

## Who Determines Eligibility?

DCF administers the Adoption Assistance program. Determination of eligibility and negotiation of the amount and type of assistance is the responsibility of local DCF service center staff.

## Is There an Annual Review?

The DCF office will send an annual review to the adoptive parents for completion. The review is due back to DCF within 30 days of receipt by the adoptive parents.

An annual review will determine if the family continues to be legally or financially responsible for the child. It is not a re-determination of the original eligibility for adoption assistance.

## Can the Adoption Assistance Be Renegotiated?

The adoptive family or DCF may request a renegotiation of the agreement if there are significant changes in the circumstances of the child or if the child has a special need that cannot be met through the monthly subsidy payment, family or community resources, or KanCare.

## When Does the Adoption Assistance End?

Adoption Assistance ends when one of the following is met:

- The family is no longer legally responsible for the child.
- The family is no longer supporting the child.
- The child turns 18 and there is no documentation indicating the youth is still in high school.
- The young adult turns 21 and was approved based on a documented physical or mental condition.

## Where Can I Get More Information?

For more information about adoption assistance or other DCF services:

- call toll free 1-888-369-4777
- visit [www.dcf.ks.gov](http://www.dcf.ks.gov)
- or contact your local DCF service center and ask to speak to the Regional Adoption Assistance Specialist.

# Adoption Assistance



A Resource for  
Families Adopting  
Children with Special  
Needs



*Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas*

## What is Adoption Assistance?

Adoption assistance is available to families adopting children with special service, support and/or resource needs.

## What Type of Help is Available?

A child may qualify for any or all of the following types of assistance:

### **Non-recurring Adoption Expenses:**

This is a reimbursement of up to \$2,000 for expenses directly related to the process of adopting a child with special needs, such as attorney fees and pre-placement visits. Payment is issued upon finalization.

### **Medical Services:**

Children who qualify, may receive health care coverage through the state/federal health insurance program, Title XIX (KanCare).

### **Monthly Adoption Subsidy Payment:**

Children may be determined eligible for a monthly subsidy payment. Adoption subsidies are based on a child's needs and family's community resources and support services.

### **Special Service Payments:**

A special service payment may be authorized on a time-limited or one-time only basis if the child has a specific need that cannot be met through KanCare, the monthly cash subsidy payment or other resources.

## How Does a Child Qualify for Assistance?

- The child must be legally free for adoption and placed in the custody of the Secretary of the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) or a private licensed child placing agency.
- A court order must be in place indicating it is not in the best interest of the child to be returned to the parents.
- The court order must establish that reasonable efforts were made to place the child without assistance.
- The child must have one or more specific factors or conditions:
  - physical disability
  - developmental disability
  - behavioral or emotional disability
  - guarded prognosis (currently not being treated for one of the above conditions, but could be in the future)
  - age 12 or older
  - member of a sibling group placed together.

## How is the Amount and Type of Adoption Assistance Determined?

The amount and type of assistance varies from family to family, and is determined through negotiation between the adoptive family and DCF. Not all special needs children require a monthly cash subsidy payment, but consideration is given based on the special needs of the child, family resources, expenses covered by KanCare and private insurance, and any other available resources.

## Will Adoption Assistance Cover All the Child's Needs?

Adoption assistance is intended to give support to the adoptive family to meet the special needs of the child. It is a general expectation that families pursuing adoption have determined they have the financial means to meet the day-to-day expenses of raising a child.

## When will Adoption Assistance Begin?

Adoption assistance shall begin when an Adoption Assistance Agreement is signed by DCF and the adoptive parents. Adoption Assistance Agreements must be signed before the adoption is finalized. Upon signing the Adoption Placement Agreement between the Child Welfare Case Management Provider and the adoptive parents, foster care payments will end.

## How Long will the Adoption Assistance Stay in Effect?

The Adoption Assistance Agreement is a legally binding contract that may remain in effect until the child reaches 18, unless a shorter time is determined and agreed to by the adoptive parents and DCF.

A youth may continue to be eligible if he/she is attending high school beyond 18, and dependent upon his/her parents for support, and may continue up to 21 if the child has a documented physical or mental condition that warrants continued assistance. KanCare coverage may be affected if the adoptive family moves out of state.