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

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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: Assistance for Unlicensed Relative Placements  
DCS-09-18

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is committed to meeting the financial needs of all children in relative care by providing and ensuring that all funds distributed for the care of children are utilized appropriately. This administrative letter outlines the types of assistance that the DCS local office may provide to unlicensed relative placements beginning January 1, 2010.

**Personal allowance.** Each child in an unlicensed relative placement for 180 consecutive days will receive an annual personal allowance of up to \$240. These funds may be expended annually during each state fiscal year.

### **Clothing**

DCS will ensure that all children are provided with adequate clothing based on their individual needs at the time of removal. DCS may provide the relative placement with an Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment of up to \$200.00 per child. Funds must be expended within 30 days of removal and may be given using a voucher/P-card. Funds expended for initial clothing and personal items purchases should be based on the child's individual needs. For example, some children who are removed may have an adequate amount of clothing and will not receive any funds to purchase additional clothing. Other children who are removed may have very little



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or no appropriate clothing and may receive the full \$200 for initial clothing. Should the child return home or be moved to a different placement, all clothing and personal items must go with the child.

### **Bedding**

DCS may provide 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. Payment for beds and bedding may be made using a voucher/P-card.

### **Client Travel**

For DCS authorized trips out of the county in excess of 100 miles round trip; the relative placement may be reimbursed at the current state mileage rate, by submitting a [State Travel Voucher \(SF 980\)](#). The relative will only be reimbursed for the portion of the trip that exceeds 100 miles (i.e., if a trip total 120 miles, the relative will be reimbursed for 20 miles). DCS local office staff will forward all travel reimbursement forms received to the DCS Local Office Director for approval prior to processing for payment.

### **Recreation**

All recreation expenses for children in relative care may be paid for using personal allowance funds. Recreation expenses include, but are not limited to team sports leagues, lessons (sports, music, dance), special events, summer camp, musical instruments, sporting equipment, youth club dues, and/or community center dues.

### **Education**

Personal allowance funds may be used to cover costs associated with any of the following educational activities: preschool, alternative schools, 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, summer school/programs, application fees, tutoring, internet classes, and extra-curricular activities.

### **Child Care**

In order to receive assistance for child care costs, the relative placement must provide documentation that they have applied to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and have been placed on the waiting list for Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Vouchers. DCS will provide up to \$25 per day or \$125 per week per child, for up to 6 months, or until CCDF begins, whichever occurs first. Children in unlicensed relative placements must attend state licensed child care facilities. Payments for child care expenses may be made using a voucher/P-card.



**Appeals for Additional Funding**

A Family Case Manager (FCM), Supervisor, or DCS Local Office Director can appeal for funds for a relative placement 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., scholarships, donations from local civic organizations, etc.). All appeals will be forwarded to the Regional Manager and Regional Finance Manager with final determination made by the Regional 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

ARCHIVE



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