Post-Adoption – Questions and Answers

Answers to questions about the adoption support program, and resources that may be available to assist you in raising your child.

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Introduction

CONGRATULATIONS on your decision to adopt. By adopting, you have established an emotional, social and legal relationship with your child.

Raising a child can be challenging. In 1971, the Washington State Legislature passed the Adoption Support Demonstration Act to establish an Adoption Support Program to make adoptions possible for children with special needs. Later in 1980, the federal government passed the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980- PL 96-272, that provides federal funding for the adoption support program.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) provides adoption support services by entering into a contract with you prior to finalizing the adoption. This contract allows DCYF to provide post-adoption resources for medical coverage, counseling, selected evidence-based therapeutic

interventions and if agreed upon, a monthly cash payment to assist you in meeting the needs of your child.

This booklet will help you find answers to questions about the adoption support program and identify potential community resources that may be available to assist you in raising your child. Your adoption support program consultant is also available to answer questions regarding the program's resources.

Contents

Questions and Answers 2

Contacting Adoption Support Staff 2

The Adoption Support Agreement 3

Program Benefits 4

- Monthly Cash Payment 4
- Medical 6
- More Information about Medicaid: 7
- Dental Care 7
- ABCD – Dental care for babies and young children 7
- Getting Medications 7
- Eye Exams and Eyeglasses 7
- Mental Health Services 8
- Education 11
- Application Process 11
- Eligible Expenses 12
- Requirements and Continued Participation in the Program 12
- Adoption Finalization Costs 12
- Training 12

Additional Information 13

When Moving Out of State 14

Community Services/Supports 14

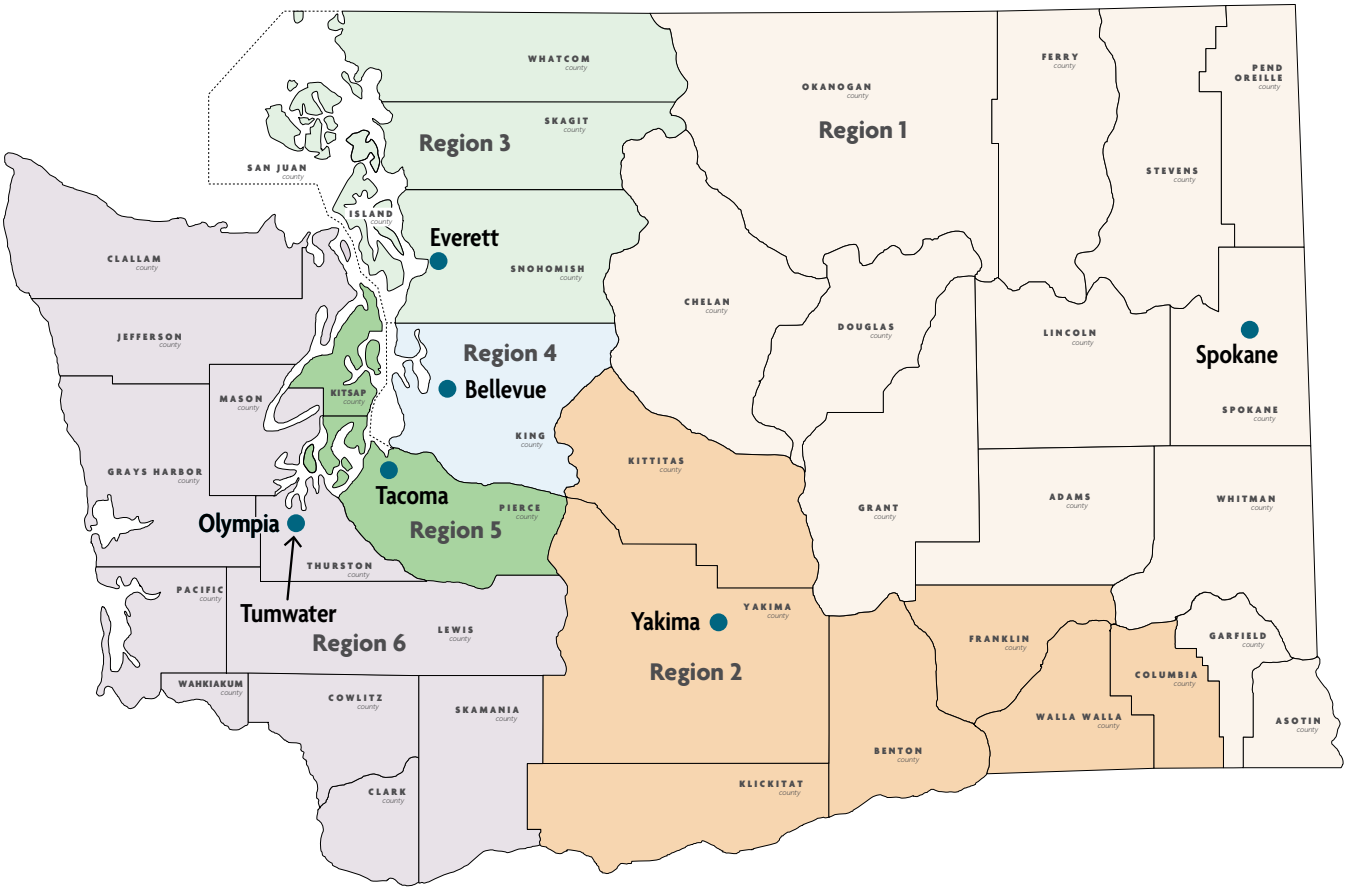
Online Resources 15

Questions and Answers

Contacting Adoption Support Staff

Q: Who should I contact when I have a question about my agreement or services?

A: Contact the person who negotiated your contract. If you do not know the person who negotiated your contract, dial 1-800-562-5682, listen carefully to the recorded message and follow the prompts. If you live outside the state of Washington, contact the consultant who assisted you with your initial agreement.



The Adoption Support Agreement

Q: What is the adoption support agreement?

A: The adoption support agreement is a legal contract between you and DCYF. The agreement identifies the terms and conditions that both you and the department must follow for participation in the adoption support program.

Q: When does the agreement become effective?

A: Unless otherwise stated in the agreement, the contract takes effect the date the adoption is finalized.

Q: What if the child I adopt is over the age of 13, does that make a difference in support?

A: If you adopt a child 13 years through 17 years, the child will be considered an independent person for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA). If you adopt a child over age 14 through age 17 years, the child maintains eligibility to apply for the College Bound Scholarship program. If you adopt a child over 16 years through 17 years, the child may be able to continue in the extended adoption support program until age 21 if they meet the following criteria:

- Participation in high school or high school equivalency certificate program/GED.
- Attending college or vocational school program, or has applied for and can demonstrate intention of timely enrollment in secondary education.
- Participating in a job training or activity that assists in removing barriers to employment.
- Engaged in employment for eighty hours or more per month.
- A youth is not able to engage in the above eligibility categories due to a documented medical condition.

In addition, youth in the extended adoption support program may be eligible for the Education and Training Voucher Program (ETV). More information on this topic is found in the Education Section.

Q: When does the agreement end?

A: The agreement ends when:

- The adoptive child reaches age 18 (unless the child is attending a full time education program working toward a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate/GED).
- Upon the death of parents or the child.
- You are no longer legally or financially responsible for the child.
- A child who was adopted between ages 16 through 17 no longer meets the requirements set forth in the extended adoption support agreement after age 18.

Q: Will I receive a notice regarding termination of the program before my child turns 18?

A: You may receive a notice advising you that the agreement will end on the child's 18th birthday. It is your responsibility to contact the adoption support program at least 90 days before your child's 18th birthday. Adoption support benefits will automatically stop on your child's 18th birthday unless the program hears from you.

Q: What if my child is 18 and is still a full time high school student or working full-time toward the completion of a high school equivalency certificate?

A: If this is the case, your child may remain on the program if, before the child turns 18, the parent requests that adoption support continue and a letter is received on school letterhead that states that the child is a full time student and provides an expected date of graduation.

Q: May I ask for a revision of my agreement?

A: Anytime there is a change in family circumstances or the child's condition, you may ask to revise the agreement by writing to your adoption support program consultant. Your consultant will advise you on the documentation you will need to submit regarding your child's special needs and the current circumstances of your family.

Q: What changes in circumstance require that I immediately notify the adoption support program consultant?

A: Notify the adoption support program consultant immediately when:

- The child is no longer living in your home.
- You are no longer legally responsible for the child.
- There is a change in your permanent address.
- The child or parent dies.
- There is a change in marital status of the parents.
- There is a change in legal or physical custody of the child.
- The child becomes eligible for another federal program i.e. Social Security benefits, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, Veteran's Administration benefits or Temporary Aid to Need Families (TANF).

Program Benefits

Monthly Cash Payment

Q: Does the adoption support program cover all the costs of raising my child?

A: As the parent(s), you are financially responsible for the needs of your child. The adoption support program should combine with your resources to assist you in meeting the ordinary and special needs of your child. The extent of support needed by you to help meet the needs of your child is determined through discussion and negotiation between you and the adoption support program consultant.

Q: What should I consider when negotiating the monthly cash payment?

A: When you begin to negotiate your child's support agreement, there are three factors that can be considered:

- The expenses that address the special needs of the child.
- The circumstances of the family.
- The legislative maximums allowed by RCW.

The needs of your child pertain to his or her special medical, physical or emotional needs. "Family circumstances" have been defined by the federal Children's Bureau as meaning a family's ability to incorporate a child's needs into the family circumstances. Income, debt, housing, transportation, space, family size, parental occupations, parental health needs, the needs of other family members and any number of other factors are considered. There is no set formula in determining monthly cash payments.

It is important to remember that the monthly cash payment may be changed through revision of the agreement, if your child's needs or family's circumstances change. The monthly cash payment is not negotiated based on anticipated problems.

The Washington State Legislature limited the amount of the monthly cash payment to the legislated maximum of the foster care maintenance expense that a child would receive if the child were to be in foster care. As a result, the negotiated amount may start at $0 and cannot exceed the legislative maximum. The legislative maximum is based on the age of the child at the time of adoption.

Q: How is the adoption support monthly cash payment determined?

A: The monthly cash payment is determined through a negotiation between the adoptive parents and the DCYF Adoption Support Consultant. The payment combines with the parents' resources to cover the ordinary and special needs of the child projected over an extended period of time and should not cover anticipated needs.

The agreement considers a variety of family specific factors:

- Size of the family.
- Usual living expenses.
- Special needs of any family member.
- Family income.
- Family resources and savings plans.
- Medical and hospitalization needs.
- Family's ability to purchase or receive care.
- Any other expenses needed by the child to be adopted.

It should be noted that consistency among families in the adoption support monthly cash payment is not the goal of the program. Families with the same income and similar circumstances will not necessarily agree on identical types or amounts of assistance. It is the uniqueness of each child/family situation that determines the monthly cash payment.

Information found: 42 U.S.C. § 673 (a), 42 U.S.C. § 673 (a) (3), Child Welfare Policy Manual 8.2D.4 (Q.1), WAC 110-80-0220 and RCW 74.13a.025.

Q: What benefits other than a monthly cash payment is provided through the adoption support program for each adopted child?

- Medical and dental benefits through Medicaid.
- Pre-authorized counseling assistance.
- Evidenced-based therapeutic interventions.
- Reimbursement up to $1500 per child for adoption expenses.

Medical

Q: What type of coverage does Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) provide for children on adoption support?

A: Apple Health (Medicaid) is provided at no cost and covers your child through:

- A program at Coordinated Care of Washington (CCW), called Apple Health Core Connections (AHCC), as primary insurance for both physical and behavioral health, or
- The following secondary insurance programs if you place your child on your personal health plan:
  - ProviderOne (fee for service) for physical health.
  - A Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) for Behavioral Health Services Only (BHSO) for behavioral health. In most regions, the assigned MCO will be Coordinated Care.

Q: What types of services are covered by Apple Health (Medicaid)?

A: The physical and behavioral health services listed below are covered by Apple Health for adoption support families:

- Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Behavioral Health
  - Inpatient
  - Outpatient
  - Wraparound with Intensive Services (WISe)
  - Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment
  - Psychiatric Services
  - Family Therapy
  - Parenting Interventions (Triple P, Incredible Years, PCIT, etc.)
- Dental
- Doctors/Providers
- Emergency Room
- EPSDT (Well-child checkups and preventative care for children up to age 21)
- Eyeglasses and Eye Exams
- Gender Affirming Medical Care
- Home Health Services
- Interpreter services for medical care
- Medical Equipment and Supplies
- Prescriptions
- Surgery
- Transportation (through regional brokers)

Some services have limitations. For more information, check with your medical provider or contact the Health Care Authority customer service center at 1-800-562-3022, extension 15480, or if your child is a member of CCW-AHCC contact 1-844-354-9876 or **AHCCTeam@coordinatedcarehealth.com**.

Q: How do I get medical services through Washington Apple Health/Medicaid?

A: Once the adoption has been finalized and you have updated your child's name with the Social Security Administration, you can contact the Foster Care Medical Team (FCMT) at 1-800-562-3022, ext. 15480 to request your child's updated ProviderOne coverage and card, or contact your Adoption Support Consultant.

In Washington, adoption support families may receive their coverage through the managed care plan through Coordinated Care of Washington, Apple Health Core Connections (CCW-AHCC). If your child is a member of CCW-AHCC, they will reach out to you via mail and phone, or you can contact CCW-AHCC directly at 1-844-354-9876 and **AHCCTeam@coordinatedcarehealth.com**.

Q: Why do I need a ProviderOne Services card?

A: This is your child's medical ID card, which confirms that your child is on medical assistance through Medicaid. If your child is covered by your personal insurance, this card ensures that you do not pay co-pays/deductibles (no out of pocket expenses) for Medicaid-covered services. If your child is insured through CCW-AHCC, the ProviderOne services card will be used for dental, eyeglasses and transportation.

Q: Does the card have an expiration date?

A: The ProviderOne card does not have an expiration date. It is not a guarantee of coverage, but is useful for keeping track of your child's ProviderOne number.

Q: What if there are mistakes on the ProviderOne Services card?

A: Check your child's card carefully to make sure everything on the card is correct. If anything on the card is wrong or needs to be changed, call your Adoption Support Program Consultant.

Q: What if I lose my child's ProviderOne Services card?

A: If you lose your card, call the FCTM at 1-800-562-3022, Ext. 15480 or the adoption support program consultant.

Q: Can my child receive private insurance and Washington Apple Health/Medicaid?

A: You are encouraged to enroll your child on your personal insurance. Your personal insurance is primary and Washington Apple Health/Medicaid is secondary. Please let the FCMT know if you have other health insurance. Call 1-800-562- 3022, ext. 15134. HCA will verify your primary insurance.

More Information about Medicaid:

Dental Care

Finding a dentist can be difficult. If you need help finding a dentist or transportation to the dentist, call the Medical Assistance helpline for a list of dentists in your area who take Washington Apple Health. If you are receiving services through CCW-AHCC, the program will assist you in locating a dentist; call 1-844-354-9876.

ABCD – Dental care for babies and young children

Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) is a dental program for young children up to six years old. Information is available at **http://abcd-dental.org**.

Getting Medications

You will not have co-pays for prescriptions covered by Washington Apple Health. You may incur a cost for medications that are not covered by Washington Apple Health. Your pharmacist can tell you if a medication is covered.

Eye Exams and Eyeglasses

Yearly eye exams are included in the coverage as are eyeglasses and replacement glasses. If there is a medical issue, your child between 6 and 20 years may be able to get exams more often.

Mental Health Services

Services for your child's mental health needs are covered through both ProviderOne and Coordinated Care of Washington – Apple Health Core Connections (CCW-AHCC). Please contact your primary coverage provider to assist with this need. If your child is enrolled with CCW-AHCC, they have a dedicated team of health care coordinators, including behavioral health clinicians. AHCC staff can help identify appropriate services and providers, connect to evidence-based practices, provide coaching and support, help you establish a system of care, screen for risk of suicide, depression, anxiety, substance use and help you get the most out of your Apple Health coverage. Call 844-354-9876 or email **AHCCTeam@coordinatedcarehealth.com** and ask for Health Care Coordination.

Q: Is it common for a child to need mental health services?

A: A statistic from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, updated Sept. 2019, notes that one out of six youth, ages 6 to 17, experience a mental health disorder each year.

Q: What if your child needs to see a mental health professional after adoption?

A: When you open your heart and your home by adopting a child, you will experience unique joys and challenges as you raise your child. Although mental health services may not be needed until years after the adoption has taken place, at some point your child may need to see a mental health professional due to emotional, behavioral or developmental challenges. You may notice that issues surface as your child grows up, especially during the teen years. It is often helpful to sort out which issues are common to all children, and which issues are related more specifically to children who were adopted. Often, post-adoption mental health services are covered by your primary insurance, Medicaid (ProviderOne in Washington), or as a preauthorized service through the adoption support program.

Q: When should you find a mental health provider for your child?

A: Talk to your child's health care professional if you have concerns about the way your child behaves at home, in school or with friends. Timely help from a skilled counselor or therapist can address an initial problem before it becomes more serious. For example, you may seek mental health services because your child has:

- A marked drop in grades at school.
- Been worried and anxious about things.
- Trouble falling asleep, is waking up frequently or is having frequent nightmares.
- Been sad, moody or angry.
- Poor self-esteem.
- Been unable to cope with daily problems.
- Started abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Started hurting themselves.
- Strange thoughts or unusual behaviors.
- Change in eating habits.
- Withdrawal from friends, family and regular activities.
- Frequent complaints about physical symptoms often related to emotion, like stomach aches, headaches, fatigue, etc.
- Comments such as, "I wish I was dead," or "I wish I could go to sleep and not wake up."
- Any drastic change in behavior, activities, social groups (aka possible indicators for trafficking).

Q: How can you find a mental health professional for your child?

A: Discuss your concerns with your child's doctor, who can offer perspective and evaluate your child to rule out any medical conditions. Most doctors have working relationships with mental health specialists such as child psychologists or clinical social workers, so they may be able to refer you to a mental health provider in your area for the help your child needs. Also, you can ask friends, family or clergy about qualified professionals they recommend. If needed, your health insurance company can give you a list of the mental health providers in their network.

Q: How should you choose a mental health professional for your child?

A: There are many different types of treatment approaches and professionals offering mental health services, but it is important to choose a professional who knows the unique issues facing adoptive families, is culturally aware and responsive, works well with your child and involves you in therapy. Typically, such a professional will fall into one of several professional categories:

- **Psychiatrist**
  A medical doctor with special training in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional illnesses. A psychiatrist can prescribe medication, but often they do not counsel patients.
- **Child/Adolescent Psychiatrist**
  A medical doctor with special training in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and behavioral problems in children. Child and adolescent psychiatrists can also prescribe medication, however, they may not provide psychotherapy.
- **Psychiatric or Mental Health Nurse Practitioner**
  A registered nurse practitioner with a graduate degree and specialized training in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional illness.

In addition, your primary care physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner (depending on your state) are often qualified to prescribe medication.

The following mental health professionals can provide psychological assessments and therapy, however, cannot generally prescribe medications (although some states will allow it):

- Clinical Psychologist – A psychologist with a doctoral degree in psychology from an accredited/designated program in psychology. Psychologists are trained to make diagnoses and provide individual and group therapy.

The following mental health professionals can provide counseling, however, cannot prescribe medication:

- Clinical Social Worker – A counselor with a master's degree in social work from an accredited graduate program. Trained to make diagnoses, provide individual and group counseling, and provide case management and advocacy; usually found in the hospital setting.
- Licensed Professional Counselor – A counselor with a master's degree in psychology, counseling or a related field. Trained to diagnose and provide individual and group counseling.
- Mental Health Counselor – A counselor with a master's degree and several years of supervised clinical work experience. Trained to diagnose and provide individual and group counseling.

Q: What should you look for when you talk to a mental health professional?

A: Ask questions related to what you are looking for from a therapist. You may want to know how they approach working with patients, their philosophy, if they provide reports to you and who covers for them if they are not available. You may ask if they have a specialty, such as family or child counseling, training in trauma, grief and loss, attachment or experience working with adoptive families. You may want to give the therapist a brief description of your concerns and explain your family's situation such as an open adoption, if your child experienced abuse, institutionalization, attachment issues, developmental delays and so on.

While experience and education are important, it's also important to find a counselor your child feels comfortable talking to. Look for one who has the right qualifications and experience, the best approach to help your child in the current circumstances and values your involvement and support.

Q: How will fees be paid when you choose a mental health provider for your child?

A: Find out if the mental health professional you choose accepts your primary insurance or Medicaid coverage and ask about their fees. If you do not have private insurance, your coverage is limited or if the therapist does not accept your insurance or Medicaid, check to see if your adoption support agreement provides for outpatient psychiatric and other counseling. If so, contact your adoption support program consultant before you start the service and request a Preauthorization for Services.

For those enrolled in CCW-AHCC, before utilizing preauthorization services, please call 844-354-9876 or email AHCC at **AHCCTeam@coordinatedcarehealth.com** for assistance in finding a Medicaid provider.

Q: What is the Adoption Support Program's Preauthorization for Services process?

A: When you call the adoption support program consultant and request a preauthorization, you will be advised of the state rates, covered services and you will be sent the pre-authorization form. You must complete the first section of the form, the provider you choose must complete the second section. Once the form is signed by the parent{s} and provider, the provider returns the signed copy to the parent who will send the form to the adoption support consultant. Adoption support will pay the provider directly. Services that require preauthorization include in-home evidenced-based practices and individual counseling.

For evidenced-based practices, you will be sent information regarding the therapeutic interventions available for your children according to their age. The information will include descriptions of the services and how to choose a provider. The current services being offered to families receiving adoption support include: Promoting First Relationships, Incredible Years, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Triple P, SafeCare, and Family Preservation Services. Many evidence-based services are covered by Medicaid. Contact your Apple Health plan to find out what is covered and to find a provider.

After completing the evidence-based practice service, it may be recommended that your family continue with individual counseling. Both processes involve following the pre-authorization request process.

Q: What if your child needs a residential treatment program after adoption?

A: Under WAC 110-80-0250, the adoption support program cannot pay for residential treatment placements. If you request residential treatment services due to:

- Your child's mental illness, please call your primary insurance company or Apple Health plan.
- Your child's diagnosis of physical, mental, developmental, cognitive or emotional disability, please call the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) to determine if your child is eligible for services.
- A need other than treatment of mental illness or developmental disabilities, please call child welfare services intake at the local DCYF Child Welfare office.
- During a crisis or severe situation, you can self-refer to the Wrap Around Intensive Service (WISe) program operated by behavioral health and recovery, **www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/child-and-youth-behavioral-health**.

If your child is enrolled in CCW-AHCC and you believe your child needs intensive behavioral health services, including residential/inpatient, please contact AHCC at 1-844-354-9876 or **AHCCTeam@coordinatedcarehealth.com** for help getting your child the right services.

Education

Q: Are there any educational programs specifically available for my child after high school?

A: Youth adopted after age 14 can maintain their eligibility for the College Bound Scholarship Program.

Effective Oct. 19, 2017, youth adopted between 14 years and 18 years with a negotiated Washington adoption support agreement will continue their eligibility for the College Bound Scholarship. To determine if your child was previously eligible for this scholarship, contact the Washington Student Achievement Council at 1-888-535-0747 and select option 1 or email **collegebound@wsac.wa.gov**.

To be eligible for the College Bound Scholarship, students must either qualify for free or reduced-price lunch or be a dependent under chapter 13.34 RCW. Dependent children must be in grades 7 through 12 or be between the ages of 18 and 21 and have not graduated from high school, or completed the high school equivalency certificate. In order to remain eligible for the College Bound Scholarship when they graduate from high school or receive a high school equivalency certificate, students must have a family income at or below 65% of the median family income and they must successfully enroll in postsecondary education. For additional eligibility criteria and information about the College Bound Scholarship application process, please visit **www.wsac.wa.gov/college-bound**.

Q: Are there additional educational programs specifically available for any child after high school?

A: The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is available for youth who were in foster care and adopted on or after turning 16. ETV offers financial assistance to eligible foster youth to attend an accredited college, university, vocational or technical college. The ETV program helps students with their own efforts to secure financial aid to enroll in college. The maximum ETV award is $5,000 per academic year.

Awards are unique to each student and are based on the cost of attendance formula established by their college of choice and any unmet need they may have within their financial aid award.

- ETV can be used nationwide.
- Youth who participate and receive an ETV payment prior to age 21 can continue to receive ETV until age 23.

Application Process

ETV applications are located on the adolescent website **www.independence.wa.gov** or you may request a hard copy by contacting program staff at **ETVWASH@dshs.wa.gov**:

- The online application is for first time applicants only.
- The renewal application is for eligible returning applicants.
- The running start/dual credit application is for students who are in high school, have been approved to be in the running start program and are taking college level courses.
- The priority application cycle begins Jan. 1 and ends April 30 of each year. All applications received after April 30 will be placed on a waiting list and will be awarded on a funds available basis. The application cycle will close July 31. No applications will be accepted after this date.
- Youth must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year on or shortly after October 1. Per federal guidelines, youth who were adopted on or after turning 13 are considered independent for the purposes of applying for federal financial aid. However, colleges may require additional verification and request confirmation of when the adoption occurred.
- Youth must reapply to the program each year.

Eligible Expenses

Once students have received their ETV award they may request assistance with the following:

- Tuition - All other forms of financial aid must first be applied toward the tuition.
- Books and supplies.
- Housing - Rent deposits, monthly rent payments and utilities.
- Grocery and personal hygiene items.
- Transportation - Bus pass, assistance with car insurance, gas, maintenance and repairs.
- Child care.

Requirements and Continued Participation in the Program

Youth are required to complete the ETV Participation Agreement, which outlines their responsibilities as an ETV participant. The main requirements include:

- Youth will need to meet their institution's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements, maintain a 2.0 GPA or better and show they are making progress toward a degree or certificate.
- Youth must be enrolled at least half time or more, meaning six or more credits.
- Youth must be enrolled in at least one 100 level college course and eligible to receive financial aid.
- Youth must submit their class schedule at the beginning of each term and a copy of their unofficial transcripts at the end of each term.

For more information, visit the website at: **www.independence.wa.gov** or contact program staff at 1-877-433-8388 or **kathy.ramsay@dcyf.wa.gov**.

Adoption Finalization Costs

Q: How may I receive assistance with adoption finalization costs?

A: Adoption finalization costs are one-time expenses incurred in order to finalize the adoption. They include attorney fees, court filing fees, cost of physicals and home study fees. To receive reimbursement for these expenses, you must apply prior to the adoption being finalized. Maximum reimbursable costs are $1,500 per child. Reimbursement occurs once the adoption has finalized and is based upon actual costs up to the amount specified in the agreement.

Q: What is required for proof of payment?

A: After the adoption is finalized, your authorized costs will be reimbursed when we receive the following:

- Signed copy of the adoption decree
- A copy of the bills which show you paid for the service you itemized on the form
- A valid receipt for paid services, or
- A copy of a cancelled check.

Training

Q: May I participate in trainings to better understand my child's special needs?

A: Your family is entitled to participate in all caregiver training opportunities provided by the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence at **www.allianceforchildwelfare.org**, and Coordinated Care of Washington-Apple Health Core Connections at **www.coordinatedcarehealth.com**. Contact the adoption support program consultant for details.

CCW-AHCC has a number of online trainings available for parents and also provides trainings in the community. For more information, contact **CommunityEducation@coordinatedcarehealth.com**.

Additional Information

Q: Do I have the right to a hearing if I disagree with a decision made by the program?

A: You may request a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) if any of the following decisions were made by the program:

- Your child's initial eligibility for the adoption support program was denied.
- The program consultant failed to respond with reasonable promptness to a written application or request for services.
- A request to change the level of payment or service in the agreement was denied.
- A decision to increase or decrease the level of monthly cash payment was made without your consent.
- A request for adoption finalization costs was denied.
- Your child was terminated from the program and you did not agree.

Q: How do I request a hearing?

A: You will be notified in writing regarding program decisions and informed of your right to a hearing, the deadline for requesting a hearing, whether your request for hearing must be in writing, where to send the request and whether you may make the request orally. You may also write to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) at:

Office of Administrative Hearings
PO Box 42489
Olympia, WA 98504-2489

All OAH offices have toll-free numbers. It is best to call the office closest to your location. Please review the website, **www.oah.wa.gov**, for the Administrative Hearings office closest to your location.

Q: What happens after I request a hearing?

A: The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) schedules a hearing and sends out a Notice of Hearing with the date, time and place of the hearing. Enclosed with the notice is important information about the hearing. Pay special attention to the enclosed brochure. Read it all. Read it carefully.

Next, the hearing representative from DCYF will contact the person who requested the hearing and any other interested party to discuss the case and try to resolve the disagreement. The DCYF representative's phone number is written on the Notice of Hearing. You may initiate contact as well.

If you wish to review your file and make copies of documents that you believe are relevant to the hearing, you should call the DCYF representative to arrange a time to do this.

Sometimes the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will schedule a pre-hearing conference. These are usually held by phone. If the ALJ schedules a pre-hearing conference, instructions about what can be expected will be included in the scheduling notice.

Q: What if I want someone to represent me?

A: You may hire an attorney at your own expense or you may represent yourself. Free and low cost legal assistance can be found on the **http://oah.wa.gov** website home page under, "How do I ... Find legal Assistance?" If you wish to be represented, your representative must be at the hearing.

Q: Once the adoption is finalized, should I contact the Social Security Administration?

A: Yes, when your child is adopted, you must contact the Social Security Administration to notify them that the adoption has finalized. The administration will update the child's record with the new identifying information and issue an updated card.

Once you have updated the information with the Social Security Administration for your child, please notify Medicaid and your Adoption Support Consultant.

Q: What is an adoption tax credit?

A: You may be able to take an adoption tax credit. Tax benefits for adoption include both a tax credit for qualified adoption expenses paid to adopt an eligible child, and an exclusion from income for employer-provided adoption assistance.

Consult the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or your tax adviser to get more in-depth and individualized information.

Q: Am I required to notify Adoption Support if I move?

A: Yes, you must notify your adoption support program consultant, in writing to maintain program services like medical and the monthly cash payment. The US Postal Service will not forward your monthly cash payments. If you have direct deposit and move without notifying your consultant your monthly cash payment may be held until your updated address is received.

When Moving Out of State

Q: When does coverage for Medicaid begin in my new state?

A: All children who participate in the adoption support program are eligible for medical assistance through Medicaid. If the family resides outside of Washington State and is receiving Federal IV-E Adoption Assistance benefits, Medicaid is paid by the state of residence. The Federal IV-E determination is noted on your adoption support agreement. If you have questions about this status, please ask your consultant when you contact them about the move.

If the child is not eligible for Federal IV-E Adoption Assistance benefits Medicaid benefits will be provided directly from Washington State or the state of residence if that state has reciprocal Medicaid coverage. Medicaid benefits included in Washington's Medicaid Plan, but excluded or limited by the resident state's Medicaid Plan remain available through Washington State's Medicaid program. Upon request, the Washington State Adoption Support Program staff will facilitate contact with the resident state to assist in obtaining Medicaid coverage. Medicaid coverage from Washington State will continue until coverage is extended by the resident state.

TIP: If your child requires monthly medication, make sure that you get enough to last through the end of the month.

Community Services/Supports

Q: How do I find support groups?

A: Support groups that serve adoptive, guardianship, foster and kinships caregivers are being developed around the state. For information about these groups, contact your local DCYF office or the Foster Parent and Caregiver Support line at 1-800-301-1868.

Things to remember:

When changing addresses, whether within the state or moving to another state, it is important to notify your adoption support program consultant. *If your child is turning 18 and is still in school, they may be eligible for an extension. Call your adoption support program consultant for details.*

Online Resources

Website for the Center for Adoption Medicine

At the University of Washington, our resource for medical and developmental issues in adoption and pediatrics.

www.adoptmed.org/home

Mental Health Services

The Health Care Authority (HCA) provides funding and oversight for mental health services for people enrolled with Apple Health (Medicaid).

www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/behavioral-health-recovery/mental-health-services

North American Council on Adoptable Children

Provides adoption information and services for children in the United States foster care system.

www.nacac.org

National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome – Washington State

NOFAS Washington State is a source for support and resources for individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, their caregivers and community providers.

www.nofaswa.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway

Resources on all aspects of domestic and intercountry adoption, including adoption from foster care. Includes information for prospective and adoptive parents, information about searching for birth relatives and resources for professionals on recruiting adoptive families, preparing children and youth, supporting birth parents, providing post adoption services.

www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/index.cfm

Washington State Medicaid:

A resource to locate ProviderOne Medicaid providers in Washington State.

https://fortress.wa.gov/hca/p1findaprovider/

Foster Parenting & Kinship Care

Offers information on social service resources.

www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting

www.dcyf.wa.gov

---

*If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, **ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov**).*

DCYF PUBLICATION CWP_0063 | DSHS 22-1211 (06-2021)