

ADOPTION SUBSIDY & GUARDIANSHIP PAYMENT NEGOTIATIONS

Courtney Smith, MSW
Adoption and Permanency Manager
Office of Child Welfare
Department of Children and Families

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy (MAS) & Guardianship Assistance Payments (GAP)

- Adoptions-65C-16.013(1), F.A.C.:
 - The purpose of adoption subsidy is to make available to prospective adoptive parents financial aid which would enable them to adopt a special needs child.
- GAP-65C-44.003(1), F.A.C.:
 - The purpose of the guardianship assistance payment is to make financial assistance available to permanent guardians to enable them to provide care for a qualifying child.

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy (MAS) & Guardianship Assistance Payments (GAP)

- The initial determination of the monthly maintenance subsidy shall be based on the needs of the child at the time of the *negotiation* and the projected future needs of the child based on the family and medical history of the child and birth family and caregiver.
 - Adoption F.S. 409.166 – Effective July 1, 2007
 - Beginning amount: \$417.00
 - GAP F.S. 39.6225-Effecitve July 1, 2019
 - Beginning amount: \$333.00

MAS or GAP NEGOTIATIONS: WHAT TO CONSIDER

- In conjunction with the prospective caregiver(adoptive parent or guardian) factors to identify are:
 - The immediate and long term needs of the child;
 - The services required to meet the child's needs;
 - Service costs;
 - Family's ability to provide the services;
 - Other community resources and supports;

MAS or GAP NEGOTIATIONS: WHAT TO CONSIDER

- Assess the family's overall ability to incorporate an individual child into their household.
- If the youth is 16 or 17 years old, are they eligible for EMAS or EGAP.
- No family or circumstance is similar therefore each family may not have an identical monthly payment amount.

MAS & GAP NEGOTIATIONS: REMINDERS

- Under no circumstances can the amount of payment be greater than the family foster care board rate that would be paid if the child was in a family foster home setting at the time of the request for payment.
- The use of a means test is prohibited in the process of selecting a in *negotiating an assistance agreement*, including the amount of the monthly payment.

Enhanced Payments

- Section 65C-16.013(8) and s. 65C-44.003(7), F.A.C. outlines that a CBC can negotiate a payment up to 100% of the statewide foster care board rate.
- Based on the 2019 foster parent cost of living allowance increase, a CBC will be able to approve MAS/GAP amounts up to the statewide foster care board rates identified in the Department's annual "Foster Parent Cost of Living Allowance Increase" memo.

Enhanced Payments cont.

- Any rate over the statewide foster care board rates must be approved by the Department Regional Family Safety Program Office.
- All adoption subsidy enhanced payments must have the "Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Approval" form signed and attached to the Adoption Assistance Agreement and uploaded into FSFN filing cabinet.
- All GAP enhanced payments must have the "Guardianship Assistance Payment Approval" form signed and attached to the Guardianship Assistance Agreement and uploaded into the FSFN filing cabinet.

Foster Care Board Rates

- Effective January 1, 2019, the room and board rates to level II-V foster parents was adjusted as follows:

Age Range	2018 Room and Board Rate	Room and Board Rate Effective January 1, 2019
Zero to Five (0 – 5)	\$457.95	\$466.65
Six to Twelve (6 – 12)	\$469.68	\$478.60
Thirteen to Twenty-one (13 – 21)	\$549.74	\$560.19

LEVEL I FOSTER CARE BOARD RATES WILL ALWAYS REMAIN: \$333.00

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS