
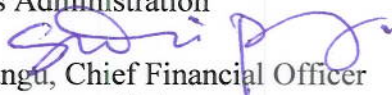


**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201**

DATE: July 1, 2016

POLICY#: SSA-CW #17-02

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Assistant Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Fiscal Officers

FROM: Rebecca Jones Gaston, MSW 
Acting Executive Director
Social Services Administration
Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer 
Budget Management and Finance

RE: Utilization of Adoption Promotion and Support Services
Funding

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ACTION REQUIRED OF: All Local Departments of Social Services

ACTION DUE DATE: July 1, 2016

CONTACT PERSONS: Helene Hornum, Program Analyst
410-767-7247
helene.hornum@maryland.gov

Sean Bloodsworth, LCSW-C
Program Manager, Out-of-Home Placement
410-767-7912
Sean.bloodsworth@maryland.gov

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance to the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) on the utilization and reporting requirements for Adoption Promotion and Support Services funded through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. DHR's budget office annually provides each LDSS an allocation. The amount allocated to each LDSS is based on the number of children with plan of adoption, as reported by each LDSS.

The federal Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds MUST be used for any adoption promotion and support services BEFORE using other support services funds.

ACTION PLAN:

The Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds continue to be linked to the forthcoming adoption goals and are specifically geared to ensure that the children with a goal of adoption are adopted. These funds can be spent on anything that would remove barriers to a finalized adoption or that would expedite the adoption process.

Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds should no longer be used to provide post-adoption services. Post Adoption Permanency funds shall be utilized.

Annually, LDSS must submit a fully detailed "action plan" by August 3, of each year. The plan must provide the LDSS contact name and phone number for monitoring purposes. **Failure to submit a plan by the established deadline will result in the total allocation for that local being withheld and redirected by the Social Services Administration (SSA).** The action plan must provide an adequate description of the planned expenditures based on the total allocation and the approximate number of families and children to be served. In addition, the plan must tie-in with the adoption goals and justify how each proposed activity and/or service would help in getting a child adopted. If the action plan cannot realistically utilize the total allocation, the plan should clearly state the funding needs of the LDSS and identify any remaining amount that can be returned to the SSA.

A spending cap is being imposed on certain activities:

- No more than 20% of the total adoption promotion allocation can be spent on adoption celebrations.
- No more than 20% of the total allocation can be spent on training and conferences.

Case Record Document

To ensure that funding is properly expended at the local level, each LDSS will be required to document in the child's case record steps taken to promptly implement permanency plans for children in out-of-home care. For children with a permanency plan of adoption or placement in another permanent family home, the LDSS must document what has been done to find an adoptive family or other permanent living arrangement for the child. The implementation of the permanency plan may include placement of a child with an adoptive family, a relative, or a legal guardian. The plan may also specify another planned permanent living arrangement and may indicate actions taken to finalize the adoption or legal guardianship. Documentation shall include clearly defined, child-specific recruitment efforts to locate a family for a hard-to-place child and a summary of services to a finalized adoptive family that supported and/or sustained an

adoptive child in the family. This documentation must be available for Quality Assurance Site Reviews.

Requirements

Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds CANNOT be combined with other grants or merged into other flex fund accounts. A SEPARATE ACCOUNTING MUST BE MAINTAINED. The LDSS is required to report to the United States Department of Health and Human Services the amount of funds spent on EACH service of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

The number of families and children served must be submitted quarterly on the attached Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Adoption Promotion and Support Services' Quarterly Program Report forms (Attachments A and B). The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled to the Monthly 302 Report to ensure that reported data is consistent.

On the attached Summary of Services form (Attachment B), each Quarterly Report must include a brief description of each activity charged to Adoption Promotion and Support Services, and how these activities are helping to achieve the LDSS adoption goals. If the activity is a support or recruitment activity, the date(s) and attendance records must be included with the report. This program report must be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, Social Services Administration.

The report submission dates and periods covered are as follow:

| <u>Submission Dates</u> | <u>Periods Covered</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| October 15 | July 1-September 30 |
| January 15 | October 1-December 31 |
| April 15 | January 1-March 31 |
| July 15 | April 1-June 30 |

The allocation for each SFY and all expenditures for services rendered between July 1 and June 30 must be liquidated (services provided and paid for) by June 30 of each year. The DAFER report and quarterly expenditure reporting will be used to monitor expenditures.

SSA will be closely monitoring the expenditures of each LDSS at the end of each quarter. If one-half (1/2) of the LDSS allocation is not spent by January 2, of each year the remaining funds may be reallocated to another LDSS that is spending their Adoption Promotion and Support **Services** funds. In addition, a LDSS that fails to submit their quarterly reports will risk reduction and reallocation of their Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds to another LDSS.

All contracts and purchase orders must follow COMAR Title 21 procurement regulations.

Charge Codes for Adoption Promotion and Support Services Funding

In order to track and report the use of these funds, please use the following charge codes:

- All child and family-specific expenses should be requested through the MD CHESSIE Service Log choosing Category Code **4140** for PSSF Adoption Promotion.

- Any charges that are not child and family-specific should use charge code PCA GC940, Project/Subproject number 0302.86, within the Child Welfare Services (n00g0003) program and the appropriate agency object for the purchase made.

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: _____
 July 1 – September 30 _____ October 1 – December 31 _____ January 1 – March 31 _____
 April 1 – June 30 _____

| Account Name | Account Number/ Project/Subproject/ Object | Expenditures Current Quarter | Expenditures Y-T-D | Obligated Funds to Date | Families Served Current Quarter | Children Served Current Quarter | Families Served Y-T-D | Children Served Y-T-D |
|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adoption Promotion and Support Services | GC940 0302.86 (non child and family-specific) 4140 (child and family-specific) | | | | | | | |
| Allocation | | | | | | | | |

Year-to-Date Expenditures _____
 Remaining Balance _____

Mail or Fax the Report to:
 Helene Hornum
 Social Services Administration
 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5th Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 Fax #: 410-333-6556

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORTS- SUMMARY OF SERVICES**

Local Department: _____ Person Completing Form: _____
Phone Number: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Report Period:
July 1 - September 30 _____ October 1 - December 31 _____
January 1 - March 31 _____ April 1 - June 30 _____

Mail or Fax the Reports to: Helene Hornum, Social Services Administration, 311 W. Saratoga Street, Baltimore, MD 21201 Fax#: 410-333-6556

Describe the activities charged to Adoption Promotion and Support Services and **how they are helping achieve the Adoption Goals.**