



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING



ISMAEL AHMED  
DIRECTOR

September 29, 2009

The Honorable Bill Hardiman, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Michigan State Senate  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

The Honorable Dudley Spade, Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Michigan House of Representatives  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Senator Hardiman and Representative Spade:

Section 556 of 2008 Public Act No. 248 requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to report 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 DHS Office Services unit or online under the "adoption" category of the DHS public Web site: [www.michigan.gov/dhs-publications](http://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.

In fiscal year 2008, the Adoption Subsidy Program office received three requests from adoptive parents for funds or reimbursement of costs to attend conferences that include training or discussion of significant adoption issues. The Adoption Subsidy office does not have funds to provide post adoption training; however, 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 on the number of requests received and current budget constraints. The department does not track reimbursement of post-adoption services since there is no program or funds allocated

for this purpose. The department may advocate that SBO set aside specific funds if a substantial need arises in the future.

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 their 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. In fiscal year 2008 the department received eight fair hearing requests from adoptive parents challenging the maximum amount of the adoption subsidy agreement. In fiscal year 2008, no requests were received alleging that a means test or similar test was used; no requests were received alleging that an adoption subsidy amount was reduced without the consent of the adoptive parent; and no payments were suspended when the child was still in the custody of the adoptive parent, but no longer in the physical care of that adoptive parent.

If you have questions, or need additional information please contact Terry A. Salacina, Field Operations deputy director, at 517-373-3570.

Sincerely,



Ismael Ahmed

Attachments

C: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Senate and House Fiscal Agencies  
Senate and House Policy Offices  
State Budget Office