance”) at the end of the county’s fiscal year means that the DFCS office spent less than the amount advanced by the local entity. Surplus funds should be accounted for as follows, based on what is agreed to between the local entity and the DFCS office:

1. Return the surplus to the local entity if this is the agreement.
2. Retain the surplus, as agreed in writing from the local entity, and either:
 - a. Leave the balance in the Cash Advance account to be used in the county's next fiscal year. Leaving the funds in this account means that the DFCS office will not have to ask for special permission to use them.
 - b. Move the balance to the Restricted Fund's Fund Balance to be used at a later date.

For County Funds specifically that are unspent at the end of each budget year, approval must be provided by the County Commissioner to allow DFCS to maintain those funds in the Fund Balance or Cash Advance accounts. Approval must be documented in the DFCS County Board meeting minutes or in the original approved budget documents and is to be used as by the County.

All funding whether from federal, state, or local entities must have an approved budget in place before any expenditure can be made.

2 USE OF LOCAL FUNDS

2.1 ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual DFCS county budget will be approved by the entity (County Commission, City Council, etc.), AND the local DFCS County Board. Broad expenditure categories **must** be specified and approved in the county's budget.

For expenditures outside of the regularly approved county budget, DFCS County Board Member approval **must** be documented in the board minutes, and the minutes should be forwarded with the request form to DFCS Fiscal Services for approval. Once approved it should be forwarded to Regional Accounting for payment processing.

2.2 ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

Local entity funds can be used for the following specific needs outlined below:

2.2.1 Regular Operating Costs

In collaboration with Regional Accounting, the DFCS County Director can determine what constitutes a regular operating cost. See [SAO Policy Accounting Manual](#) for guidance on what is considered a regular operating cost.

2.2.2 Travel

Please see the [DFCS Travel Policy](#) from the Field Fiscal Services website for allowable travel expenditures. Questions can be directed to Field Fiscal Services Travel team.

2.2.3 Equipment and Related Supplies

Includes general office supplies, coffee supplies, and water supplies.

Appliances are allowable but require State Office approval from the Office of Facilities and Support Services (OFSS) (see section 2.3).

County funds must be used when purchasing name badges for DFCS employees and requires approval from the State Office of Communications team (see section 2.3).

NOTE: Use of DHS or DFCS Logos: If using DHS or DFCS logos on any items, you must receive approval from the DFCS Office of Communications and then DFCS Fiscal Services prior to making the purchase. Fiscal approval will not be provided without proof of Communications approval. Logos and Style guide can be reached on the [Office of Communication's Intranet](#).

2.2.4 Foster Care Expenses

Includes haircuts, allowances, musical instruments/lessons, diapers, school activity fees, camps, photo packages, and any other programmatic needs.

2.2.5 General Assistance to Clients (Indigent Care)

2.2.6 Meetings/Events

Local funds or county restricted funds must be used for:

- Staff Luncheons
- Staff Meetings
- Meet and Greet Events (other than law enforcement meet and greet)
- County Board Meetings
- Trainings (multi-county trainings food and drinks will be prorated among all attendees and charged as a registration fee against each county's budget as appropriate)

Funds received from Interest on County CD's and Savings accounts should remain on the DFCS' books and will be considered County Funds. These funds can be used for Staff Appreciation Day Luncheons where a meeting and luncheon occurs.

Allowable expenses related to the meeting or event:

- Meals:
 - The [Statewide Policy for Other Meals and Incidental Travel](#) limits Group Meals to be in line with the [Statewide Travel Policy](#) of:
 - \$23 per person for dinner
 - \$14 per person for lunch
 - \$13 per person for breakfast
 - Supplies such as cups, plates, napkins, and utensils are allowable.
 - Must have a meeting agenda and sign-in sheet whether it is county or state funded per [Group Meal Policy](#).
- Certificates or plaques of merit or achievement:
 - Provided from the state office in appreciation for an employee's years of service.
 - Follow [DOAS Compensation Rules and Policies](#) documents regarding Incentive Pay and Meritorious Awards. A request must be submitted to the DFCS CFO, Melissa Barwick (Melissa.Barwick@dhs.ga.gov), no later than 60 days from the date of the employee's retirement for processing.

State funds can only be used for:

- Road Shows
- Law Enforcement events
- Other state mandated events

All Meetings/Events require State Office Approval from DFCS Fiscal Services (see section 2.3)

2.2.7 Membership Application Fees

Membership Fees include fees to organizations that, through membership and/or participation in the organization, aligns with the mission and purpose of DFCS/DHS. Examples include the County Chamber of Commerce, County Lions Club, and others.

Membership Fees should be paid using local/county funds first, but if local/county funds have been verified as not available then state funds may be utilized.

The Membership Fees Authorization Form should be filled out and signed by the County Director. The form and County Board approved minutes outlining the membership fees amount should then be forwarded to Regional Accounting for payment processing.

Counties can elect to pay for Georgia Professional Human Services Association (GPHSA) group memberships for their employees with local/county funds. Individual memberships would be covered by the employees (payroll deduction, credit card, etc.).

2.2.8 Christmas Gifts for Foster Children

Christmas gift requests **must have** a budget per child amount and the total spending limit amount should be approved in the board minutes.

There are three allowable ways for DFCS offices to purchase Christmas and/or Holiday gifts for children in Out-of-Home Care:

1. Direct purchase by the county office.
 - a. State Office Approval from DFCS Fiscal Services is required prior to purchase (see Section 2.3).
2. Give funds to the foster parent(s) to shop for the child.
 - a. This option requires the county office to submit the ADPOR to Regional Accounting for each foster parent that receives funds and that clearly lists the child's name and the amount of funds received.
 - b. Foster parents **must submit receipts by the last day of February** the following year. Failure to do so will result in funds being recouped from the foster parent.
3. Participation in the State Office's Secret Santa Program, which is a donation-based program that provides presents to children in foster care at no cost to the county. Please contact DFCS Fiscal Services for more information.

2.2.9 Additional Compensation for Staff

Per [State Board Rule 478-1-12](#), county funds may also be used to provide additional compensation for agency staff. When approving funds for the purpose of compensating employees within the county DFCS office, use of these county funds must comply with state

policies as well as Internal Revenue Service's guidelines for appropriate compensation of state employees.

There is no authority, regardless of the funding source, for awarding across the board bonuses to state employees. Providing a bonus or other form of lump sum payment without specific authority to do so would violate the gratuities provision of the state constitution.

Examples of appropriate compensation expenditures include:

- Salary and fringe benefits
- Temporary or conditional salary supplements
- Ongoing salary supplements
- Lump sum incentive-based payments

Temporary or conditional salary supplements may be used in the same manner as state funded supplemental pay when state funds are not available.

Ongoing salary supplements paid for with local funds may be used to support retention efforts by the agency. A plan for providing monthly supplements must be submitted for review to state personnel by the Division before payments may be scheduled to begin. The plan must be funded for a minimum of one year, must include all job titles to receive the supplement, and give any specific inclusion criteria such as tenure. All incumbents in a job title must be included when they meet other inclusion criteria.

Using County Funds for the purpose of compensating staff such as county supplements requires three approvals:

- (1) The Office of Human Resources (OHR)
- (2) Assistant Division Director of Field Operations, Deputy Director
- (3) The Division Director (or designee).

Local funds may be used for one-time lump sum payments for incentive or meritorious awards. Plans for lump sum payments to state employees must follow guidelines outlined in the [DOAS Compensation Rules and Policies](#).

- Incentive pay is a one-time lump sum payment and must be based on achievement of a pre-determined goal which does not become part of an employee's base salary.
- Meritorious award payments are a one-time lump sum payment based on extraordinary achievement which does not become part of base salary.

NOTE: Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) Compensation Rules and Policies: Expenditures solely for the benefit of employees, whether the budget is discretionary or line item, must comply with [DOAS Compensation Rules and Policies](#) and State Personnel Board rules governing employee compensation.

2.3 STATE OFFICE APPROVALS

2.3.1 All Purchases

State DFCS Fiscal Services approval **is required when requesting to use local funds where the total dollar value of the request is over \$500.** Approval is not required when the request is under \$500.

2.3.2 Equipment Purchases

The following require approval from the Office of Facilities and Support Services (OFSS) and notification of DFCS Fiscal Services:

- Installation of any equipment that requires opening of walls, hooking equipment to water source, and other similar scenarios.
- Any facility repairs and/or maintenance costs.
- Proof of approval from OFSS must be provided before requesting approval from DFCS Fiscal Services.

The following requires approval from DFCS Fiscal Services:

- All expenditures outside of the county-approved annual operating budget.
- All appliance purchases. You must have a client benefit justification when submitting a request form for approval.

2.3.3 Meetings/Events

All meetings and events require approval by DFCS Fiscal Services. Please include the following in the request:

- Special Needs Request Form
- Meeting/event agenda

Once approved, please submit the following to Regional Accounting for payment:

- Approved Special Needs Request Form
- Meeting/event Agenda
- Meeting minutes if available
- Participant sign-in sheet **must be included if using State or local funds**

2.3.4 Christmas Presents for Children in Foster Care

If a county office opts to purchase presents directly for children in foster care, State DFCS Fiscal Services approval is required prior to making the purchase. Please include the following in your request:

- Special Needs Request form
- DFCS County Board approved minutes or Board approval of direct purchase of gifts

Once approved, send your request form, approval, and board minutes to Regional Accounting for payment processing

2.3.5 Employee Compensation

Use of County Funds for staff compensation, such as county supplements, requires three approvals:

- The Office of Human Services: Johnanna Weathers, Deputy Director – Field Services
- Assistant Division Director of Field Operations, Deputy Director: Mary Havick, Deputy Commissioner – Child Welfare
- Division Director (or Designee): Christopher Apsey – Deputy Chief of Staff/Senior Deputy Commissioner

If requesting approval, please send the request and justification documents (including board minutes and breakdown of positions affected) to your HRG Generalist. After they receive the necessary approvals, the Field Fiscal Services Director will send final approval to the requesting county and Regional Accounting to process.

2.3.6 Use of DHS and/or DFCS Logos

The following requires approval from DHS Communications:

- Name badges for DFCS employees.

The following requires approval from DHS Communications and DFCS Fiscal Services:

- Using DFCS or DHS logo on any items.
- Proof of approval from Communications must be provided before requesting approval from DFCS Fiscal Services.

2.3.7 State Office Contacts

DFCS Budget and Finance:

Melissa Barwick
Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Finance
Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Melissa.Barwick@dhs.ga.gov

DFCS Fiscal Services

Approval from Fiscal Services is required for (1) all expenditures not included in the county's annual operating budget, (2) all purchases over \$500, (3) all meetings as described in section 2.3.3, (4) Christmas gifts, (5) equipment purchases approved by OFSS, and (6) use of DHS or DFCS logos approved by the DHS Office of Communications.

Adrian Owens
Director, Fiscal Services
Adrian.Owens@dhs.ga.gov

Davida Walker
Compliance Specialist, Fiscal Services
Davida.Walker@dhs.ga.gov

DHS OFSS:

Approval from OFSS is required for equipment installation and expenditures as described in section 2.3.2.

Allanda Baptiste

Section Manager, OFSS

allanda.baptiste@dhs.ga.gov

DHS OHR:

Approval from OHR is required for use of county funds for employee compensation as described in section 2.3.5.

Johnanna Weathers

Deputy Director, OHR Field Services

Johnanna.Weathers@dhs.ga.gov

DHS Office of Communications:

Approval is required from the Office of Communications for the use of the DHS or DFCS logo and for employee name badges as described in section 2.3.6.

dhsbrandingapproval@dhs.ga.gov

2.4 PROHIBITED EXPENDITURES

The following items are prohibited and are considered not allowable uses of Local and/or County Funds:

- Gift cards of any type to an employee, child, foster parent, or client.
- Replacement salary for furlough days.
- Out of pocket costs incurred by an employee while on the job, such as insurance deductibles if in an accident, towing, speeding tickets, parking tickets, etc.
- Equipment and/or supplies contrary to state purchasing guidelines, and that do not have a direct client justification. Items for personal use are prohibited (O.C.G.A. Section 50-5-80).
- State employee gratuities in the form of cash payments or gift cards.
- Donations to other agencies/organizations.

2.5 INTERNAL CONTROLS

Local funds are subject to the same internal control policy and procedures governing state and federal funds. When requesting supplies and/or other procurement needs, county offices should utilize either the Supplies & Equipment Request form or the Special Needs Request form.