

Lois A. Day

Authorized Signature
Number: CW_IM_09_023

Issue Date: 10/15/09

Topic: Adoptions

Changes in the Adoption and Guardianship Program as a result of Rate
Subject: Redesign

Applies to (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | All DHS employees | <input type="checkbox"/> | County Mental Health Directors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Area Agencies on Aging | <input type="checkbox"/> | Health Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Children, Adults and Families | <input type="checkbox"/> | Seniors and People with Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | County DD Program Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify): |

Message: Notification to CAF field staff of changes in the adoption and guardianship program as impacted by Rate Redesign

The implementation of rate redesign as of September 1st 2009 is resulting in concurrent changes in the adoption and guardianship programs. A letter has been sent out to all adoptive families and guardians notifying them of the changes (a copy was sent to field, too). The revised foster care rates are expected to result in requests for renegotiations of current adoption assistance and assisted guardianship subsidies. Our office currently handles a caseload of approximately 11,000 such cases.

The program has added four additional adoption assistance coordinators through a work rotation to handle this increased workload. As of 9/1/09 the distribution of work in the program is alphabetically divided as follows:

Adoption Assistance Cases with family surnames ending in:

- A through C will be handled by Chris Mulligan at 503-945-6729
- D through H will be handled by Scott Wickline at 503-947-5311
- I through M will be handled by Lori Harris at 503-945-6632
- N through R will be handled by Cathy Reeves at 503-945-5685
- S through Z will be handled by Gayle Bien at 503-947-5370

Support staff on adoption assistance cases are:

- Kathy Hook at 503-945-6631 (A through F)
- Courtney Nichols at 503-947-5092 (G through M)
- Karen Cremer at 503-945-6642 (N through Z)

Guardianship cases will be handled by Bonnie Klohs at 503-947-5371
Guardianship support staff -Sue Bakke at 503-947-5312

For guidance in current policy and practice please reference the temporary rules that are currently in existence on the DHS website that relate to Adoption Assistance and Guardianship Assistance:

http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/cross_index.htm

Rules: I-G.3.1 and I-E.3.6.2. Permanent rule changes are forthcoming.

Adoption Assistance and Subsidized Guardianship

Federal regulations stipulate that adoption assistance and guardianship assistance payments are based on negotiations with the family around the ordinary and special needs of the child and the ability of the family to meet **the child's needs**. There is **no standardized** amount of assistance provided to families. Adoption Assistance and Guardianship Assistance are not continuations of the Foster Care Program. The payments are intended to combine with the adoptive or guardian family's own resources.

Negotiations may range from \$0 to the payment that the child would receive if they were currently in foster care for both programs.

Payments can never be more than what a child would receive if currently placed in foster care. Usually payments will not match the foster care rate as foster parents are paid agents of the state and are paid for the time they spend meeting the needs of the child. Adoptive parents and guardians become the primary financial resource for the child supplemented by assistance from subsidy and community resources.

The adoption assistance ceiling for children placed out of state is determined by the foster care rate for the child in the new state of residency.

Any requests for renegotiations of subsidies follow the same guidelines.

As of 9/1/09 all subsidy negotiations will take into account the Base Rate the child was receiving in foster care and, if applicable, the CANS Enhanced Supervision rate. Children qualifying for CANS enhanced rates will have that dollar amount added to the negotiated adoption assistance and guardianship assistance payment.

Pursuant to federal regulations, Personal Care payments will no longer be factored into the subsidy calculation and there is no payment for respite services.

Renegotiations:

For existing adoption assistance and guardianship payments there will be no automatic increases in subsidy, however adoptive parents and guardians may request renegotiations of the subsidies that their children are currently receiving.

Families with children whose behaviors or needs have increased in severity may request a CANS assessment for their child, the results of which will be factored into the negotiations. This is true for out of state families too, who will have to undertake the CANS assessment by via a telephonic assessment.

Families requesting renegotiations of adoption assistance and guardianship assistance will be sent a form from Central Office to complete and submit to the Central Office Adoption and Guardianship Program. They will also be sent a CANS form to complete and return to their coordinators at Central Office if they are requesting a CANS assessment. The CANS form will request the same information that will be expected for foster children, re. determining the need for a CANS and a description of the child's current behavioral supervision issues.

Effective September 1, 2009, any changes made in the subsidy amount will become effective on the 1st of the month in which the completed form was received by the program office. All applications date stamped as arriving in the Central Office Adoption and Guardianship Program prior to September 1st 2009 will be processed as per rules and practices at that time. All those arriving on or after September 1st 2009 will be processed according to the new rules utilizing the CANS screening.

If you have any questions about this information, contact:

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