**DSS**
SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT *of* SOCIAL SERVICES

## Licensed Foster Parents
- How many does DSS have? 1,932
- How many do Private Agencies have? 1,583

## Licensed Homes without Foster Children
- DSS Licensed Homes – 134 homes
  - <12 Months – 79 homes
  - >=12 Months – 55 homes
- Private Agency Licensed Homes – 200 providers
  - <12 Months – 79 homes
    - Regular Providers – 37 homes
    - Therapeutic Providers – 42 homes
  - >=12 Months – 121 homes
    - Regular Providers – 39 homes
    - Therapeutic Providers – 82 homes

### Foster Parents Using SC Childcare Vouchers

To qualify, there must be an open/active foster care case, the child needing care must be between birth and 13 years of age or 13-19 years of age if the child has special needs and you must need child care in order to work. If you meet the qualifications and need assistance, please email your name and contact information to fosterchildcare@dss.sc.gov

## Pending Kinship/Foster Parent Applications for Licensure
→ Total of **540** pending kinship/foster parent licenses. This includes:
- **288** pending foster parent licenses
- **99** pending kinship licenses
- **44** pending ICPC (Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children) licenses
- **82** pending ICPC relative/parent approvals
  - ICPC requests are referrals of children in care from other states to be placed in SC.
- **27** pending CPA (Child Placing Agencies) licenses

## Continued Efforts and Practices for Pending Applications
- Heartfelt Calling, our partner agency who manages inquiries from those interested in foster home licensing or adoption approval, is continuing to receive calls and screen individuals. Anyone interested can reach Heartfelt Calling at (888) 828-3555.
- Families can begin collection of all required documentation, including medical and financial information, and submit those documents to their licensing professional.
- DSS licensing professionals are continuing to work to process licensing packets already submitted and follow-up with families or partner agencies where more information is required.
- Our licensing unit is also practicing unprecedented use of technologies like Skype and FaceTime to do virtual walk-throughs of potential foster/adoptive homes.
- While licensing professionals will have to do an actual physical home inspection before a license can be issued, the virtual walk-through would allow the licensing professional to point out things that would have to be corrected, like moving a dresser or other furniture that is blocking a window.
- Right now, DSS is working with LLR and the State Fire Marshal to prioritize fire inspections based on the most urgent needed homes.
- Pre-service training is web-based to allow flexibility for scheduling and completing.

## Ongoing Updates
To continue to receive updates from DSS, be sure your licensing professional has your personal email address. DSS cannot use your work or business email address.

**How long is the typical timeframe for a DSS foster home from when a potential home signed the application to licensure?**

→ The average (or the mean) is 126 days

→ The median is 115 days

**Where do most children reside while in foster care?**

→ Most children reside in family like settings (82%) which includes kinship (481 or 11%) and other family like settings such as regular foster homes, therapeutic foster homes, and pre-adoptive or adoptive homes (3,153 or 71%).

→ Only 755 children or 17% are in congregate care settings. The percentage of children in congregate care has been decreasing with the increased emphasis on placing children into either kinship or other family like settings.

**It is important to find the right placement for children at entry, or as soon as possible after entry. Research has demonstrated that frequent placement changes can negatively impact outcomes of children in foster care.**

→ Placement instability is defined as the rate of placement moves per 1,000 days of foster care and placement moves are changes in foster care placements. From October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019, children in care in South Carolina experienced 4.3 moves per 1,000 days in care. DSS has improved its performance but still needs to do more.

→ From March 1, 2019 to February 29, 2020; children experienced 4.1 moves per 1,000 days in care.

**Timely permanency is best for all children. Children need to be in a loving permanent home as quickly as possible so that they can flourish. Research shows that the longer a child is in foster care, the more he or she becomes estranged from his biological parents and reunification becomes less likely. Children with longer foster care stays also experience more frequent placement moves. Therefore, DSS monitors positive outcomes such as average months to reunification and average months to adoption for children.**

→ Average months to reunification: Of all children under the age of 18 who were reunified with their parent(s) or caretaker(s) at the time of discharge from foster care, for the reporting year, 79% of children were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of their latest removal from home.

→ Average months to adoption: Of all children who left foster care due to finalized adoption, for the reporting year, 24% of children had finalized adoptions in less than 24 months from the date of their latest removal from home.