

About the Family Support Program

1. What is the Family Support Program (FSP)?

The FSP is a state-funded program that provides access to intensive mental health services and supports to youth with a severe emotional disturbance. The goal of the FSP is to support eligible youth and their families by strengthening family stability, improving clinical outcomes, and promoting community-based services.

The FSP is governed by 89 Ill. Adm. Code 139, commonly referred to as “Rule 139.” The Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) is the state agency responsible for the FSP. The program receives administrative and clinical support from eQHealth Solutions, Inc. (eQHealth), a designated quality improvement organization that is contracted with HFS. More information about FSP can be found on the [HFS website](#).

2. What does the Family Support Program cover?

Every youth enrolled in FSP is assigned a case manager, called the FSP Coordinator, at their local Screening, Assessment, and Support Services (SASS) agency. The FSP Coordinator helps youth and their family access FSP covered services as well as understand the requirements and processes of the FSP. In addition to case management, the FSP provides access to community mental health services, alternative community services, and residential treatment when it is determined to be medically necessary.

Community mental health services covered by the FSP include the following: assessment, treatment planning, therapy/counseling, community support, medication management, crisis intervention, and intensive outpatient services. FSP alternative community services are made up of two distinct service lines: Therapeutic Support Services and Family Support Services. Both Therapeutic Support Services and Family Support Services require prior authorization from HFS.

Therapeutic Support Services are clinical interventions that support the youth’s treatment goals and help promote safety and stabilization of the youth in the community. Therapeutic Support Services are available to FSP youth for up to \$3,000 in services per fiscal year. Examples of Therapeutic Support Services include interventions such as specialized therapies, peer support, or parent training.

Family Support Services are non-therapeutic supports that promote the youth’s stabilization in the community in line with the youth’s treatment goals. Family Support Services are available to FSP youth for up to \$1,500 in services per fiscal year. Examples of Family Support Services include interventions such as respite and wellness activities/programs.

3. Who can participate in the Family Support Program?

Youth may be determined as eligible to participate in the FSP if they meet all of the following criteria:

- The parent or guardian of the youth demonstrates residence in the State of Illinois;
- The youth is under the age of 18 at the time a completed application is submitted;
- The youth is not under the guardianship or in the legal custody of any unit of the federal, State or local government;
- The parent or guardian of the youth agrees to meet the terms of the Program's Parent or Guardian Responsibilities;
- The youth demonstrates a severe emotional disturbance;
- The youth demonstrates a severity of need indicating that his or her clinical needs are not being met through active participation in traditional outpatient mental health services;
- The youth demonstrates sufficient cognitive capacity to respond to psychiatric treatment and intervention;
- The youth's history of mental health challenges and treatment efforts demonstrate a chronic condition rather than an acute episode; and,
- The youth demonstrates behaviors or symptoms that are likely to respond to the treatment services available in the FSP.

4. How do I apply for the Family Support Program?

HFS' enrolled providers of SASS are available to help families with obtaining, completing and submitting the FSP application. Each SASS agency is required to have an FSP Coordinator available to assist families with the FSP application process. While it is not required, families are strongly encouraged to use the help of the FSP Coordinator in completing and submitting the FSP application. The FSP Coordinator is trained on how to complete the FSP application, and can answer questions a family has about the process.

The FSP application can be found on the [HFS website](#). Completed FSP applications may be submitted to eQHealth for an eligibility determination by the parent or guardian of the youth or, as requested by the parent or guardian, the youth's designated SASS agency. A list of SASS agencies can be found on the [HFS SASS Provider webpage](#).

Completed FSP applications may be submitted to eQHealth in any of the following ways:

1. By faxing the application to 800-418-4039 using the subject line “FSP Application for Review;” or,
2. By mailing the application to the following address:

eQHealth Solutions, Inc.
Attn: FSP Technical Coordinator
500 Waters Edge, Suite 125
Lombard, IL 60148

A determination of the youth’s eligibility for the FSP will be made within 30 days after the date that eQHealth receives a completed application. The parent or guardian of the youth will receive written notification from eQHealth letting them know the outcome of the eligibility determination and how to appeal the determination if necessary.

If an FSP application is submitted but is missing required information, the parent or guardian will be notified that the application was incomplete and given instructions on what must be done to complete the application. If the application is not completed and resubmitted within 30 days after the date of the notice that the application is incomplete, the application will not be reviewed to determine whether the youth is eligible for the FSP.

5. How long can someone stay in the Family Support Program?

Youth who are determined eligible to participate in the FSP will receive 180 days of program eligibility. During the last 30 days of a youth’s 180 day FSP eligibility period, a request for continued FSP enrollment may be submitted to eQHealth. EQHealth will review the request for continued FSP enrollment and will determine whether the youth continues to meet the FSP eligibility criteria within three (3) business days of receiving the continued enrollment request. If a youth is found to be eligible for continued FSP enrollment, the youth will receive an additional 180 days of program eligibility. The Continued Enrollment Authorization Request process must be repeated for every 180 day eligibility period that the youth wishes to be enrolled in the FSP.

Youth may continue to receive continued FSP enrollment up to the age of 18 or up to the age of 21 if the youth is still attending but has not yet graduated high school or achieved high school graduation equivalency.

6. I have additional questions. Who can I contact?

If you have questions about the FSP application process or about the status of a submitted FSP application, please call the eQHealth FSP Helpline Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at 866-435-8778. All other questions about the FSP may be directed to HFS by calling the Bureau of Behavioral Health at 217-557-1000 or by email at HFS.BHClinical@illinos.gov.