



ADOPTION FINAL REPORT

Department of Children and Families

Office of Child Welfare

July 31, 2017

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Purpose

Section 409.166, Florida Statutes, describes the intent to protect and promote the right of every child to have the stability and security of a permanent family, especially when that child cannot safely return to his/her birth parents due to abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Maintenance adoption subsidies and medical assistance enable families to consider adoption of special needs children who have been traumatized by abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Proviso Language for line item 342A in the 2016 General Appropriations Act (Chapter 2016-66, Laws of Florida) required the Department of Children and Families (Department) to provide the number of adoptions finalized, the average maintenance adoption subsidy amounts, the number of adoptions receiving an enhanced subsidy, and the average enhanced subsidy amounts by Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBC) for adoptions that occurred from July 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017. The proviso language also required the Department to provide a year-end projection of the total funding need for maintenance adoption subsidies based on the aforementioned data.

Maintenance adoption subsidy payments are negotiated for every child adopted who meets the definition of “special needs” outlined in section 409.166, Florida Statutes. Once an agreement on the amount of the maintenance adoption subsidy is reached, all parties sign an Adoption Assistance Agreement outlining the amount of subsidy that the family will receive. Per section 65C-16.013(7), Florida Administrative Code, maintenance adoption subsidy negotiations must begin at \$417.00. If the family requests a maintenance adoption subsidy amount higher than the current Statewide Foster Care Board Payment that includes the annual cost of care living increase (\$527.36), approval of the Department’s regional managing director or designee is required. All maintenance adoption subsidy amounts above the Statewide Foster Care Board Payment of \$527.26 are considered to be enhanced subsidies. These subsidies may be provided to children who have behavioral, medical, or therapeutic concerns that may cause a higher level of care from the adoptive parents.

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy

Northwest Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 1/31/2017
Region: Northwest

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Big Bend CBC	107	\$451.19	4	\$1,726.68
Families First Network	129	\$474.22	7	\$1,897.22
Northwest Region Total	236	\$463.78	11	\$1,835.21

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Northwest Region's two CBCs finalized 236 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 236 finalized adoptions, 11 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 4.6 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Northwest Region.

Northeast Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between
7/1/2016- 1/31/2017
Region: Northeast

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Community Partnership for Children	135	\$433.93	16	\$863.97
Family Integrity Program	14	\$511.21	1	\$1,667.22
Family Support Services of North Fla	153	\$359.07	9	\$887.17
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	51	\$416.23	0	\$0.00
Partnership for Strong Families	110	\$451.30	5	\$2,206.77
Northeast Region Total	463	\$413.70	31	\$1,113.20

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Northeast Region's five CBCs finalized 463 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 463 adoptions finalized, 31 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 6.7 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Northeast Region.

Central Region

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 1/31/2017 Region: Central

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Brevard Family Partnership	48	\$607.73	7	\$1,711.64
Community Based Care of Central FL	156	\$412.86	4	\$1,275.00
Heartland for Children	58	\$403.84	1	\$862.00
Kids Central, Inc.	103	\$439.69	2	\$969.20
Central Region Total	365	\$444.63	14	\$1,420.14

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Central Region's four CBCs finalized 365 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 365 adoptions finalized, 14 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 3.8 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Central Region.

Suncoast

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 1/31/2017 Region: Suncoast

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Childrens Network of SW Florida	107	\$444.47	6	\$959.50
Eckerd Community Alternatives	195	\$472.39	15	\$1,429.61
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	173	\$471.95	19	\$1,090.43
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	80	\$421.06	3	\$926.67
Suncoast Region Total	555	\$459.47	43	\$1,179.05

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Suncoast Region's four CBCs finalized 555 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 555 adoptions finalized, 43 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 7.7 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Suncoast Region.

Southeast

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 1/31/2017 Region: Southeast

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
ChildNet-Broward	148	\$480.49	9	\$1,582.49
ChildNet-Palm Beach	98	\$420.18	0	\$0.00
Devereux CBC	81	\$407.93	0	\$0.00
Southeast Region Total	327	\$444.44	9	\$1,582.49

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Southeast Region's three CBCs finalized 327 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 327 adoptions finalized, nine of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 2.7 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Southeast Region.

Southern

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 1/31/2017 Region: Southern

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	240	\$364.03	18	\$928.54
Southern Region Total	240	\$364.03	18	\$928.54

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The Southern Region's one CBC finalized 240 adoptions between July 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. The chart above illustrates that of the 240 adoptions finalized, 18 of these children received an enhanced subsidy amount. The number of children who received an enhanced subsidy represents 7.5 percent of the total finalized adoptions in the Southern Region.

Statewide

Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Amount for Children Adopted Between 7/1/2016- 1/31/2017 Statewide

CBC	Number of Adoptions	Average Subsidy Amount	Number of Adoptions with Enhanced Subsidy	Average Enhanced Subsidy Amount
Big Bend CBC	107	\$451.19	4	\$1,726.68
Brevard Family Partnership	48	\$607.73	7	\$1,711.64
ChildNet-Broward	148	\$480.49	9	\$1,582.49
ChildNet-Palm Beach	98	\$420.18	0	\$0.00
Childrens Network of SW Florida	107	\$444.47	6	\$959.50
Community Based Care of Central Fl	156	\$412.86	4	\$1,275.00
Community Partnership for Children	135	\$433.93	16	\$863.97
Devereux CBC	81	\$407.93	0	\$0.00
Eckerd Community Alternatives	195	\$472.39	15	\$1,429.61
Eckerd Community Hillsborough	173	\$471.95	19	\$1,090.43
Families First Network	129	\$474.22	7	\$1,897.22
Family Integrity Program	14	\$511.21	1	\$1,667.22
Family Support Services of North Fla	153	\$359.07	9	\$887.17
Heartland for Children	58	\$403.84	1	\$862.00
Kids Central, Inc.	103	\$439.69	2	\$969.20
Kids First of Florida, Inc.	51	\$416.23	0	\$0.00
Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc	240	\$364.03	18	\$928.54
Partnership for Strong Families	110	\$451.30	5	\$2,206.77
Sarasota Y/Safe Children Coalition	80	\$421.06	3	\$926.67
Statewide	2,186	\$435.04	126	\$1,239.95

Source: OCWDRU Data Request #1681

The chart above provides a statewide listing of the total number of adoptions, average subsidy amount, the number of enhanced subsidies, and the average enhanced subsidy amount for adoptions from July 1, 2016 through January 31, 2017. For that time period, a total of 2,186 adoptions were finalized statewide. Of these adoptions, 5.8 percent (or 126) resulted in enhanced subsidies being offered to the families at a statewide average of \$1,239.95.

Year-End Projections

State of Florida, Department of Children and Families (DCF) Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Mid-Year MAS Allocations, DCF Office of CBC/ME Financial Accountability

Child Welfare Lead Agency (CBC)	Current MAS Budget Allocation in Schedule of Funds (09/08/2016)	Total Projected MAS Expenditures from CBCs in Jan 2017	Difference between MAS in Current Schedule of Funds and Total Projected MAS Expenditures
Big Bend CBC	\$8,087,338	\$8,231,166	(\$143,828)
Brevard Family Partnership	\$3,743,945	\$3,819,678	(\$75,733)
CBC of Central Florida	\$11,611,188	\$11,448,023	\$163,165
ChildNet-Broward	\$10,852,230	\$11,402,657	(\$550,427)
ChildNet-Palm Beach	\$9,667,994	\$9,641,544	\$26,450
Children's Network of SW Fla	\$6,831,811	\$7,317,255	(\$485,444)
Community Partnership for Children	\$8,791,950	\$9,060,022	(\$268,072)
Devereux CBC	\$5,277,697	\$5,931,369	(\$653,672)
Eckerd-Hillsborough	\$18,169,169	\$18,276,287	(\$107,118)
Eckerd-Pasco/Pinellas	\$19,811,894	\$19,519,345	\$292,549
Families First Network	\$10,506,326	\$11,078,400	(\$572,074)
Family Support Services of N Fla	\$17,214,763	\$16,801,336	\$413,427
Heartland for Children	\$8,859,225	\$8,341,953	\$517,272
Kids Central	\$8,274,206	\$8,120,539	\$153,667
Kids First of Florida	\$1,791,937	\$1,851,464	(\$59,527)
Our Kids of Miami-Dade & Monroe	\$20,533,933	\$20,634,027	(\$100,094)
Partnership for Strong Families	\$9,553,529	\$9,580,606	(\$27,077)
Sarasota Family YMCA	\$7,324,659	\$7,267,092	\$57,567
St Johns County - Family Integrity Program	\$1,176,027	\$1,272,628	(\$96,601)
Total Allocated MAS in CBC Sch of Funds	\$188,079,821	\$189,595,391	(\$1,515,570)
Total MAS unallocated (Jan 2017)	\$3,000,002		
Total MAS Budget for FY16/17	\$191,079,823		

MAS = maintenance adoption subsidy

The Department has seen a growth in adoption finalizations over the past year, which has resulted in more families receiving a maintenance adoption subsidy. Each year, the Department requests that the CBCs provide a year-end projection of the amount of funding needed to support maintenance adoption subsidy payments until the end of the fiscal year. The chart above reflects the SFY 2016-2017 CBC maintenance adoption subsidy end of year projections as of January 2017. The chart also indicates that 6 of the 19 CBCs' projections are currently within their anticipated allocations.

At the end of January 2017, the difference between the maintenance adoption subsidy in the Current Schedule of Funds and the Total Projected Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Funds was greater than the Current Maintenance Adoption Subsidy Budget Allocation in the Schedule of Funds. However, Proviso Language for line item 342A in the 2016 General Appropriations Act (Chapter 2016-66, Laws of Florida) gave the Department the ability to re-allocate maintenance adoption subsidy allocations to CBCs that are projecting a year-end deficit.

Thus a reallocation of Schedule of Funds occurred for each CBC to account for adjustments in the CBC's initial maintenance adoption subsidy projections in March 2017. As a result, the total unallocated maintenance adoption subsidy funds are \$1,484,430. Additionally, the Department maintains a reserve of \$1 million to account for reallocation of maintenance adoption subsidy funds.

As previously noted, the implementation of the Adoption Benefits Program for State and Other Qualifying Employees found in section 409.1664, Florida Statutes, and the Adoption Incentive Program located in section 409.1662, Florida Statutes, are potential factors that may contribute to the continued rise in the total number of families adopting from the foster care system.

Conclusions

Maintenance adoption subsidy has proven to be an important support in the adoptions of foster children with special needs. Subsidies have enabled a new population of families to adopt children with special needs, especially foster parents and relative caregivers who develop a commitment and nurturing relationship with these children. As a result, thousands of children each year are being nurtured by permanent adoptive families in Florida's communities rather than remaining in foster care.