

● Adoption Unit for their review and determination.

● The Adoption Unit will contact the adoptive family to discuss the child's needs, negotiate a payment rate and complete an adoption assistance agreement. In order to be eligible for the program the adoption assistance agreement must be negotiated and signed **before the adoption is finalized**.

How long does adoption assistance last ?

The Adoption Assistance Agreement remains in effect until the child's 18th birthday unless an earlier date is stipulated in the agreement. New Hampshire does not provide adoption assistance beyond a child's 18th birthday. Prior to age 18, the subsidy may be terminated:

- At the request of the adoptive parent(s);
- If the adoptive parent(s) is/are no longer legally responsible for the child or the parent(s) is/are no longer providing support to the child; or
- If the child or the adoptive parent(s) die(s).
- Payments may be suspended and/or Medical Assistance discontinued if the parent(s) fail(s) to submit the required annual review paperwork.

Is there a review process?

The adoptive parent will receive an annual review for completion. The review is due back within 30 days of receipt by the adoptive parents.

An annual review will determine if the family continues to be legally or financially responsible for the child. It is not a re-determination of the original eligibility for adoption assistance.

Can I appeal a decision about adoption assistance?

An adoptive parent may appeal a decision to deny, discontinue, change, or reduce adoption assistance. The request must be in writing to the Administrative Appeals Unit (AAU) in the Department of Health and Human Services within 30 days of receipt of the notice to deny, discontinue, change, or reduce the payment.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about adoption assistance or other DCYF services:

- ◆ call toll free 1-800-852-3345
- ◆ visit <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf>

Adoption Assistance



A Resource for Families Adopting Children with Special Needs



New Hampshire

What is adoption assistance?

New Hampshire participates in the Federal Adoption Assistance program, which is part of the Social Security Act §471 (Title IV-E).

Adoption assistance is a resource used to remove barriers to adoption for children who have special needs and who cannot be adopted without adoption assistance.

The purpose of the program is to obtain and provide for safe and permanent adoptive families for children with special needs.

Families of any economic level may be provided with needed social services, as well as medical and financial support to care for children considered difficult to place.

Adoption assistance can include:

- Medicaid health care coverage for the child;
- Monthly payments (subsidy) to meet the needs of the child; and/or
- Reimbursement of certain one-time expenses related to completing the adoption process (non-recurring adoption expenses up to \$2000/child).



How does a child qualify for adoption assistance?

The child must be legally free for adoption and placed in the custody of the Division for Children, Youth and Families.

A court order must be in place indicating it is not in the best interest of the child to be returned to the parents.

The court order must establish that reasonable efforts were made to place the child without assistance.

The child must have one or more of the following specific factors or conditions:

- At least 6 years old, if age is the only criteria;
- Is a member of a minority group;
- Is part of a sibling group, or joining a sibling ;
- Has a documented physical, mental, or emotional handicapping condition; or
- Is at risk of physical, mental, or emotional disability, based on birth family history, prenatal factors, or more than two adverse childhood experiences.

How is the amount and type of adoption assistance determined?

The amount and type of assistance varies from family to family and is determined based on the needs of the child and the

circumstances of the family. Adoptive parents who apply for adoption assistance must identify their current circumstances. Adoption assistance is intended to remove barriers to adoption for a family that is ready, willing, and able to provide a loving, secure, lifelong family for a child, but who may need support to meet specific needs of the child, such as extraordinary placement expenses, medical care, supportive educational needs, maintaining contact with siblings and other family members, or respite. It is an expectation that families pursuing adoption have determined they have the financial ability to meet the day-to-day expenses of raising a child.



What is the process ?

Requests for adoption assistance are made through the Adoption Unit at State Office in Concord. The child's worker provides the adoptive family with the Adoption Assistance Application (Form 1802) for them to complete. Once this form is completed, it is forwarded to the