

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 4: Assessment	Effective Date: January 1, 2012
	Section 24: Assistance for Unlicensed Relative Placements	Version: 1

POLICY [NEW]

The Department of Child Services (DCS) is committed to meeting the financial needs of children in unlicensed relative placements by providing the following assistance:

Personal Allowance: of up to \$300 over the course of one (1) year available to the relative placement after the 8th consecutive day of placement. These funds may be expended and are reset at the beginning of each calendar year. These funds can be used for items such as, but not limited to, computer hardware and/or software required for courses, field trips, driver's education (unless eligible for emancipation Goods & Services Funds), class pictures, book rental fees, application fees, tutoring, internet classes, extracurricular activities, musical instruments, sporting equipment, electronic devices (e-readers, laptops, etc.), high chairs, car seats, other baby equipment, prom dress or other special occasion clothing, other school related events fees, equipment and fees associated with extracurricular activities (including activities for young children), preschool, and summer school. The following items are not permitted or reimbursable: piercings, tattoos, tobacco products, alcoholic products or beverages, firearms/weapons, fireworks, lottery tickets, gift cards (gas, visa, Wal-Mart, etc.), cash, checks or money orders.

Note: DCS will reimburse the unlicensed relative for all of the above covered items upon receipt of a properly claimed invoice with a receipt attached for each of the items.

Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment: available upon initial placement of up to \$200 per child. These funds are to be utilized for clothing and personal items such as, but not limited to, clothing, socks, shoes/boots, coats, toiletries, personal hygiene items, undergarments and hair products.

Special Occasion Allowance: available for all children in the amount of \$50 for each child's birthday and \$50 for holiday gifts for each child. In order for the unlicensed relative to receive reimbursement for the Special Occasion Allowance, the child must be in the relative's care on the day of his or her birthday and December 25th. These items include, but are not limited, to toys, video games or other electronics, salon services, clothing, jewelry, sporting equipment, birthday party, and tickets to an event on his or her birthday. Items not allowable are: piercings, tattoos, tobacco products, alcoholic products or beverages, firearms/weapons, fireworks, lottery tickets, gift cards (gas, visa, Wal-Mart, etc.), cash, checks or money orders.

Note: No referral is needed to receive reimbursement for the Special Occasion Allowance. DCS will reimburse the unlicensed relative for all of the above covered items upon receipt of a properly claimed invoice with a receipt attached for each of the items (See Practice Guidance).

Bedding Allowance: only if needed and pre-approved available up to \$400 per child for a bed and bedding. This is a one time payment and the bed and bedding must go with the child should they return home or be moved to a different placement.

Child Care Allowance: only if approved for a need during work or school hours available up to \$18 per day or \$90 per week, per child, for licensed child care costs. This funding is available for up to six (6) months or until Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Vouchers begin, whichever occurs first. Children in unlicensed relative placements must attend state licensed child care facilities. (See practice guidance)

Respite Care: if needed and approved by the FCM available for up to five (5) days a calendar year. The respite care must be in a licensed foster parent's home. Respite will require a referral to be done by the FCM.

Travel Reimbursement: for properly claimed travel expenses incurred for a child placed in unlicensed relative care. Travel will be reimbursed monthly beginning at mile one (1) for travel such as:

1. Travel between the unlicensed relative home and the school in which the child was enrolled before placement and continues to be enrolled while residing with the unlicensed relative home if the school is not required to and/or does not provide transportation under applicable state law.
2. Travel to and from parent and/or sibling visits (including visits to other relatives that are authorized by DCS and are a part the child's case plan) and visits to facilitate the transition to another placement;
3. Travel to and from the following types of health related appointments:
 - b. Doctor (primary care physician and any specialists)
 - c. Dentist (including orthodontist)
 - d. Health clinic
 - e. Hospital/Emergency Room (including foster visits during child inpatient episodes)
 - f. Occupational and Physical Therapy
 - g. Behavioral Health Counselor and Therapist
4. Travel to and from the following types of case activities:
 - a. Administrative case reviews
 - b. Judicial reviews (court appearances)
 - c. Case conferences
 - d. Child and family team meetings
 - e. Foster parent training sessions
 - f. Behavioral Health Counselor and Therapist
5. Other approved travel for activities consistent with the child's case plan.

DCS will not pay for the child to take trips with the unlicensed relative placement that are not related to the child's case plan.

Note: If a child moves placements mid-year, the new unlicensed relative or foster parent can be reimbursed for any personal allowance for the child that is remaining for the year.

Questions regarding a child's usage of annual allowances should be directed to the local Regional Finance Manager (RFM).

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE

The FCM will:

1. Ensure all appropriate clothing and/or personal items go with the child at the time of removal or placement change whenever possible;
2. Complete a thorough inventory of the child's clothing and/or personal items on the [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#) at placement and changes throughout the life of the case. The inventory of the child's clothing and/or personal items should be:
 - a. Taken anytime the child is removed from their home;
 - b. Reviewed with and signed by the unlicensed relative acknowledging what items belong to the child and were brought with and/or for the child.
3. If it is not possible to take the child's clothing and/or personal items at the time of removal, make efforts to pick them up within 48 hours;
4. Engage the Child and Family Team (CFT) to identify community supports and services which may be able to assist the relative in meeting the child(ren)'s financial needs;
5. If a need is identified, request that the Supervisor evaluate the clothing and/or personal items situation and authorize the purchase of additional clothing;
6. If the child does not have adequate clothing and/or personal items at the time of removal complete a referral for the a one time Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment to assist the unlicensed relative in acquiring clothing and/or personal items for the child within 60 days of initial placement and submit for payment within 30 days;
7. Complete a referral for the use of Personal or Bedding Allowances to assistance to assist in reimbursement efforts for the unlicensed relative if a need is identified and the item(s) requested is a permitted expense;

Note: Prior to completing referrals for the use of Personal or Bedding Allowances it should be verified that the requested amount does not exceed the allotted amount and has not previously been expended for the child. Questions regarding a child's usage of annual allowances should be directed to the local RFM.

8. Ensure the unlicensed relative has applied for a Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Voucher (see practice guidance);
9. Complete a referral for child care assistance in reimbursement efforts for the unlicensed relative if a child care need is identified;
10. Complete a referral for respite care if a need is identified;
11. Inform the unlicensed relative of the travel invoicing instructions (see forms and tools);
12. If the relative has unusual circumstances or a situation that requires additional financial support file an appropriate appeal.

Appeals for Additional Funding:

1. The FCM will complete the [Appeal for Additional Funding](#) form detailing the unusual circumstances and situations prior to the expenditure of any funds and submit to the Supervisor for approval or denial;

2. The Supervisor will review and approve or deny the appeal for additional funding. The Supervisor will immediately notify the FCM if the request is denied. If the Supervisor approves the appeal for additional funding, it will be submitted to the DCS Local Office Director for approval or denial.
3. The DCS Local Office Director will approve or deny the appeal of additional funding. If the DCS Local Office Director approves the appeal for additional funding, the written request will be sent to the Regional Manager (RM) and if approved the RM will send a copy to the RFM.
4. The RM will notify the Local Office Director of the final determination via written correspondence.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Special Occasion Allowance

FCM's and Foster Care Specialists should make all unlicensed relative placements aware of invoicing instructions in order to utilize the Special Occasion Allowance. All unlicensed relative placements need to fill out a [Vendor Information SF 53788](#) in order to receive reimbursement from the state. All relatives should utilize the standard invoice, [SF 28808 Claim for Support of Children Payable from Family & Children Funds](#) and attach all receipts in order to receive reimbursement for the Special Occasion Allowance.

Additional Assistance

FCM's should provide unlicensed relative placements with information regarding Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a program managed by the Division of Family Resources (DFR) to provide temporary financial assistance to qualifying children in relative care. TANF is available for a single parent family or a family in which a parent is disabled/unemployed/underemployed (unable to work, possibly due to illness, or lack of education or job training).

To apply for TANF, the relative should contact their local DFR office. The applicant or recipient must provide their local DFR office with accurate and complete information regarding the child(ren), parent(s) and all other household members whose income and needs are to be assessed in order to determine eligibility. In addition, individual members must provide their Social Security numbers meet state residency and citizenship/alien requirements, employment and child support assignment requirements. The local DFR office has the responsibility to process applications, certify eligible applicants for participation, and issue benefits. Applications may be taken to the local DFR office, mailed or faxed.

The amount of cash payment is determined by the number of eligible family members and their total income. The standard for a family including children and their caretaker is reflected in the chart below. A child can be considered a family of one (1) in some circumstances without the relative's income being considered. In the case of sibling children, the sibling could comprise a family without the relative's income being considered.

Income Standard

Family Size	Gross Income Limit	Maximum Monthly Benefit
1	\$286.75	\$139.00

2	\$407.00	\$198.00
3	\$527.25	\$256.50
4	\$647.50	\$315.00
5	\$767.75	\$373.50
6	\$888.00	\$432.00
7	\$1008.25	\$490.50
8	\$1128.50	\$549.00
9	\$1248.75	\$607.50
10	\$1369.00	\$666.00

More information on TANF can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/2684.htm>

FCM's should inform unlicensed relatives about the Food Stamp program, called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This program can help provide food for the child placed in relative care. The program enables low-income families to buy nutritious food through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards. Families must qualify to receive this assistance. To apply for this program, visit this web site at <http://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/2691.htm> for a copy of the application and information on where to submit the application.

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program provides financial assistance for child care for families who are working or enrolled in school. To apply for the CCDF voucher program, you must contact your local Intake Agents, which can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/3900.htm>. If you receive a voucher, you must choose a child care provider who meets CCDF provider eligibility standards. More information can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/fssa/2552.htm> (in the left column, click on Child Care Assistance – Child Care Development Fund).

Relative placements that care for infants and children up to age five (5) may be eligible to participate in the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) program when the relative's children are Medicaid eligible. WIC is a supplemental food and nutrition program and participants receive vouchers that are redeemed for specified nutritious foods at designated groceries. Such foods consist of baby formula, cereal, eggs, milk, peanut butter, juice and other foods to meet a child's specialized needs. WIC participants also receive nutrition education, nutrition counseling, and referrals to other health services if needed. You can obtain information on applying at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/19691.htm>. You can also contact your state WIC representative at 1-800-522-0874 or email inwic@isdh.in.gov, or you can ask your FCM or Regional Foster Care Specialist for more information.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Application for Assistance, Food Stamps, Cash Assistance, Health Coverage](#)
2. [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#)
3. [Appeal for Additional Funding](#)-available in hard copy
4. [SF 28808 Claim for Support of Children Payable from Family & Children Funds](#)
5. [Vendor Information SF 53788](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

ARCHIVE