



March 25, 2022

Abby C. Branan, Director of Finance and Purchasing  
Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners  
Finance and Purchasing Department

Re: FY2023 Lumpkin Co DFCS Budget Request

Dear Ms. Branan:

The Lumpkin County Department of Family and Children Services is making the following request:

**\$15,000.00** to reimburse foster parents for expenses that are not covered by other sources for the children in the custody of the Department. We currently have 52 children in the custody of Lumpkin County DFCS. Due to limited state and federal funding, we do not have enough funding to cover the necessities for the foster children without assistance from the county. I am attaching a copy of our foster parents' reimbursement guidelines for your review. If you look at the spreadsheet attached, this would cover for code 814.450 county incidentals. A few examples would be haircuts, car seats, extracurricular activities once state funds have been exhausted, assessments not covered by the child's medical insurance but included as part of a court-ordered case plan, broken eyeglasses, mileage reimbursement to a foster parent after taking a child to multiple specialist appointments, etc.

**\$2,000.00** to assist with rent, utility bills, counseling, assessments, transportation to medical appointments and other needs of families that we work with in our investigations and family preservation cases where children remain in the homes and do not become foster children. Often, we can keep families intact if we have the resources to get them back on their feet. We work with these families to develop a budget so that the assistance from us is a one-time occurrence and they can continue to cover expenses themselves.

**\$2,000.00** to provide training and support to Lumpkin County foster parents. As children enter foster care, it is imperative to maintain a connection to their community by keeping the children in Lumpkin County. These funds would help support existing foster parents and for foster parent recruitment. We currently have 7 foster families within the

county and their homes are full. Part of this funding would also be utilized to recruit adoptive parents in Lumpkin County and elsewhere within the State for children where reunification is no longer viable. We currently have 12 children on a path to be adopted. These funds would assist in recruiting and providing additional support for children with no identified resource.

**\$3,000.00** for a combination of additional support as follows: additional support around Christmas for older youth; community engagement sponsor events for county specific needs and community education; and, to provide training and additional support to Lumpkin Co staff serving the community. The current turnover due to caseload sizes and on-call duties remains high. There is a need to increase retention and morale to front-line staff to in turn provide quicker and better services to the community.

The total amount requested is **\$22,000.00**.

These funds will continue to be overseen by the 5-member County Commission appointed Family and Children Services Board with monthly updates to the Board.

Additionally, the Lumpkin County Board of Family and Children Services asks for approval to administer any remaining prior year fund balances in a prudent manner and within the guidelines and authorities already established for the Director and the Board in order to support Lumpkin County families and children as well as continue to maintain and increase professionalism of the Agency and staff in the community with the same obligation to report those expenditures to the Board of Commissioners.

Please let me know if additional information is needed to support this request. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this budget proposal.

Respectfully,

 Recoverable Signature

X Mariela Perez

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Mariela Perez

County Director

Signed by: 9de2cf1c-7639-4b00-974b-30da8304e4ac

Mariela Perez, Lumpkin County Director

Department of Family and Children Services