

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENT DURATION

Adoption assistance amendments can last for one year. The DCF will contact the adoptive parents in writing at least 120 days before the expiration of the amended agreement. The DCF will ask if the adoptive parents want to continue the amended agreement for one more year.

If the amended agreement is continued, the DCF will contact the adoptive parents at least 120 days before the expiration of the amended agreement. At this time the DCF will ask the parents to complete updated forms about the child. The adoptive parents will complete the adoption assistance amendment process. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will determine if the amendment will:

- be continued at the amended rate, **or**
- decreased based on the child's current needs, **or**
- returned to the amount on the original adoption assistance agreement.

The amended adoption assistance amount cannot be lower than the original adoption assistance rate.

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE REVIEWS AND APPEALS

The adoptive parents may appeal an amendment decision made by the DCF if:

- The amendment request was denied.
- The adoptive parents are not satisfied with the amount offered for the amendment.

The adoptive parents may request an appeal in writing to the Division of Hearing and Appeals at P.O. Box 7875, Madison, WI 53707-7875. The request for an administrative hearing must be submitted no later than 30 days from the written decision from DCF.

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENT HELP

Adoptive parents may contact the Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist to request consultation on adoption assistance amendments. The Amendment Specialist may be reached by:

- calling 866-666-5532 (toll free),
- sending an email to AAAmendments@wisconsin.gov
- Writing to P.O. Box 8916, Madison, WI 53708-8916.



The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please call (608) 266-8787. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled can use the free Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711 to contact the department.

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENTS



Information for Families

DIVISION OF SAFETY AND PERMANENCE



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

ABOUT ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENTS

Many children adopted from foster care are at a greater risk of special care needs. These needs may include mental, physical, or developmental health challenges, disruptive behavior, medical problems, or other special care needs. Adoptive families often need support to help meet their needs. Adoption assistance provides support to these adoptive families.

Some children have increased special care needs as they grow. If a child develops more needs, the family may need more support. An adoption assistance amendment may increase support.

An adoption assistance amendment increases the amount of the monthly adoption assistance subsidy. If the family has an adoption assistance agreement with no subsidy, an amendment may allow the family to begin receiving a subsidy.

Families may apply for an adoption assistance amendment if they have a signed adoption assistance agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) in effect. To apply for an amendment, there must have been a change in circumstance to the child's special care needs since the original agreement was signed. This may be physical, behavioral, or emotional.

Families may apply for an adoption assistance amendment if they believe there was an increase in needs and it:

- has been at least 12 months since the adoption of the child, **or**
- has been at least 12 months since the last amended request was denied, **or**
- is within 120 days before the expiration date of an amended agreement.



ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENT RATES

The original adoption assistance subsidy is based on the Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting Policy. It has three types of rates:

- The basic rate, which is based on the child's age.
- The supplemental rate, which is based on the child's emotional, behavioral, and physical needs.
- The exceptional rate, which is based on extra needs the child may have.

The three above types of rates are added together to determine the subsidy amount. The subsidy amount cannot be greater than \$2,000.

If the adoptive parents have an original adoption assistance agreement with a subsidy, the amended rate will be calculated by:

- The basic rate from the original adoption assistance agreement.
- The supplemental rate based in the child's current emotional, behavioral, and physical needs. This is the part of the rate that will increase if the child's needs increased. If the child was at the highest number of points possible for this rate, this amount will not increase.
- The exceptional rate from the original adoption assistance agreement. If there was no exceptional rate in the original agreement, there will be no exceptional rate in the amended amount.

If the adoptive parents have an original adoption assistance agreement with no subsidy, the amended rate will be calculated by:

- The basic rate in effect at the time the amendment is requested,
- The supplemental rate based on the child's current emotional, behavioral, and physical needs.

No exceptional rate can be established.

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE AMENDMENT PROCESS

The family will apply for the adoption assistance amendment. The following process must be completed to get an amendment:

1. The family will contact the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to get the correct forms.
2. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will send the family the correct forms to complete.
3. The family will fill out the forms about the child's needs. These forms have information on behavioral, emotional, and physical needs.
4. The family will have professionals complete the forms to verify the child's increased needs.
5. The family will submit complete forms to the Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist.
6. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will review the forms. The specialist may ask for more information from the parents. The specialist may also require the child to see a specialist to give more information about the child's needs.
7. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will do a background check on the adoptive parents. If the adoptive parents have a substantiated child abuse or neglect finding for the child, the amendment will be denied.
8. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will approve or deny the request.
9. If approved, the Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will determine the new amended rate.
10. The specialist will send the decision to deny or approve with the new rate to the family in writing.
11. If the amendment is approved and the family agrees with the rate, the family will sign the amended adoption assistance agreement.
12. The Adoption Assistance Amendment Specialist will start the new subsidy amount for up to one year.