



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MAURA D. CORRIGAN
DIRECTOR

April 17, 2012

The Honorable Bruce Caswell, Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan State Senate
Lansing, Michigan 48933

The Honorable David Agema, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan House of Representatives
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Senator Caswell and Representative Agema:

Section 556 (1) of 2011 Public Act 63 requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to report quarterly on adoption subsidy notification, post-adoption training, adoption subsidy hearings and subsidy payment policy.

The department complies with both federal and state requirements to notify prospective adoptive parents about the Michigan Adoption Subsidy Assistance Programs with the DHS Publication-538. The DHS Pub-538 brochure, Michigan Adoption Subsidy Programs - Information for Prospective Adoptive Parents, is available through the Office Services Unit of DHS or online under the Adoption category of the DHS public website: www.michigan.gov/dhs-publications. State law requires that this publication be provided to prospective adoptive parents of children who are under the care and supervision of DHS prior to their adoptive placement and signatory acknowledgement of this information is required on DHS Form 3153A. If Michigan does not have responsibility for placement and care, or is otherwise unaware of the adoption of a potential special needs child, it is incumbent upon the adoptive family to request adoption subsidy on behalf of the child. This policy is consistent with the intent and purpose of the statute to promote the adoption of special needs children who are in the public foster care system.

From January 1, 2012 to March 31, 2011, the department received zero (0) requests from adoptive parents for funds or reimbursement of costs to attend conferences that include training or discussion of significant adoption issues. Although the Adoption Subsidy office does not have funds to provide post-adoption training, families are referred to their local DHS office for further information. Training costs for adoptive families may be covered under the Adoption and Foster Care Recruitment and Retention allocation distributed to local DHS offices. Approval for these funds is based upon the number of requests received and current budget constraints.

The purpose of support and medical subsidies is to assist with the costs of caring for a child with special needs. An adoptive child may be eligible to receive a support subsidy or a medical subsidy or both. The subsidies are intended to help with the costs of raising the child, but not to cover every expense. Adoption Subsidy policy requires issuance of a negative action if it is determined that a parent is not using the Adoption Subsidy payments to financially support his or her child. Parents have due process to submit evidence to negate the negative action and the right to an administrative hearing if payments are stopped. If a child is placed in a residential setting that is funded through the medical subsidy program, parents agree to have their support subsidy payments stopped. If a child is placed as a temporary ward in foster care, the court may order that the adoption subsidy payments stop.

From January 1, 2012 to March 31, 2012, the Adoption Subsidy office received one (1) fair hearing request from adoptive parents challenging the maximum amount of the adoption subsidy agreement; zero (0) fair hearing requests alleging that a means test or similar test was used; zero (0) fair hearing requests alleging that an adoption subsidy amount was reduced without the consent of the adoptive parent; and zero (0) fair hearing requests alleging that payments were suspended when the child was still in the custody of the adoptive parent and being supported by the parent, but no longer in the physical care of that adoptive parent.

If you have questions, or need additional information please contact Scott Parrott, Director, Child Welfare Field Operations, at (517) 373-3985.

Sincerely,



Susan Kangas
Chief Financial Officer

cc: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees
Senate and House Fiscal Agencies
Senate and House Policy Offices
State Budget Director