



Adoption Promotion Program Fund

May 10, 2017

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Program Guidelines

Yearly Dear County Director Letter September 2016

<https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/dss/dcdl/2016.htm>

Webinar

<https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/8623924172901290242>



Statewide Adoption Meeting

Discuss and brainstorm ideas for the implementation of the Adoption Promotion Program moving forward that will serve children and families most effectively while meeting the goals and requirements of the Adoption Promotion Program Fund.



Focus of Statewide Meeting

1. Brainstorming regarding **General** overall program improvements. (broad)
2. Brainstorming regarding improvements to the Adoption Services Agreement (ASA) **facilitation and negotiation process.**
3. Brainstorming regarding changes to the **division of services and/or fund sharing** between Private Agencies and County DSS's



Results of Small Group/Individual Feedback

Top Identified Priorities

ASA Negotiation/Facilitation Process

- Improve negotiation guidance & start negotiation of service agreement early.

ASA Division of Services and/or Fund Sharing

- Change percentages / breakdown & clarify services

General Program Improvements

- Clear guidelines on use of funds



Use of Adoption Promotion Funds



Examples Provided in the Dear County Director Letter (9-2016)

- Contracting with out-of-state agencies that are providing an adoptive family for a child.
- Facilitation of cross jurisdictional placements.
- Activities surrounding the recruitment, training, preparation, assessment and retention of adoptive parents.
- Completion of Pre-Placement Assessments. (Contracting for services)
- Services provided to the child and family to sustain the adoptive placement prior to finalization.
- Adoption preparation activities for youth. Some examples include: Adoption workshops, Adoption preparation camps such as Under One Sky, identify and utilize resources to assist the child in understanding their biological and cultural heritage, etc.
- Targeted child specific recruitment activities. Some examples include: Having professional photos taken for their NC Kids registration, creating an internal Gallery of waiting children, coordinating matching events, purchasing child specific recruitment materials.
- Create or update an adoption resource library.
- Purchase a billboard or banners to display the need for adoptive families in your community.
- Legal services to expedite the adoption process. (Contracting for services)
- Specialized assessments and subsequent recommended services for a child that would assist in locating and/or sustaining an identified adoptive placement. These services shall not be covered by any other funding source or medical insurance program such as Medicaid or private insurance.
- Social worker travel associated with the recruitment, assessment and training of adoptive parents, as well as post placement support.
- Local and national adoption conferences to enhance skills of adoption staff and adoptive families.



Things to Remember When Using Funds



Funds received from the Adoption Promotion Program are to be used to enhance and/or expand your *adoption* program. Agencies should be reminded when planning activities, that these funds should not be treated as recurring. Funding amounts are not guaranteed from year to year and are dispersed on a first come, first served basis.

When considering use of the funds, please remember the following:

1. Funds cannot be used to supplant the salaries of county workers.
2. Funds cannot be used to purchase automobiles for the county.
3. Funds should not be used when there are other means to pay for the item or service in question. (Ex. Non-recurring Adoption Fees should be utilized to reimburse families for court filing fees, legal fees, purchasing new birth certificates after finalization, etc., prior to using Adoption Promotion Funds. Ex. If Medicaid or other insurance is available to pay for a service, it should be utilized first.)
4. If funds are to be used in regards to purchasing a direct service or item for a specific adoptive family and child, the agency needs to consider how purchasing that service or item is going to successfully achieve moving that adoption forward or ensuring that the adoptive placement is maintained through finalization. Use of funds for a specific adoptive family and child should only be considered when the overall goal of the item or service is to move the adoption forward and/or ensure that the adoptive placement is going to remain intact through finalization because of the purchase of that item. A good question to ask yourself is, “If this item/service is not provided, will this adoptive placement be maintained through final decree?”

(What may be an appropriate use of funds for one child, may not be for another. These should be considered on a case by case basis, much like Vendor Payment requests.)



A Few Additional Examples

- Adoption Conference – target audience adoptive, foster/adoptive families, adoption staff, GALs, etc.
- Lifebooks / Adoption Journey books (Shutterfly type) for adoptive children. (This was done as an activity with the children in a group – they got to select pictures for their book.)
- Youth Conferences targeted towards youth who are cleared for adoption (topics include adoption readiness, independent living, youth who are struggling with concept of adoption, etc.)
- Recruitment video to use at events/orientation, etc.
- Cinema Ads identifying need for adoptive families.



Next Steps Following Statewide Feedback

Establish an Adoption Promotion Program Small Workgroup

Consist of representatives from DSS, private partners (Benchmarks and non-Benchmarks) and Division staff.

May – September

- Review feedback from February and develop recommendations for change to the program in the short term (for FY 17/18).
- Develop a new Adoption Services Agreement (ASA) with improved mechanism for division of funds along with concrete directions for use.
- Provide recommendation for improvement to any other program specific forms or resources.

If these items are achieved, the group can look forward to longer term recommendations (for FY 18/19 and beyond).



Contact Information

Permanency Coordinator

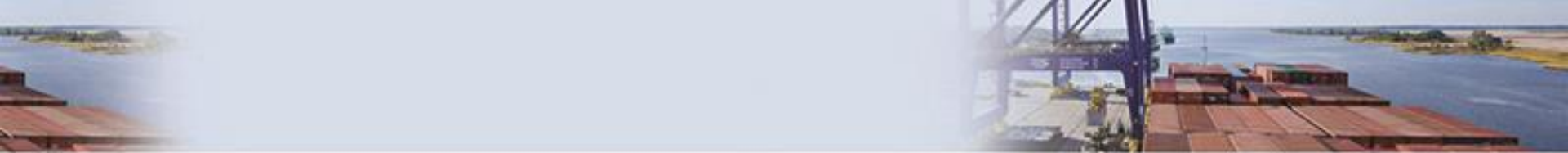
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Please forward the name and email address of your agency contact for the Adoption Promotion Program.





Thank you for all the work you do to
achieve permanence for North
Carolina's children!

