

Department for Children, Youth and Families

Justification for Authorization to amend the 2024 Budget to accept additional funding from the Office of Children and Family Services and to renew a contract with Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region regarding the Family First Mobile Response Initiative

The Department respectfully requests Legislative authorization to amend the 2024 budget to accept funding from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and to renew an agreement with Trinity Alliance of the Capital Region, Inc., in regards to the Family First Mobile Response Initiative. The funding and the contract renewal are for the period April 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025 in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) provides a vehicle for New York State (NYS) to move from the status quo of child protection as a primary prevention strategy and to move towards services and resources that strengthen families and enable children to remain safely at home. In that space of transformation, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has identified mobile response units as a strategy to develop and operate coordinated programs of community-based family support and family preservation services to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk, assure children's safety within the home, and preserve integrity of the family unit in which children have been maltreated, when the family's needs can be safely addressed effectively in the home.

As a response to the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), Trinity Alliance has been approved by OCFS as a single source entity, and was awarded a Mobile Response Van to provide services for the Mobile Response Initiative.

The mobile response van will be staffed with a licensed clinician, a behavioral health specialist, a family and/or peer advocate, a service navigation specialist, or a domestic violence advocate. Services must be available during both business hours and after hours. Services are available to be responsive to immediate needs such as at the time a placement occurs. Services will be available for ongoing needs for families identified as high risk and in receipt of preventive services. The mobile response van must respond to a request for assistance by going to the home where the child is residing or at a location in the community at a mutually agreed upon time. The mobile response unit must be able to be responsive when families call for help when a child is involved in an emotional or behavioral health need that could lead to a disruption in the home.

Mobile response units will work with the parent or caregiver and child to reduce or de-escalate identified behaviors and may provide intervention services to address any immediate concerns identified as well as ongoing needs.

Funding will be utilized for costs involving staff, maintenance of the Van, and to meet emergent needs of families not otherwise met through availability of existing funds, if necessary.