

Idaho

Adoption Assistance- Who Do You Contact?

State Contact Information

<p style="text-align: center;">Adoption Assistance Specialist</p> <p>NAME: Susan Dwello</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Family and Community Services 450 West State Street, 5th Floor Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>E-MAIL: dwellos@idhw.state.id.us</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208.334.5652</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ICAMA Compact Administrator Or Contact</p> <p>NAME: Susan Dwello</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Family and Community Services 450 West State Street, 5th Floor Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>E-MAIL: dwellos@idhw.state.id.us</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208.334.5652</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Adoption Program Manager or Contact</p> <p>NAME: Susan Dwello</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Family and Community Services 450 West State Street, 5th Floor Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>E-MAIL: dwellos@idhw.state.id.us</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208.334.5652</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ICPC Compact Administrator Or Contact</p> <p>NAME: Kathy McCarroll</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Family and Community Services 450 West State Street, 5th Floor Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208.334.5700</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Post Adoption Services Contact</p> <p>NAME: Susan Dwello</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Family and Community Services 450 West State Street, 5th Floor Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>E-MAIL: dwellos@idhw.state.id.us</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208.334.5652</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Medical Assistance Specialist</p> <p>NAME: Robin Pewtress</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Health and Welfare Division of Medicaid P.O. Box 83720 Boise, Idaho 83720-0036</p> <p>E-MAIL: pewtresdr@idhw.state.id.us</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 208-364-1892</p>

Adoption Assistance- Who is Eligible?

A good place to start. Public adoption in Idaho is administered by the Department of Health and Welfare (DHW), Division of Family and Community Services (DFCS). DHW, DFCS and adoption links: www2.state.id.us/dhw/, www2.state.id.us/dhw/facs/index_facs.htm and www2.state.id.us/dhw/foster_care/english/index.htm. Or phone 208.334.5697.

1. What specific factors or conditions does your state consider to determine that a child cannot be placed with adoptive parents without providing financial assistance? (*"What is your state definition of special needs?"*)

A child with special needs is defined as a child that has at least one of the following needs or circumstances that may be a barrier to placement or adoption without financial assistance:

- Age
- Member of a sibling group of two or more children that must be placed together
- Physical, mental, emotional or medical disability
- At risk of developing a physical, mental, emotional, or medical disability based on known information regarding the birth family and child's history

Note: Children must be legally free for adoption to be eligible for adoption assistance.

2. What are the eligibility criteria for your state-funded adoption assistance program?

In order to be eligible for state-funded adoption assistance a child must be a special needs child as defined above and legally free for adoption.

3. What is the maximum amount a family may receive in non-recurring adoption expenses from your state? Adoptive parents can receive reimbursement of certain approved, "one-time" adoption expenses incurred in the process of finalizing a special needs adoption.

\$2000.00 per child

Note: For cases where the child has not been in the custody of the Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho will not cover legal expenses to complete the termination of parental rights. Once parental rights are terminated and a child is legally free for adoption, legal expenses can be applied to the non-recurring adoption expenses reimbursement.

4. Does your state enter into deferred adoption assistance agreements? In some states, adoptive parents can enter into an agreement in which they choose to defer the receipt of a Medicaid card, the monthly monetary payment, or both and can elect to receive the Medicaid card and/or monetary payment at another time.

Idaho offers deferred assistance. Payments and benefits are established under what is known as "Agreement Only" assistance where no benefits are paid at the adoptive family's request. This type of agreement allows families to return to the state at a later date to open the adoption assistance case for benefits and services needed at that time. For children who are eligible for adoption assistance based on the "at risk" criterion, adoption assistance benefits are not available until such time as the specific disability for which the child is

known to be at risk becomes evident. Once an “at risk” factor becomes evident, the adoptive family must contact the local adoption assistance office to renegotiate/activate the child’s adoption assistance agreement. Contact the nearest DHW regional office, link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/Directory/regions.htm.

5. When may adoption assistance payments and benefits begin in your state?

Adoption assistance payments and benefits may begin in Idaho at adoption finalization. For those children who are not federal adoption assistance (Title IV-E) eligible and are placed outside of Idaho via an interstate adoption, Idaho will negotiate and sign the Idaho state-funded adoption assistance agreement at the time of placement so that adoption assistance benefits, specifically Medicaid, are immediately available to the child in the new state of residence.

6. How are changes made to the adoption assistance agreement in your state?

- a. When can a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- b. How does a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- c. What if a parent does not receive the change they request in the adoption assistance agreement?

Adoptive parents can request a change in the adoption assistance agreement whenever there is a change in the circumstances of the family or the needs of the child. Adoption assistance benefits can be modified at any time prior to the child’s eighteenth birthday. Requests must be made in writing and submitted to the regional Children and Family Services office if the family resides in Idaho. If the family resides outside of the state, requests must be made to the state adoption assistance office. Information detailing the change in the child’s needs must accompany the request in addition to supporting documentation from professional service providers. If the change is due to a change in family circumstance, families must provide written documentation of changes in family income or circumstances. Adoption assistance agreements are reviewed annually in March to provide a yearly opportunity for adoptive families to determine if they need to request changes to the child’s benefits. Families are able to request a fair hearing if they disagree with the response to a requested change. DHW regional offices locator link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/Directory/regions.htm.

Adoption Assistance- Post Adoption Services

7. What types of post adoption services are available in your state and how do I find out more about them?

Post-adoption services in Idaho are administered by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Family and Community Services and include the following examples:

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| 1. Information and referral | 5. Advocacy | 9. Search services (Adoption Registry) |
| 2. Training | 6. Respite | 10. Website |
| 3. Support groups | 7. Residential treatment | |
| 4. Therapeutic intervention/counseling | 8. Case management services | |

Idaho operates a state-wide post adoption services system, with seven regional offices located throughout the state. Services are arranged through contact with the regional Children and Family Services offices or at the state Adoption Assistance Office in Boise, Idaho and residential treatment must be approved through Children’s Mental Health Services. See Question #8 for more information on mental health in Idaho.

Contact the Post Adoption Services Contact, Meri Brennan, via e-mail: brennanm@idhw.state.id.us or phone: 208.334.5697, or the DHW regional office near you, link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/Directory/regions.htm. See Parent Resources for Information, Development, and Education (PRIDE) for training information.

PRIDE is a model for developing and supporting foster and adoptive families, link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/foster_care/english/what's_new/training.htm. See also Idaho's Wednesday's Child program, www.idahowednesdayschild.org/ and PRIDE, link: www.idahowednesdayschild.org/misc/pride.html for free training workshop information.

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or post adoption services contact for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

Adoption Assistance- Medical assistance

8. What mental health services are provided by your state?

Public mental health services for children in Idaho are administered by the Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) through the Division of Family and Community Services (FACS) and the Division of Medicaid. Services include the following examples: assessment and evaluation, clinical case management, family support, respite care, outpatient services, day treatment, prescription medication, therapeutic foster care, residential treatment, inpatient hospitalization, crisis/emergency intervention.

Medicaid finances the majority of children's public mental health services, including services under the Clinic Option, the Rehabilitation Option and Inpatient Services. The FACS's children's mental health program has ten core services (listed above) that are available for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED) and their families. Idaho uses the Least Restrictive theory of service delivery to maintain children in their homes whenever possible. Families, children and mental health clinicians work collaboratively to determine the appropriate mix of services necessary to meet the child and family's needs.

See www2.state.id.us/dhw/facs/index_facs.htm for Idaho's Mental Health Plan for Children and Adults and www2.state.id.us/dhw/childmh/CMH_Services_E.pdf for Children's Mental Health Services, A Parent's Guide. Additional Idaho mental health links for children:

- [Children's Mental Health Services](#)
- [Children's Mental Health Implementation Plan](#)
- [If your child has a serious emotional or behavioral disorder](#)
- [Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services Manual](#)

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or medical assistance specialist for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

9. Does your state provide additional finances or services for medical or therapeutic needs not covered under your state medical plan to children receiving adoption assistance?

Idaho does not provide additional finances or services for medical or therapeutic needs not covered under the state medical plan to children receiving adoption assistance. Medical or therapeutic needs not covered under the state medical plan must be negotiated as part of the Adoption Assistance Agreement, or as an Amendment to the Agreement. Benefits must receive prior authorization from the State Adoption Assistance office before service delivery. DHW regional offices locator link: <http://www2.state.id.us/dhw/Directory/regions.htm>.

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

Adoption Assistance- Fair Hearings

10. What is your state's process for applying for a fair hearing? A fair hearing is a legal, administrative procedure that provides a forum to address disagreements with agency decisions.

Adoptive parents can request a fair hearing when a family receives a written decision denying eligibility or requests for benefits or whenever there is disagreement with a DHW decision that affects their child's adoption assistance benefits. A written letter detailing the fair hearing process is included with every adverse decision notice sent to the adoptive family and includes an application for fair hearing.

The written request for fair hearing must be filed with the Administrative Hearings Office within twenty-eight days of the mailing of the denial of benefits or services. All information on how to file and request the hearing is included with the fair hearing request form sent with the adverse decision notice. The hearing process itself can be conducted in the local Children and Family Services office or by telephone. The family does not have to appear in person at the hearing if they choose a telephone hearing. Families may represent themselves or may bring an advocate(s) to the hearing if they choose. The hearing officer receives written and verbal testimony from all parties and then renders a decision in writing that is sent to the adoptive family. Requests for fair hearing are made by written request to the following address:

Department of Health and Welfare
Administrative Hearings Section
450 W. State Street, 10th Floor
Boise, Idaho 83720-0036

Adoption Assistance- Web/Internet Information

11. What is your state Web address for general adoption information?

Idaho's general adoption links: www2.state.id.us/dhw/foster_care/splash.htm (Click on Spanish or English for information) and www2.state.id.us/dhw/foster_care/english/faq.htm (Frequently Asked Questions)

See also the Idaho Wednesday's Child Frequently Asked Questions about Adoption Children with Special Needs, link: www.idahowednesdayschild.org/faq.html

12. What is your state Web address for adoption assistance information?

Idaho's adoption assistance link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/foster_care/english/faq.htm (See the fourth question under Frequently Asked Questions about Adoption, *Is there financial assistance available for adoptive families?*)

13. What is your state Web address for state-specific medical assistance information for children?

Idaho's state-specific medical assistance links: www2.state.id.us/dhw/medicaid/index.htm, www.idahohealth.org, and www2.state.id.us/dhw/medicaid/for_consumers.htm (Medicaid Information for Consumers)

See also Medicaid for Disabled Children link: www2.state.id.us/dhw/medicaid/consumers/dischild.htm