

INTERSTATE COMPACT ON ADOPTION AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

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ARTICLE I. FINDINGS

The states which are parties to this Compact find that:

- A. In order to obtain adoptive families for children with special needs, states must assure prospective adoptive parents of substantial assistance (usually on a continuing basis) in meeting the high costs of supporting and providing for the special needs and the services required by such children.
- B. The states have a fundamental interest in promoting adoption for children with special needs because the care, emotional stability, and general support and encouragement required by such children can be best, and often only, obtained in family homes with a normal parent-child relationship.
- C. The states obtain fiscal advantages from providing adoption assistance because the alternative is for the states to bear the higher cost of meeting all the needs of children while in foster care.
- D. The necessary assurances of adoption assistance for children with special needs, in those instances where children and adoptive parents live in states other than the one undertaking to provide the assistance, include the establishment and maintenance of suitable substantive guarantees and workable procedures for interstate cooperation and payments to assist with the necessary costs of child maintenance, the procurement of services, and the provision of medical assistance.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSES

The purposes of this Compact are to:

- A. Strengthen protections for the interests of children with special needs on behalf of whom adoption assistance is committed to be paid, when such children are in or move to states other than the one committed to provide adoption assistance.
- B. Provide substantive assurances and operating procedures which will promote the delivery of medical and other services to children on an interstate basis through programs of adoption assistance established by the laws of the states which are parties to this Compact.

ARTICLE III. DEFINITIONS

As used in this Compact, unless the context clearly requires a different construction:

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- A. "Child with special needs" means a minor who has not yet attained the age at which the state normally discontinues children's services, or a child who has not yet reached the age of 21 where the state determines that the child's mental or physical handicaps warrant the continuation of assistance beyond the age of majority, for whom the state has determined the following:
- 1 That the child cannot or should not be returned to the home of his or her parents;
 - 2 That there exists with respect to the child a specific factor or condition (such as his ethnic background, age, or membership in a minority or sibling group, or the presence of factors such as medical condition or physical, mental, or emotional handicaps) because of which it is reasonable to conclude that such child cannot be placed with adoptive parents without providing adoption assistance;
 - 3 That, except where it would be against the best interests of the child because of such factors as the existence of significant emotional ties with prospective adoptive parents while in their care as a foster child, a reasonable but unsuccessful effort has been made to place the child with appropriate adoptive parents without providing adoption assistance.
- B. "Adoption assistance" means the payment or payments for the maintenance of a child which are made or committed to be made pursuant to the adoption assistance program established by the laws of a party state.
- C. "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or a Territory or Possession of the United States.
- D. "Adoption assistance state" means the state that is signatory to an adoption assistance agreement in a particular case.
- E. "Residence state" means the state in which the child is a resident by virtue of the residence of the adoptive parents.
- F. "Parents" means either the singular or plural of the word "parent".

ARTICLE IV. ADOPTION ASSISTANCE

- A. Each state shall determine the amounts of adoption assistance and other aid which it will give to children with special needs and their adoptive parents in accordance with its own laws and programs. The adoption assistance and other aid may be made subject to periodic reevaluation of eligibility by the adoption assistance state in accordance with its laws.
- B. The adoption assistance, medical assistance, and other services and benefits to which this Compact applies are those provided to children with special needs and their adoptive parents from the effective date of the adoption assistance agreement.

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- C. Every case of adoption assistance shall include a written adoption assistance agreement between the adoptive parents and the appropriate agency of the state undertaking to provide the adoption assistance. Every such agreement shall contain provisions for the fixing of actual or potential interstate aspects of the assistance so provided as follows:
1. An express commitment that the assistance so provided shall be payable without regard for the state of residence of the adoptive parents, both at the outset of the agreement period and at all times during its continuance;
 2. A provision setting forth with particularity the types of care and services toward which the adoption assistance state will make payments;
 3. A commitment to make medical assistance available to the child in accordance with Article V of this Compact;
 4. An express declaration that the agreement is for the benefit of the child, the adoptive parents and the state and that it is enforceable by any or all of them; and
 5. The date or dates upon which each payment or other benefit provided thereunder is to commence, but in no event prior to the effective date of the adoption assistance agreement.
- D. Any services or benefits provided for a child by the residence state and the adoption assistance state may be facilitated by the party states on each other's behalf. To this end, the personnel of the child welfare agencies of the party states will assist each other, as well as the beneficiaries of adoption assistance agreements, in assuring prompt and full access to all benefits expressly included in such agreements. It is further recognized and agreed that, in general, all children to whom adoption assistance agreements apply will be eligible for benefits under the child welfare, education, rehabilitation, mental health, and other programs of their state of residence on the same basis as other resident children.
- E. Adoption assistance payments on behalf of a child in another state shall be made on the same basis and in the same amounts as they would be made if the child were living in the state making the payments, except that the laws of the adoption assistance state may provide for the payment of higher amounts.

ARTICLE V. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- A. Children, for whom a party state is committed, in accordance with the terms of an adoption assistance agreement to provide federally aided medical assistance under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, are eligible for such medical assistance during the entire period for which the agreement is in effect. Upon application therefore, the adoptive parents of a child who is the subject of such an adoption assistance agreement shall receive a medical assistance identification document made out in the child's name. The identification shall be issued by the medical assistance program of the

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- residence state and shall entitle the child to the same benefits pursuant to the same procedures, as any other child who is covered by the medical assistance program in the state, whether or not the adoptive parents are themselves eligible for medical assistance.
- B. The identification document shall bear no indication that an adoption assistance agreement with another state is the basis for its issuance. However, if the identification is issued pursuant to such an adoption assistance agreement, the records of the issuing state and the adoption assistance state shall show the fact, and shall contain a copy of the adoption assistance agreement and any amendment or replacement thereof, as well as all other pertinent information. The adoption assistance and medical assistance programs of the adoption assistance state shall be notified of the issuance of such identification.
- C. A state which has issued a medical assistance identification document pursuant to this Compact, which identification is valid and currently in force, shall accept, process and pay medical assistance claims thereon as it would with any other medical assistance claims by eligible residents.
- D. The federally aided medical assistance provided by a party state pursuant to this Compact shall be in accordance with paragraphs (a) through (c) of this Article. In addition, when a child who is covered by an adoption assistance agreement is living in another party state, payment or reimbursement for any medical services and benefits specified under the terms of the adoption assistance agreement, which are not available to the child under the Title XIX medical assistance program of the residence state, shall be made by the adoption assistance state as required by its law. Any payments so provided shall be of the same kind and at the same rates as provided for children who are living in the adoption assistance state. However, where the payment rate authorized for a covered service under the medical assistance program of the adoption assistance state exceeds the rate authorized by the residence state for that service, the adoption assistance state shall not be required to pay the additional amounts for the services or benefits covered by the residence state.
- E. A child referred to in paragraph (a) of this Article, whose residence is changed from one party state to another party state shall be eligible for federally aided medical assistance under the medical assistance program of the new state of residence.

ARTICLE VI. COMPACT ADMINISTRATION

- A. In accordance with its own laws and procedures, each state which is a party to this Compact shall designate a Compact Administrator and such Deputy Compact Administrators as it deems necessary. The Compact Administrator shall coordinate all activities under this Compact within his or her state. The Compact Administrator shall also be the principal contact for officials and agencies within and without the state for the facilitation of interstate relations involving this Compact and the protection of benefits and services provided

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pursuant thereto. In this capacity, the Compact Administrator will be responsible for assisting child welfare agency personnel from other party states and adoptive families receiving adoption and medical assistance on an interstate basis.

- B. Acting jointly, the Compact Administrators shall develop uniform forms and administrative procedures for the interstate monitoring and delivery of adoption and medical assistance benefits and services pursuant to this Compact. The forms and procedures so developed may deal with such matters as:
 - 1. Documentation of continuing adoption assistance eligibility;
 - 2. Interstate payments and reimbursements; and
 - 3. Any and all other matters arising pursuant to this Compact.

- C.
 - 1. Some or all of the parties to this Compact may enter into supplementary agreements for the provision of or payment for additional medical benefits and services, as provided in Article V(d); for interstate service delivery, pursuant to Article IV(d); or for matters related thereto. Such agreements shall not be inconsistent with this Compact, nor shall they relieve the party states of any obligation to provide adoption and medical assistance in accordance with applicable state and federal law and the terms of this Compact.
 - 2. Administrative procedures or forms implementing the supplementary agreements referred to in paragraph (c) (1) of this Article may be developed by joint action of the Compact Administrators of those states which are party to such supplementary agreements.

- D. It shall be the responsibility of the Compact administrator to ascertain whether and to what extent additional legislation may be necessary in his or her own state to carry out the provisions of this Article IV or any supplementary agreements pursuant to this Compact.

ARTICLE VII. JOINDER AND WITHDRAWAL

- A. This Compact shall be open to joinder by any state. It shall enter into force as to a state when its duly constituted and empowered authority has executed it.
- B. In order that the provisions of this Compact may be accessible to and known by the general public, and so that they may be implemented as law in each of the party states, the authority which has executed the Compact in each party state shall cause the full text of the Compact and notice of its execution to be published in his or her state. The executing authority in any party state shall also provide copies of the Compact upon request.
- C. Withdrawal from this Compact shall be by written notice, sent by the authority which executed it, to the appropriate officials of all other party states, but no such notice shall take effect until one year after it is given in accordance with the requirements of this paragraph.

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- D. All adoption assistance agreements outstanding and to which a party state is a signatory at the time when its withdrawal from this Compact takes effect shall continue to have the effects given to them pursuant to this Compact until they expire or are terminated in accordance with their provisions. Until such expiration or termination, all beneficiaries of the agreements involved shall continue to have all rights and obligations conferred or imposed by this Compact, and the withdrawing state shall continue to administer the Compact to the extent necessary to accord and implement fully the rights and protections preserved hereby.

ARTICLE VIII. CONSTRUCTION AND SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this Compact shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes thereof. The provisions of this Compact shall be severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, or provision of this Compact is declared to be contrary to the Constitution of the United States or of any party state, or where the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person, or circumstance is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of this Compact and the applicability thereof to any government, agency, person or circumstance shall not be affected thereby. If this Compact shall be held contrary to the Constitution of any state party thereto, the Compact shall remain in full force and effect as to the remaining states and in full force and effect as to the state affected as to all severable matters.