2026 Special Session I

Budget Bill - HB30 (Enrolled)

Department of Social Services

Item 333	First Year - FY2027	Second Year - FY2028
Child Welfare Services (46900)	**$283,544,141**	**$285,942,022**
Foster Care Payments (46901)	$42,515,744	$44,272,878
Supplemental Child Welfare Activities (46902)	$61,237,928	$61,676,380
Adoption Subsidy Payments (46903)	$162,306,549	$162,508,844
Prevention Services (46905)	$17,483,920	$17,483,920
Fund Sources:		
General	$142,274,196	$143,574,353
Special	$2,434,593	$2,434,593
Dedicated Special Revenue	$585,265	$585,265
Federal Trust	$138,250,087	$139,347,811

Authority: Title 63.2, Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 8 through 15, Code of Virginia; P.L. 100-294, P.L. 101-126, P.L. 101-226, P.L. 105-89, P.L. 110-351, P.L. 111-320, as amended, Federal Code.

A. Expenditures meeting the criteria of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act shall be fully reimbursed except that expenditures otherwise subject to a standard local matching share under applicable state policy, including local staffing, shall continue to require local match. The commissioner shall ensure that local social service boards obtain reimbursement for all children eligible for Title IV-E coverage.

B. The Commissioner, Department of Social Services, in cooperation with the Department of Planning and Budget, shall establish a reasonable, automatic adjustment for inflation each year to be applied to the room and board maximum rates paid to foster parents. However, this provision shall apply only in fiscal years following a fiscal year in which salary increases are provided for state employees.

C. Out of this appropriation, $500,000 the first year and $500,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided for the purchase of services for victims child abuse and neglect prevention activities as stated in § 63.2-1502, Code of Virginia, in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Board of Social Services.

D. Out of this appropriation, $180,200 the first year and $180,200 the second year from the general fund and $99,800 the first year and $99,800 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be provided to continue respite care for foster parents.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 63.2-1300 through 63.2-1303, Code of Virginia, adoption assistance subsidies and supportive services shall not be available for children adopted through parental placements, except parental placements where the legal guardian is a child placing agency at the time of the adoption. This restriction

does not apply to existing adoption assistance agreements.

F.1. Out of this appropriation, $1,500,000 the first year and $1,500,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to implement pilot programs that increase the number of foster care children adopted.

2. Beginning July 1, 2017, the Department of Social Services shall provide an annual report, not later than 45 days after the end of the state fiscal year, on the use and effectiveness of this funding including, but not limited to, the additional number of special needs children adopted from foster care as a result of this effort and the types of ongoing supportive services provided, to the Governor, Chairmen of House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees, and the Director, Department of Planning and Budget.

G. Out of this appropriation, $7,590,588 the first year and $5,002,933 the second year from the general fund and $2,250,000 the first year and $2,250,000 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be provided for special needs adoptions.

H. Out of this appropriation, $74,886,517 the first year and $76,416,027 the second year from the general fund and $75,216,746 the first year and $76,477,185 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be provided for Title IV-E adoption subsidies.

I. The Commissioner, Department of Social Services, shall ensure that local departments that provide independent living services to persons between 18 and 21 years of age make certain information about and counseling regarding the availability of independent living services is provided to any person who chooses to leave foster care or who chooses to terminate independent living services before his twenty-first birthday. Information shall include the option for restoration of independent living services following termination of independent living services, and the processes whereby independent living services may be restored should he choose to seek restoration of such services in accordance with § 63.2-905.1 of the Code of Virginia.

J.1. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 63.2-1302, Code of Virginia, the Department of Social Services shall negotiate all adoption assistance agreements with both existing and prospective adoptive parents on behalf of local departments of social services. This provision shall not alter the legal responsibilities of the local departments of social services set out in Chapter 13 of Title 63.2, Code of Virginia, nor alter the rights of the adoptive parents to appeal.

2. Out of this appropriation, $342,414 the first year and $342,414 the second year from the general fund and $215,900 the first year and $215,900 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be provided for five positions to execute these negotiations.

K.1. Out of this appropriation, $10,017,668 the first year and $10,017,668 the second year from the general fund and $2,500,000 the first year and $2,500,000 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be available for the reinvestment of adoption general fund savings as authorized in title IV, parts B and E of the federal Social Security Act (P.L. 110-351).

2. Of the amounts in paragraph K.1. above, $3,078,595 the first year and $3,078,595 the second year from the general fund shall be used to develop a case management module for a comprehensive child welfare information system (CCWIS).

L.1. Out of this appropriation, $7,121,181 the first year and $7,121,181 the second year from the general fund and $7,121,181 the first year and $7,121,181 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be available for the development of a compliant comprehensive child welfare information system (CCWIS). Any unexpended balances in this paragraph at the close of business on June 30 each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund, but shall be carried forward and reappropriated for this purpose.

2. In the development of the CCWIS, the department shall not create any future obligation that will require the appropriation of general fund in excess of that provided in this Item. Should additional appropriation, in excess of the amounts identified in paragraphs K.2. and L.1. above, be needed to complete development of this or any other module for the CCWIS, the department shall notify the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees, and Director, Department of Planning and Budget.

3. Beginning September 1, 2018, the department shall also provide semi-annual progress reports that includes current project summary, implementation status, accounting of project expenditures and future milestones. All reports shall be submitted to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees, and Director, Department of Planning and Budget by February 1 and September 1 each year.

M. Out of this appropriation, $1,009,563 the first year and $1,009,563 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be used to fund 10 positions that support the child protective services hotline.

N. Out of this appropriation, $50,000 the first year and $50,000 the second year from the general fund and $50,000 the first year and $50,000 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be used to fund one position that supports Virginia Fosters.

O. Out of this appropriation, $851,000 the first year and $851,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for training, consultation and technical support, and licensing costs associated with establishing evidence-based programming as identified in the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Evidence-Based Programs Clearinghouse.

P. The Department of Social Services shall maintain an emergency approval process for kinship caregivers and develop foster home certification standards for kinship caregivers using as a guide the Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards developed by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Generations United, and the National Association for Regulatory Administration. The adopted standards should align, as much as reasonably possible, to the Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards, and should ensure that children in foster care: (i) live in safe and appropriate homes under local department of social services and court oversight; (ii) receive monthly financial assistance and supportive services to help meet their needs; and (iii) can access the permanency options offered by Virginia's Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program.

Q.1. Out of this appropriation, $6,173,560 the first year and $6,173,560 the second year from the general fund is provided to make relative maintenance payments. Participation in the relative maintenance payment program shall not exceed available appropriation.

2. In order to ensure timely distribution of relative maintenance payments pursuant to legislation passed in the 2024 General Assembly and provisions thereto, the Department of Social Services shall have the authority to implement such changes effective upon passage of this act, and prior to the completion of any regulatory process undertaken in order to effect such changes.

R. Out of this appropriation, $564,000 the first year and $564,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for the department to meet the housing support provisions of §63.2-905.1:1, Code of Virginia.

S. Out of this appropriation, $246,548 the first year and $246,548 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to fund an increase in adult protective services calls to the child protective services hotline.

T. The department shall continue to apply for and utilize federal funding for kinship navigator programs until such time that all available funding has been exhausted.

U. Out of this appropriation, $310,000 the first year and $310,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided for a statewide driver's licensing program to support foster care youth in obtaining a driver's license.

Funding shall be made available to local departments of social services to reimburse foster care providers for increases to their existing motor vehicle insurance premiums that occur because a foster care youth in their care has been added to their insurance policy. The program may also reimburse foster care providers for additional coverage that provides liability protection should a foster care youth get into or cause a catastrophic accident. Additionally, funding shall be made available to foster care youth in Virginia's Fostering Futures Program to assist in covering the cost of obtaining motor vehicle insurance. The Department shall develop reimbursement policies for foster care providers and foster care youth. The Department shall coordinate and administer the driver's licensing program based on best practices from similar programs in other states, to include developing educational or training materials that educate foster parents, private providers, and foster youth about (i) liability issues, insurance laws, and common insurance practices (to include laws about renewal and cancellation, how long an accident can affect premiums, how to establish that a foster youth is no longer living in the residence, and other applicable topics); (ii) DMV requirements to obtain a learner's permit and driver's license; (iii) what funding and resources are available to assist in this process, to include, paying school lab fees for "Behind the Wheel" or paying a private driving education company; and (iv) why getting a driver's license on time is important for normalcy and a successful transition to adulthood. The Department shall provide information on how many foster care youth were supported by this program and any recommendations to improve the program to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees annually on December 1.

V. The Department of Social Services, in consultation with stakeholders, shall develop a process for Virginia localities to enter into memorandums of understanding with localities in surrounding states for the purposes of kinship care.

W. Out of this appropriation, $300,000 the first year and $300,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for the Department of Social Services to expand the existing program to find relative and fictive kin for youth in foster care.

X.1. Out of this appropriation, $2,453,852 the second year from the general fund is provided to support initial implementation costs of creating a centralized child protective services intake system to collect and triage child abuse and neglect reports, pursuant to Chapter 900, 2026 Acts of Assembly.

2. Out of this appropriation, $1,000,000 the first year from the general fund and $1,000,000 the first year from nongeneral funds is provided to support third-party contract costs pursuant to Chapter 900, 2026 Acts of Assembly. The Department of Social Services (DSS) shall contract with a third party by August 1, 2026, to conduct a comprehensive study and review of the screening process used for child protective services complaints across Virginia. The Director, Department of Planning and Budget, shall unallot this appropriation until DSS provides documentation of contract costs and shall allot only the amount necessary to satisfy the contract.

Y.1. Out of this appropriation, $375,000 the first year and $363,450 the second year from the general fund and $125,000 the first year and $121,150 the second year from nongeneral funds shall be used to establish a pilot multidisciplinary law office for parents in child dependency matters in Roanoke City, pursuant to the second enactment of Chapter 428, 2024 Acts of Assembly. The local Roanoke entity establishing such multidisciplinary law office will be the Qualified Legal Services Provider previously approved by the Virginia State Bar, and will enter into an agreement with a local department of social services or the Department of Social Services to receive Title IV-E funding for eligible administrative costs of providing legal representation for a parent or guardian of a child who is a candidate for or in Title IV-E foster care to prepare for and participate in all stages of foster care legal proceedings.

2. The Department of Social Services shall report each year by December 1 to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees on the implementation and outcomes of the multidisciplinary law office pilot established in Roanoke City pursuant to this act. The report shall include, at a minimum, the number of parents and guardians served, services provided, utilization of Title IV-E reimbursement for eligible administrative costs, program expenditures, any available data regarding child welfare and court

outcomes, and recommendations for program improvement.