

Adoption Assistance Program

The Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) is an entitlement program to provide financial and medical coverage to facilitate the adoption of children who otherwise would remain in long-term foster care. The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 created federal incentives to encourage the adoption of special needs children. The California State Legislature created the Adoption Assistance Program with the intent to provide the security and stability of a permanent home through adoption. AAP eligible children may receive federally funded benefits or non-federally funded benefits per state guidelines. The request for AAP benefits, the eligibility determination, benefit negotiation and execution of the AAP agreement must be completed prior to the adoption finalization.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the AAP benefits that an AAP eligible child may receive?

- Monthly negotiated rate
- Medical coverage (Medicaid/Medi-Cal)
- Reimbursement of Nonrecurring adoption expenses (up to \$400 per child per adoption)
- Payment for an eligible out of home placement
- Payment for eligible Wraparound services
- Benefits may continue in a subsequent adoption
- Continues regardless of the adoptive family's state or country of residence
- If eligible, benefits may continue to age 21

What is the amount of the monthly financial AAP benefit?

The negotiated AAP benefits are based on the child's needs and the circumstances of the family which may not exceed the rate the child would have received had they remained in foster care. The intent of AAP benefits is to assist adoptive parents with their child's lifelong needs and not the short-term monetary needs that may occur during a crisis. If the child's needs require a higher level of care and supervision, they may be eligible to receive a Special Care Increment (SCI) in addition to the AAP basic rate. A child who is developmentally delayed and eligible to receive California Regional Center services may receive the dual agency rate plus eligible supplemental rate.

What if the adoptive parent(s) does not wish to receive AAP benefits for their AAP eligible child?

If the adoptive parent(s) elect to not to receive AAP benefits for their child, they are encouraged to sign a deferred AAP agreement. A deferred agreement will retain their child's eligibility should the adoptive parents request benefits at an unspecified future date.