	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 16: Financial Services/Assistance	**Effective Date:** November 1, 2016
	Section 2: Assistance for Unlicensed Relative Placements	**Version:** 4

POLICY

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: Personal allowance funds of up to $300 over the course of one (1) year are 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 may be used for items such as, but not limited to, computer hardware and/or software, field trips, driver's education (unless eligible for emancipation Goods & Services Funds), class pictures, application fees, extracurricular activities, musical instruments, sporting equipment, electronic devices (e.g., e-readers, laptops, iPod, Xbox, etc.), a prom dress or other special occasion clothing, equipment and fees associated with extracurricular activities (including activities for young children), and preschool. The following items are not permitted or reimbursable: piercings, tattoos, tobacco products, alcoholic products or beverages, firearms or other weapons, fireworks, lottery tickets, gift cards (e.g., 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: Initial clothing and personal items funds of up to $200 per child are available upon initial placement of the 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: Special occasion funds are 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 (e.g., gas, visa, Wal-Mart, etc.), cash, checks, or money orders.

> **Note:** A referral is not 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.

Bedding Allowance: Bedding allowance funds are available up to $400 per child if there is a need for a bed and/or bedding, and Family Case Manager (FCM) approval has been obtained.

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: Child care funds (only if needed for work or school hours) are available up to $18 per day or $90 per week, per child, for child care costs in a child care center or home that is licensed, registered, or the appropriate background checks have been conducted. For further guidance, see separate policy, 13.5 Conducting Background Checks for Unlicensed Placements. This funding is available for six (6) months only. If the relative becomes licensed or begins receiving Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) prior to six (6) months the funding will end.

Educational Needs Funding: Educational needs funding is available to cover the cost of securing a High School Equivalency (HSE) Certificate, tutoring, and summer school. This is referred in KidTraks through Global Services. Contact the local DCS Education Liaison (EL) for assistance with school related fees as many may be waived.

> **Note:** When other funding is available for securing an HSE Certificate it should be utilized prior to completing a global services referral.

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

Travel Reimbursement: Travel reimbursement is available for properly claimed travel expenses incurred for each 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 system in which the child was enrolled before placement and continues to be enrolled while residing with unlicensed relative if the school system is not required to provide transportation under applicable state law.

   Note: FCMs may consult with the EL for information on what school corporations are required to provide transportation for the child.

2. Travel to and from Headstart, summer school, pre-school, summer camps, and school related extracurricular activities.

   Note: Mileage will be eligible for reimbursement to and from these programs only when it is not provided by the school corporation.

3. 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 (SF2956)) and visits to facilitate the transition to another placement;
4. Travel to and from the following types of health related appointments:
   a. Doctor (primary care physician and any specialists),
   b. Dentist (including orthodontist),
   c. Health clinic,
   d. Hospital/Emergency Room (including visits during child inpatient episodes),
   e. Occupational and Physical Therapy, and
   f. Behavioral Health Counselor and Therapist;

5. Travel to and from employment or job searching for youth 14 years of age or older;
6. 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, and/or
   f. Behavioral Health Counselor and Therapist;

7. Other travel that is extraordinary and has been approved in writing as consistent with the child's Case Plan (SF2956) by the DCS Local Office Director (LOD)/Division Manager (DM) prior to the travel taking place.

The relative being considered as a placement resource may receive an amount of properly claimed travel expenses incurred for a child who will be placed in the relative home when the relative travels at least one (1) mile for pre-placement visits between the relative and child, regardless of whether they are overnight visits.

> **Note:** If a child moves placements mid-year, the new unlicensed relative may be reimbursed for any personal allowance for the child that is remaining for the year.

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 (SF2956).

Questions regarding a child's usage of annual allowances should be directed to the DCS Regional Manager (RM) and to the local DCS 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 Inventory of Personal Items (SF54315) 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, and
   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. Make efforts to deliver the child's clothing and/or personal items within 48 hours, if not taken at the time of removal;
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. Complete a referral for the use of the Bedding Allowance if a need is identified;
6. Request that the FCM Supervisor evaluate the clothing and/or personal items situation and authorize the purchase of additional clothing, if a need is identified;

7. Complete a referral in KidTraks for the 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, if the child does not have adequate clothing and/or personal items at the time of removal;
8. Complete a referral for the use of Personal Allowance when requested by the unlicensed relative;

   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 amounts indicated above. Additionally, the FCM should verify that the bedding allowance has not previously been expended for the child. Questions regarding a child's usage of annual allowances should be directed to the local RFM.

9. Give the unlicensed relative the Financial Assistance Options for Relative Caregivers Brochure and the Relative Resource Guide at initial placement of a child with a relative (see Practice Guidance);
10. Ensure the unlicensed relative has applied for a CCDF Voucher;
11. Complete a referral for child care assistance in reimbursement efforts for the unlicensed relative if a child care need is identified;
12. Complete a referral for respite care and/or educational needs if a need is identified;
13. Ensure that the unlicensed relative is informed of the travel invoicing instructions; and
14. File an appropriate appeal, if the relative has unusual circumstances or a situation that requires additional financial support.

Request for Additional Funding:

1. The FCM will complete the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870) detailing the unusual circumstances and situations prior to the expenditure of any additional funds and submit to the FCM Supervisor for approval or denial;
2. The FCM Supervisor will review and approve or deny the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870). The decision of the FCM Supervisor will be submitted to the LOD or DM for final approval or denial;
3. The LOD/DM will approve or deny the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870). If the LOD/DM approves the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870), a copy of the request will be submitted to the RFM;
4. The LOD/DM will notify the RM and the FCM Supervisor of the final determination via written correspondence.

   [REVISED] Note: The LOD may approve $300 extra for clothing and other personal items and $300 extra for miscellaneous expenses. **An RM appeal, utilizing the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870) form, must be submitted for approval by the RM when additional funds or funds outside the scope of LOD approval are needed.**

RM Appeals:

1. The FCM will complete the RM appeal on the Request for Additional Funding (SF54870) detailing the unusual circumstances and situations prior to the expenditure of any funds and submit to the FCM Supervisor for approval or denial;
2. The FCM Supervisor will review and approve or deny the appeal for funding;
3. The FCM Supervisor will submit the appeal decision to the LOD/DM for approval or denial;
4. The LOD/DM will approve or deny the request for additional funding (RM appeal);

5. The LOD/DM will send the request for additional funding (RM appeal) to the RM for final approval or denial;
6. The RM will submit a copy to the RFM, if approved; and
7. The RM will notify the LOD/DM of the final determination via written correspondence.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Relative Placement Options

Adult relatives (18 and older) to be considered for placement include but are not limited to:

1. Adult siblings including step and half-siblings;
2. Maternal or paternal grandparents;
3. Adult aunts or uncles;
4. Adult cousins;

   Note: The individuals must be first or second cousins.

5. Parents and extended family of half-siblings (e.g., adult siblings, grandparents, adult aunts or uncles, and adult cousins);
6. Former step-parents and extended family of former step-parents (e.g., adult siblings, grandparents, adult aunts or uncles, and adult cousins);
7. Other adult relatives suggested by either parent of a child including but not limited to extended cousins, great aunts or uncles, great or great-greats; or
8. Any other individual with whom a child has an established and significant relationship.

Relative placement with an individual who is not related by blood, marriage or adoption

This is an individual with whom a child has an established and significant relationship. The relationship with the child will be **other relative** and **must**:

1. Have the characteristics of a family relationship. The relationship should have the same characteristics or be similar to the relationship that the child has with an individual related to them by blood, marriage, or adoption;
2. Have existed prior to agency's current involvement with the child or family; and
3. Be verified through interviews or attested by the written or oral designation of the child or of another person, including other relatives related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Former long-term foster parents may be considered as relative placements in cases where the child is the victim of repeat maltreatment or returning to substitute care. FCMs should staff with the FCM Supervisor and LOD to determine which type of placement is appropriate (i.e., Foster Care or Relative Placement). Consideration should be given to the child's report of the relationship and the potential for permanency.

Credible evidence showing that the individual performs or has performed a substantial role in the upbringing or material support of the child should be documented in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK). The placement recommendation should be staffed with the FCM Supervisor and LOD, if needed. DCS placement recommendation must be approved by the court.

> **Note:** Placement with a relative related by blood, marriage, or adoption **must** be ruled out before considering any other out-of-home placement, with the first consideration being given to an appropriate noncustodial parent.

Child Care Allowance
Child care allowance is only paid for six (6) months or until CCDF is received or the relative becomes licensed whichever occurs first. DCS will only permit an Unlicensed Registered Child Care Ministry to be paid using child care allowance if the ministry accepts CCDF. If there are concerns regarding the safety and well being of a ward attending this type of facility it may be appropriate to facilitate a CFT Meeting to discuss the relative placement's child care needs and issues or concerns such as location and cost. A decision could be made to review Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) inspection reports for the facility (which may found on the FSSA website, https://secure.in.gov/apps/fssa/carefinder/index.html). An FCM may complete site visits necessary to make an informed decision as to the appropriateness of the facility. The team should also be prepared to provide information about facilities that may be deemed appropriate and may meet the needs of the family.

Personal Allowance
The purpose of the Personal Allowance is to normalize a child's stay in foster care. As such, the Personal Allowance may be used for a broad array of purchases. The list of personal allowance items in policy are only examples. The options for use are extremely broad.

Clothing and Personal Item Allotment
It is allowable for unlicensed relatives to purchase clothing for the child up to $200 and be reimbursed if they have received FCM approval, even if the approval is received after the purchase of clothing. At times it is necessary for the clothing to be purchased prior to DCS approval. Unlicensed relatives must present the receipts for all purchases. In unique circumstances, an RM appeal may be utilized to purchase clothing beyond the first 60 days of placement. Examples are a sudden weight gain or loss, a change of placement when the FCM has attempted to obtain clothing from the previous placement without success, etc.

Educational Needs
Contact the EL for assistance with school related fees as many may be waived. For fees that cannot be waived or cannot be funded through other means, a global services referral should be completed. These expenses should not come out of the child's personal allowance.

Special Occasion Allowance
The FCM and the Relative Care Support Specialist (RCSS) should make all unlicensed relative placements aware of invoicing instructions in order to utilize the Special Occasion Allowance.

Tax Reimbursement
Tax on any purchases made for a ward including clothing and personal items, personal and special occasion allowances is reimbursable. Reimbursement can be claimed for the items plus tax up to the amount listed in policy. For example, the resource parent(s) purchases clothing in the amount of $180 and paid $12.60 in tax for a total of $192.60. The resource parent(s) can claim reimbursement for $192.60. However, if the resource parent(s) purchased clothing in the amount of $200 and paid $14 in tax for a total of $214, the resource parent(s) can only claim $200 outlined in policy. Reimbursement can be claimed for the items plus tax up to the amount listed in policy.

Supporting Relative Caregivers
It is important for FCMs to support all relative caregivers. FCMs will be mindful that relative caregivers may not have planned to take emergency placement of their relative's child(ren). This is especially true in emergency after hours placements. The FCM should be patient and exercise empathy for the relative caregivers and serve as a support to them by answering any

questions and addressing any concerns they may have, in conjunction with the RCSS and/or Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS). It is the goal of DCS to have a child transition as smoothly as possible from their home into the relative caregiver's home. The transition will be easier to achieve if the relative feels supported and may focus primarily on the child.

FCMs are responsible for communicating all of the support and clinical services that DCS may offer the relative caregiver, in conjunction with the RCSS and/or the RFCS. The Relative Home Environment Checklist (SF55106) requires the FCM to provide the relative caregiver with the Financial Assistance Options for Relative Caregivers Brochure. Either the RCSS or the RFCS will follow up and provide them with the Relative Resource Guide that outlines the specific financial assistance that DCS offers as well as other community resources available to the relative caregiver.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

FCMs should ensure, in conjunction with the RCSS or the RFCS that unlicensed relative placements are provided with information regarding 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 (e.g., 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. An individual must provide his or her Social Security number, employment, and child support assignment requirements. In addition, he or she must meet state residency and citizenship/alien 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 may 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: Child(ren) Only	Maximum Monthly Benefit: Parent and/or Caretaker
1	$286.75	$139.00	$139.00
2	$471.75	$198.00	$229.00
3	$592.00	$256.00	$288.00
4	$712.25	$315.00	$346.00
5	$832.50	$373.00	$405.00
6	$952.75	$432.00	$463.00
7	$1,073.00	$490.00	$522.00
8	$1,193.25	$549.00	$580.00

9	$1,313.50	$607.00	$639.00
10	$1,433.75	$666.00	$697.00

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

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

FCMs should ensure, in conjunction with the RCSS or RFCS, that unlicensed relatives are informed about the SNAP Food Stamp program. This program may 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.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

The CCDF program provides financial assistance for child care for families who are working or enrolled in school. More information may be found at: http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/3900.htm (in the left column, click on Child Care Assistance – Child Care Development Fund).

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Relative placements that care for infants and children up to age five (5) may be eligible to participate in the 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. Additional information on applying is located at http://www.in.gov/isdh/19691.htm. WIC representatives are also available at 1-800-522-0874 or email inwic@isdh.in.gov.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. Case Plan (SF2956)
2. Inventory of Personal Items (SF54315)
3. Financial Assistance Options for Relative Caregivers Brochure
4. Relative Resource Guide
5. Relative Home Environment Checklist (SF55106)
6. Application for Assistance, Food Stamps, Cash Assistance, Health Coverage
7. Request for Additional Funding (SF54870)
8. Claim for Support of Children Payable from Family & Children Funds (SF28808)
9. Direct Deposit Authorization (SF51519)
10. Relative Parent Travel Invoice (SF54891)
11. Automated Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement (SF47551)
12. W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification
13. W-9 and Direct Deposit Form Instructions
14. W-9 and Direct Deposit Form Q & A

RELATED INFORMATION

Mileage Reimbursement

Mileage reimbursement is a flat rate per mile based on the current State employee approved mileage per diem. Unlicensed relative caregivers may check for the most current rate at: http://www.in.gov/idoa/2459.htm. Mapquest at www.mapquest.com should be used to obtain the shortest mileage distance for trips.

Requirements for Reimbursement

All resource parent(s) need to fill out an Automated Direct Deposit Authorization Agreement (SF47551) and W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification in order to receive reimbursement from the state. All resource parents should utilize the standard invoice, Claim for Support of Children Payable from Family & Children Funds (SF28808) (or submit via KidTraks e-Invoicing) and attach all receipts in order to receive reimbursement for the Personal Allowance, Special Occasion Allowance, Initial Clothing Allotment, etc. Additional information on completing the W-9 may be found on the W-9 and Direct Deposit Form Instructions and W-9 and Direct Deposit Form Q & A.