



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Social Services

325 North Salisbury Street • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408
Courier # 56-20-25-MS# 2408

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
(919) 733-3155

May 5, 2011

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DSS CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS
ADOPTION SUPERVISORS
LICENSED PRIVATE CHILD PLACING AGENCY**

SUBJECT: ADOPTION PROMOTION GUIDANCE

The purpose of this letter is to provide additional guidance in terms of the distribution of the Adoption Promotion funds when county departments of Social Services engage with a private child placing agency to select an approved family for a child who is in foster care and has adoption as the permanent plan. The Division of Social Services has encouraged public and private agencies to work in partnership in order to enhance recruitment and adoptive opportunities for waiting children. The overall intent is to promote enhanced collaboration between the public and private agencies as a creative means of improving overall outcomes for waiting children.

Adoption Promotion Program Funds are intended to increase the pool of available resource families who will adopt children in the legal custody of county departments of Social Services. These funds are available to all county DSS agencies and all NC licensed private child placing agencies.

The primary activities generally directed at the Adoption Promotion funds to support the agencies activities such as:

1. Recruitment – Agency activities to locate and work with families that are not actively engaged in the adoption process, but are able and willing to care for children who are eligible for adoption.
2. Screening and Pre-placement – Agency conducting the process of mutual selection between the prospective adoptive individual(s) and the agency to determine if the goals are in alignment and meet the laws, rules and policies related to adoption services, and further serve the best interests of our children.
3. Training – Agency transferring the knowledge skills and abilities to the prospective adoptive individual(s) in order to ensure that a child placed will receive the care required and achieve permanency.
4. Monitoring and Support – Agency ensures the individual(s) continue to meet the requirements of law, rule and policy and have the support to ensure the long term ability to meet those and promote the ongoing permanency needs of eligible children.

If the adopting family has only received services from the public agency, then the public agency is eligible for all the funds. Where the private agency has primarily provided the above services, they are eligible for all the funds. In situations where the private agency and public agency have shared together the responsibility to complete these goals, then the two agencies involved will mutually determine how the funds will be shared based on the actual services provided by each agency. This agreement should almost always be reached "up-front" and in advance of the actual placement. It would not be appropriate for a public agency to request the full funding if the private agency did the majority of the functions, and the same is true if the public agency did the majority of the service functions. Legal clearance is the responsibility of the public agency and is not a service to be considered under this contract. The purpose of the fund is to recognize and provide financial support to agencies that demonstrate a capacity to secure homes for children deemed hardest to place.

Public agencies are entitled to count the completed adoption as part of their baseline goal regardless of how the funds are dispersed; the private agencies are no longer required to meet baselines.

The funds provided are specifically earmarked for these purposes and whether the activities outlined are performed by a public or private agency, it is that agency which is entitled to the additional funding. When the adoption services specified are performed by more than one agency then the funds may be shared. The funding levels noted in the February 1, 2011 County Director's letter remains the same.

If you have questions, regarding the Adoption Promotion Program, please contact Amelia Lance at (919) 334-1096 or Amelia.lance@dhhs.nc.gov. Requests for payments, including all of the required documentation described in this letter should be sent to Ms. Lance at the following address:

Amelia Lance
North Carolina Division of Social Services
Child Welfare Services Section
325 N. Salisbury Street, Suite 725
2408 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2408

Sincerely,



Kevin Kelley, Interim Section Chief
Child Welfare Services

cc: Sherry Bradsher
Jack Rogers
Children's Program Representatives
Local Business Liaisons
Licensed Child Placing Agencies

CWS-11-11