



## Foster Care and Initial Health Assessments

Effective **July 1, 2021**, children/youth placed in foster care, including those in direct placement foster care and those in the care of Voluntary Foster Care Agencies (VFCAs) statewide, will be mandatorily enrolled in Medicaid Managed Care unless they are otherwise exempt or excluded from enrollment. As such, these individuals may present Healthfirst insurance.

### Role of 29-I Health Facilities & Local Department of Social Services

29-I Health Facilities	Local Department of Social Services (LDSS)
A Voluntary Foster Care Agency (VFCA) that has received an Article 29-I license by the Department of Health to provide limited health-related services to children in foster care.	A department in the State of New York that provides and administers a full range of publicly funded programs.
The 29-I License enables facilities to provide Core Limited Health-Related Services (CLHRS) and Other Limited Health-Related Services (OLHRS).	

### Foster Care Population Profile and Attributes

Children/youth often enter foster care without having had access to traditional preventive healthcare services. As a result, they require an increase in the frequency of their health monitoring. The impact of the trauma they have experienced is profound. It is essential that they have immediate access to services upon placement in foster care, as well as no interruption in the provision of ongoing service.

Access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare is essential to children/youth placed in foster care. The occurrence of birth defects, developmental delays, mental/behavioral health needs, and physical disabilities is higher in these children than in children/youth from similar socioeconomic backgrounds outside of the foster care system.

## Foster Care Initial Health Service Activities

Initial health service activities must be completed within 60 days of foster care placement. The 29-I Health Facilities and Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) are responsible for facilitating the completion of these activities within the State mandated timeframes. Providers should be aware of the access timeframes and partner with the 29-I Health Facilities and LDSS to complete the health service activities within the mandated timeframes.

### Initial health service activities include the following:

- An immediate screening of the child’s medical condition, including assessment for child abuse/neglect.
- A comprehensive health evaluation that shall include all elements of EPSDT (as required by Medicaid) and shall be completed within 30 days of entering care in conjunction with the comprehensive health evaluation. The EPSDT screening shall include federally mandated aspects related to the following:
  - Comprehensive health and developmental history, including physical exam, immunizations, laboratory tests (including lead toxicity screening), and health education
  - Hearing
  - Dental, including ongoing preventive and restorative care
  - Mental Health/SUD
  - Vision
  - Follow-up health evaluation and treatments that incorporate information from the five initial assessments
  - Ongoing efforts to obtain child’s existing medical records and document medical activities

## Timeframes for Completion of Initial Health Services

The table below outlines the timeframes for initial health activities to be completed within 60 days of foster care placement. An “X” in the Mandated Activity and/or Mandated Timeframe column indicates that the activity is required within the indicated timeframe. An “R” indicates that the activity is required by the Office for Children and Family Services.

Providers need to partner with the 29-I Health Facilities and LDSS to complete the health service activities within the mandated timeframes included below.

# Provider Alert

Initial Health Services				
Timeframe	Activity	Mandated Activity	Mandated Timeframe	Who Performs
24 Hours	Immediate medical screening, including an assessment for abuse/neglect	X	X	Health practitioner (preferred) or Child Welfare caseworker/health staff
5 Days	HIV risk assessment for children under the age of 13	X	X	Child Welfare caseworker or designated staff
10 Days	Request consent for release of medical records and treatment	X	X	Child Welfare caseworker or health staff
30 Days	Initial medical assessment	X	X	Health practitioner
30 Days	Initial dental assessment	X	X	Health practitioner
30 Days	Initial mental health assessment	X	R	Mental health practitioner
30 days	Family Planning Education & Counseling and follow-up healthcare for youth age 12 and older (or younger, as appropriate)	X	X	Health practitioner
45 Days	Initial developmental assessment	X	R	Health practitioner
45 Days	Initial substance abuse assessment	R	R	Health practitioner
60 Days	Follow-up health evaluation	R	R	Health practitioner

## Questions?

Call Provider Services at **1-888-801-1660**, Monday to Friday, 8:30am–5:30pm.

**Reference: Transition of Children Placed in Foster Care and NYS Public Health Law Article 29-I Health Facility Services into Medicaid Managed Care**