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James W. Payne, Director

**Indiana Department of Child Services**

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**Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 800-800-5556**

June 29, 2009

To: Regional Managers  
Directors, Local Offices, Department of Child Services

From: James W. Payne, Director  
Douglas Weinberg, Chief Financial Officer  
Angela Green, Deputy Director Practice Support  
David Judkins, Deputy Director Field Operations  
Department of Child Services

Subject: Payments for a Family's Basic Needs  
DCS-09-12

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is committed to supporting the basic needs of children involved with DCS when possible in an effort to preserve families. This administrative letter outlines the types of assistance that the DCS local office may provide to families who have a child who is in out-of-home CHINS or JD placement, in-home CHINS, participating in an Informal Adjustment (IA), or receiving preservation services beginning July 1, 2009.

When families are in need of additional support to pay their bills, the Family Case Manager (FCM) should work with other public and private agencies to obtain needed support and services prior to requesting funding from DCS. DCS should not be the first source of funding for families, rather the FCM should engage the Child and Family Team (CFT) and community to work together to meet the family's needs.

**Home Related Expenses**

The DCS Local Office Director must approve all funds as follows:

- One month of rent and a one month security deposit of up to \$750 each. Rent assistance and security deposits have a lifetime cap of \$750 each.
- A one-time payment for gas and electric utilities assistance. The maximum amount of this payment is \$1000.



- Up to \$200 per lifetime for Pest Control services.
- Up to \$400 per lifetime, per child for children's beds and bedding.

DCS will not pay for any of the following:

- Mortgage Payment Assistance
- Other utilities, not listed above.
- Home appliances (including HVAC) repairs and purchases.
- Furniture (not including children's beds as outlined above)
- Food and groceries.

### **Transportation Related Expenses**

DCS may provide up to \$50 per month to cover the cost of parental travel for visitation. The method of payment (gas card, bus tickets, etc.) is at the discretion of the DCS local office.

DCS will not pay for car repairs, driver's license reinstatement fees, and any other expenses related to parental travel.

### **Child Related Expenses (for children remaining in the home through an in-home CHINS, an IA, or receiving preservation services)**

DCS will not provide funding for any of the following:

- Clothing
- Child travel
- Recreation (including, but not limited to fees, supplies, uniforms, etc.)
- Education (including, but not limited to tuition, uniforms, book fees, etc.)
- Day Care

### **Appeals for Additional Funding**

The FCM, Supervisor, or DCS Local Office Director can appeal for funds for families to cover unusual circumstances and situations. A one (1) page written request must be submitted stating the reasons and circumstances that warrant an exception to policy and the amount of the expenditure being requested. The request must also outline the efforts made to utilize outside funding (i.e. donations or support from local civic organizations, churches, Salvation Army, etc.). All appeals will be forwarded to the Regional Manager and Regional Finance Manager with final determination made by the Regional Manager. Upon approval or denial, the request will be returned to the requester and a copy will be submitted to the Regional Finance Manager.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this administrative letter, please address them to the DCS policy mailbox at [DCS.Policy@dcs.in.gov](mailto:DCS.Policy@dcs.in.gov).

Sincerely,

James W. Payne, Director  
Department of Child Services



*Protecting our children, families and future*