

Indiana

Adoption Assistance- Who Do You Contact?

State Contact information

Adoption Assistance Specialist	ICAMA Compact Administrator
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Post Adoption Services Contact	Medical Assistance Specialist
<p>NAME:</p> <p>ADDRESS:</p> <p>E-MAIL:</p> <p>TELEPHONE:</p>	<p>NAME:</p> <p>ADDRESS:</p> <p>E-MAIL:</p> <p>TELEPHONE:</p>

Adoption Assistance- Who is Eligible?

A good place to start. Public adoption in Indiana is administered by the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Bureau of Family Protection and Preservation (BFPP). FSSA, BFPP and adoption link(s): www.in.gov/fssa/, www.in.gov/fssa/families/protection/index.html, www.in.gov/fssa/adoption/ and www.ifcaa.org/. Or call 888.25.ADOPT (888.252.3678).

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:

- Two years of age or older
- Member of a sibling group of two or more children of which at least one is two years of age or older and who will be placed with the sibling group in the same home
- Medical condition or a physical, mental or emotional disability at time of adoption petition
- A recognized high risk of developing a medical condition or a physical, mental or emotional disability, as determined and documented by a physician licensed to practice in Indiana or another state or territory

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

"State funded" adoption assistance in Indiana is funded through its counties. It is the court that decides if the child is hard to place and whether county adoption assistance should be awarded. When county adoption assistance is petitioned for, the financial information of the adoptive family is provided to the court and is a factor in determining receipt. The judge of the court in which the adoption is finalized has discretion to determine eligibility and the amount of the adoption assistance payment. Adoptive parents and the county FSSA can initiate application, but approval is by the judge in a court order, it is a judicial determination and order. Children must be in the custody of the state of Indiana to be eligible for state-funded (county) adoption assistance.

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.

\$1,500.00 per child

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.

Indiana offers medical-only adoption assistance agreements or agreements where the monetary amount is zero (\$0). The amount of the adoption assistance payment is a negotiable matter and payments can range from zero to the maximum payment. Even with a zero payment, Medicaid is provided to the eligible child

and adoption assistance agreements are made with the understanding that dollar amounts can be negotiated upon request by the adoptive parents.

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

Adoption assistance payments and benefits may begin for children receiving federal adoption assistance (IV-E) at adoption placement. For children receiving county funded adoption assistance, assistance begins at the date established in the court order when a petition for adoption has been filed which seeks adoption assistance payment is ordered by the court.

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 or adjustment in the adoption assistance agreement at any time after the agreement is signed. Changes are made with the mutual agreement of both the state agency through the local county office and the adoptive parent(s). Parents are directed to contact their adoption assistance worker by phone to request changes or to mail requests to the local county office. A new adoption assistance agreement will be drafted to include approved changes and parents will need to sign the new agreement prior to the change taking effect. If an adoptive parent does not receive the requested change to the adoption assistance agreement, they can seek a fair hearing to dispute the issue. See Question #10 for information regarding fair hearing.

Indiana's regional adoption program contact information: www.in.gov/fssa/adoption/offices.html.

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 Indiana are contracted through outside agencies and include the following examples:

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| 1. Information and referral | 4. Support groups |
| 2. Education programs | 5. Respite |
| 3. Educational materials | 6. Adoption History Registry |

Contact your adoption assistance worker or adoption specialist for referral. Indiana's regional adoption program contact information: www.in.gov/fssa/adoption/offices.html. Many private organizations offer a variety of respite options. See Indiana's Respite Programs, link: www.respitelocator.org/i2states.htm.

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?

Indiana's mental health care is administered through the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, Division of Mental Health and Addiction and its Hoosier Assurance Plan (HAP). Services include the following examples: out patient and inpatient hospital, psychological, inpatient psychiatric care, prescription drugs, and case management. Indiana's mental health general link: www.in.gov/fssa/servicemental/ and link to services information: www.in.gov/fssa/servicemental/.

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?

Indiana offers what is known as *Adoption Clearance Trust Funds*. Depending on availability, county funds can be used to supplement adoption assistance benefits up to 100 percent of the daily rate (per diem) received.

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.

All applicants for federal IV-E adoption assistance have the right to request a fair hearing when their application is denied or when action is not taken within forty-five days of the date of application. Parents also have the right to request a fair hearing if agreement cannot be reached on the adoption assistance agreement through the negotiation process with the agency. Notice of the right to a fair hearing is explained in print on the initial assistance application form and written notice is also sent to the adoptive parent(s) when a reduction or termination of payment affecting their child's assistance is scheduled to occur. Written notice of fair hearing includes an explanation of fair hearing and appeal procedures. Requests must be made in writing within thirty days of the contested action. Send requests for fair hearing to the following address:

Hearings and Appeal Section
402 W. Washington , W396
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Adoption Assistance- Web/Internet Information

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

Indiana's general adoption link: www.in.gov/fssa/adoption/faq.html

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

Indiana's adoption assistance link: www.in.gov/fssa/adoption/legal.html#_Toc33512232 On the page, *Legal Issues in Adoption*, see the last two full paragraphs at the bottom of the page entitled "Adoption Assistance" and "County Adoption Subsidy".

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

Indiana's state-specific medical assistance link: www.in.gov/fssa/healthcare/