

# Mississippi Adoption Assistance- Who Do You Contact?

## State Contact information

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adoption Assistance Specialist</b></p> <p>NAME: Edna F. Hollie</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Family and Children Services 750 North State Street Jackson, Mississippi 39202</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:ehollie@mdhs.state.ms.us">ehollie@mdhs.state.ms.us</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 601.359.4498</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICAMA Compact Administrator or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Phoebe Clark</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Family and Children Services 750 North State Street Jackson, Mississippi 39202</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:pclark@mdhs.state.ms.us">pclark@mdhs.state.ms.us</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 601.359.4981</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adoption Program Manager Or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Bridget Powell</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Family and Children Services 750 North State Street Jackson, Mississippi 39202</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:bpowell@mdhs.state.ms.us">bpowell@mdhs.state.ms.us</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 601.359.4498</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICPC Compact Administrator Or Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Patricia Hickman</p> <p>ADDRESS: Department of Human Services Family and Children Services 750 North State Street Jackson, Mississippi 39202</p> <p>E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:phickman@mdhs.state.ms.us">phickman@mdhs.state.ms.us</a></p> <p>TELEPHONE: 601.359.4986</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Post Adoption Services Contact</b></p> <p>NAME: Patricia Digsby</p> <p>ADDRESS:  P.O. Box 1576 Fulton, Mississippi 38843</p> <p>E-MAIL:</p> <p>TELEPHONE: 601.862.7318</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Medical Assistance Specialist</b></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 Mississippi is administered by The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS). Mississippi's DHS and adoption links: [www.mdhs.state.ms.us/index.html](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/index.html) and [www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs\\_adoptall.html](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs_adoptall.html). Or contact the Adoption Resource Exchange, phone: 800.821.9157.

- 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:

- Six years of age or older
- Racial or ethnic factors
- Member of a sibling group of two or more children placed together for adoption
- Physical disability
- Mental disability
- Developmental disability
- Emotional disturbance
- Medical conditions
- History of abuse that puts a child at risk of having special needs

- 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.

- 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.**

\$1,000.00

- 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.**

Mississippi offers deferred adoption assistance.

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

Adoption assistance payments may begin in Mississippi at adoption placement.

- 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 may request a change in the adoption assistance agreement at any time. Parents must submit a written request for change to the DHS Administrator and include current documentation of the child's special needs. The state office Administrator approves or disapproves any changes in agreements.

## **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 Mississippi are administered by the DHS Family and Children Services regional offices and through organizations such as the Mississippi Adoption Resource Exchange and Families First Resource Centers. Services include the following examples:

- |                             |                                       |            |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Information and referral | 4. Therapeutic intervention (limited) | 7. Respite |
| 2. Educational materials    | 5. Counseling                         |            |
| 3. Support groups           | 6. Retreats                           |            |

Contact the local Department of Family and Children's Services office to access post adoption services. DFCS Regional Directors contact link: [www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs\\_rd.html](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs_rd.html). Contact the Adoption Resource Exchange at 601.359.4407 or 800.821.9157.

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 Mississippi are administered by the Office of the Governor, Division of Medicaid (DOM) and include the following examples: inpatient and outpatient hospital, physician services, prescription drugs, psychiatric residential treatment, and inpatient psychiatric care. The DOM link: [www.medicaid.state.ms.us/](http://www.medicaid.state.ms.us/). The DOM Contact Guide and Services for Medicaid Beneficiaries pages are also available on this site. Or phone the Medicaid Central Office: 601.359.6050.

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?**

Mississippi does not offer additional finances or services for medical or therapeutic needs not covered under their state medical plan to children receiving adoption assistance.

## **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.

Requests for fair hearing in Mississippi can be made whenever there is a disagreement regarding an agency action affecting an application for or receipt of adoption assistance. Adoptive parents must file a written grievance requesting a fair hearing with the Department of Human Services (DHS). The written request must be sent to DHS within ten working days of the date of the contested agency decision. Fair hearings are held within sixty calendar days of the receipt of the written request and notices of the proposed hearing shall be sent to all involved parties at least thirty calendar days prior to the fair hearing,

## **Adoption Assistance- Web/Internet Information**

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

Mississippi's general adoption link: [www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs\\_howadopt.html](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs_howadopt.html)

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

Mississippi's adoption assistance link: [www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs\\_whoare.html](http://www.mdhs.state.ms.us/fcs_whoare.html). See under the heading, "Most of the children have special needs. They are..." for a description of children eligible for adoption assistance.

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

Mississippi's state-specific medical assistance link: [www.medicaid.state.ms.us/](http://www.medicaid.state.ms.us/)