

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Resolution to appropriate the Virginia Department of Social Services Family Assistance Management (F.A.M.) grant in the amount of \$125,754.06 (2nd reading)
Staff Contact(s):	Taylor Harvey-Ryan, Grants Program Manager
Presenter:	Misty Graves, Director of Human Services, Charlsie Stratton, Deputy Director Human Services Department
Date of Proposed Action:	February 2, 2026

Issue

- Appropriate funding from the Virginia Department of Social Services in the amount of \$125,754.06
- Execute the MOA between the Virginia Department of Social Services and the City of Charlottesville

Background / Rule

The City of Charlottesville, was notified that it had received a grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia through the Virginia Department of Social Services' Family Assistance Management (F.A.M.) program to support the Community Attention Foster Families program operated by the City's Department of Human Services.

Analysis

The Community Attention Foster Families (CAFF) /Department of Human Services was awarded the F.A.M. grant to support the recruitment and hiring of a dedicated staff member specializing in family finding. This position will enhance our efforts to identify and support kinship families for youth within our catchment area and surrounding communities. t Now mission and serve children in their care more effectively. In our current collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS) in Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and Greene County, we have a total of 123 children enrolled in the program. The collaboration has approved 74 resource families, with 38 children placed in resource family homes. Additionally, there are 85 children in the program living in relative or kinship homes. Of these, 32 children are in kinship homes through Albemarle County DSS, 47 children are in kinship homes through Charlottesville DSS, and 6 children are in kinship homes through Greene County DSS.As we navigate additional partnership with Fluvanna County DSS we have learned that they currently have 19 children experiencing foster care with 4 youth in independent living, 1 child in residential care, 2 children in kinship care, 3 children on trial home visits and 9 youth in resource family/TFC/LCPA homes. Fluvanna has a total of 14 resource families that they have approved and monitor.

Community Attention Foster Families (CAFF) brings over 20 years of experience in evaluating and implementing child welfare programs across our region. Throughout this time, our agency has adapted and evolved our programming to meet the changing needs of children and families, consistently providing responsive and effective support to our partner LDSS offices. Across its various iterations, CAFF has remained grounded in evidence-based practices and informed by local data. Our approach has always prioritized keeping youth connected to their communities, recognizing that these connections lead to better long-term outcomes for children and their families. In 2009, CAFF launched

the Fostering Local initiative—an intentional effort to recruit foster families within our communities and ensure that youth in foster care maintain relationships with familiar, trusted adults and remain in environments that support their well-being. This initiative also encompasses training, approval, and ongoing support for kinship caregivers. As a result of this longstanding work, our partner localities now lead the state in the percentage of youth placed with kinship families. Together, we continue to look ahead, identifying innovative ways to expand services and strengthen supports for families, always with the goal of keeping children safe, connected, and close to home.

We will utilize these grant funds to enhance existing services with a specific emphasis on family finding for both new and ongoing cases. The funding will allow CAFF to hire a dedicated staff member specializing in Family Finding to support the Charlottesville, Albemarle, Greene, and Fluvanna Departments of Social Services. This individual will undergo specialized training in the Family Finding model and will work closely with each local Department of Social Services (LDSS). They will engage with cases as early as possible to identify potential relative caregiver placement options. The funds will be allocated for salary, travel, individual and community training, office supplies and furniture, computer and cell phone procurement, as well as advertising, marketing materials, and administrative fees.

We will use the grant funds to expand existing services by placing a targeted focus on family finding for both new and ongoing cases. Specifically, the funding will enable CAFF to hire a dedicated staff member specializing in Family Finding to serve Charlottesville, Albemarle, Greene, and Fluvanna Departments of Social Services. This individual will receive specialized training in the Family Finding model and will collaborate closely with each LDSS, engaging as early as possible in each case to identify potential relative caregiver placement options. In instances where kinship placement is not immediately available, and a child must enter a resource family home, the Family Finding staff member will maintain ongoing involvement—persistently revisiting and re-engaging the family finding process throughout the life of the case. This continuous effort ensures that kinship and relative placement options remain a top priority, aligning with the VDSS Kin First Now mission and reinforcing our commitment to keeping children connected to family whenever possible.

CAFF will recruit and hire a Family Finding staff member through the City of Charlottesville's Human Services Department. Given that this position will support multiple LDSS partners, we will leverage their networks and outreach capabilities to ensure a broad and competitive applicant pool, allowing us to identify and hire the most qualified candidate. Grant funding will ensure that the selected staff member receives training in the most current and effective Family Finding practices. In addition, they will complete all standard training required of Human Services/CAFF employees, including but not limited to Trauma-Informed Care and Mental Health First Aid. The staff member will receive regular supervision from a CAFF Program Director, with ongoing evaluation of their effectiveness conducted through scheduled supervision sessions, monthly coordination meetings with partner LDSSs, and quarterly checkins aligned with grant reporting requirements and data collection benchmarks.

With support from this grant, CAFF will be able to allocate resources toward enhancing our community visibility through expanded branding and outreach efforts. This will include the development of promotional materials such as car magnets, flyers, signage, and potentially a billboard. Strengthening our marketing presence will support targeted recruitment of non-relative foster families—providing additional placement options for our partner LDSSs when kinship caregivers are not immediately available. In addition to recruitment, grant funding will allow CAFF to offer a wider range of relevant training opportunities for non-relative caregivers, equipping them with tools to better support the youth in their homes. These trainings include, but are not limited to, Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) and

Compassionate Caregiving, with a specific focus on supporting neurodivergent youth. Importantly, this funding will allow CAFF to expand access to TBRI training beyond our internal staff to include foster families across our partner localities. Furthermore, the grant will enable us to train and certify a staff member as a TBRI trainer, ensuring our ability to offer ongoing, sustainable TBRI training to families within our current LDSS partnerships and additional localities, including Fluvanna.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to the City of Charlottesville.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the appropriation of the grant funds from the Virginia Department of Social Services and the execution of the Memorandum of Agreement by the City Manager.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

I move to approve the resolution appropriating the \$125,754.06 from the Virginia Department of Social Services to support the Community Attention Foster Families program.

I move to approve the City Manager or designee execute the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Charlottesville and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Attachments

1. RESOLUTION_\$125,754.06 FAM Grant