

FAQ's from Adoptive Families

1. How do I get my child's birth certificate once the adoption is finalized?

Once your child's adoption is finalized you can request the child's new birth certificate through the Department of Vital Records or the Town Hall in which your child was born. Be sure you get the name of the town and/or state your adoptive child was born in prior to adoption. Typically your child's new birth certificate will be available approximately four months after the adoption is finalized as a new birth certificate is created.

A copy of a child's **uncertified** original birth certificate can be obtained if they meet **all** of the three criteria below:

1. They were born and adopted in Connecticut
2. Their adoption was finalized after October 2, 1983
3. They are over the age of 18 on or after July 1, 2015

If your child was born out of state, please contact the following:

The Connecticut Department of Health
Vital Records Section
410 Capital Avenue, MS#11 VRS
Hartford, CT 06106

If your child was born in Puerto Rico there have been many changes to that process. Please find more information about that process: www.prfaa.com/birthcertificates. Should you continue to have challenges in obtaining a birth certificate from Puerto Rico, contact the DCF Subsidy unit: 860-550-6608 or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document.

2. How do I get my child's Social Security card in my child's adopted name?

After the birth certificate is obtained, only the adoptive parent's can obtain the child's new social security card through the social security administration. This can be done by applying through your local Social Security office. Please review this process on the Social Security website: <http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/>

3. If I have moved or am planning to move, what do I do?

If you move and do not notify the Department in writing it may delay correspondence from the subsidy unit and your financial subsidy getting to you in a timely manner.

If you have moved or are planning to move, you will need to send a notarized letter with your current and new address to:

The Department of Children and Families
Adoption Subsidy Unit 10th floor
505 Hudson St.
Hartford, CT. 06106

Call the DCF Subsidy unit at 860-550-6608 (or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document), one to two months in advance of your move so the proper paperwork can be sent to the new state of residence in order for medical coverage to be initiated. *Please contact the subsidy unit even if you have direct deposit.* Please see more about this under number 7.

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4. I want to take my adopted child to the doctor, however, I don't have their new medical card, and when I give the physicians office my child's name it is not showing up in the system. What do I do?

It could take up to four months or more for your child's medical insurance card to change from their biological name to their adoptive name and for a new medical card to be sent to you. For this reason you should continue to use the medical card with the child's biological name on it until you receive the new medical card. DO NOT call the Department of Social Services if you have not received a new card.

If you have questions regarding your child's medical card and have not received within six months of your child's adoption finalization, call the DCF subsidy unit at 860-550-6608 (or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document).

5. Who do I contact if I am experiencing difficulties with my child CT Title XIX Medicaid medical insurance?

If you experience difficulty with your child's **new** medical card, call the DCF subsidy unit at 860-550-6608 (or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document).

Title XIX Medicaid medical insurance is provided by the CT Department of Social Services not DCF. <http://www.huskyhealth.com>.

Below is information found on the DSS website: "If you are already a member, there is a lot of useful information on our Members page, please [follow this link to visit the page](#). You can also call the HUSKY Health Member Services at 1-800-859-9889, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., for information about your benefits, help with finding a provider, or to find out about other services that are available to you"

6. Will my child's dental needs be covered?

Routine dental coverage is provided. If your child is in need of treatment outside of routine work: exams, fillings, etc and other more involved dental treatment is recommended by your child's dentist, it is very important to check with the dental insurance provider before any treatment is performed to verify that the treatment needed is covered. It should also be noted that orthodontia work is *not* covered by Title XIX dental insurance unless deemed medically necessary. Should you be denied, use the appeal process available to you via the Department of Social Services. CT DSS has indicated that often requests are initially denied due to lack of supporting and thorough documentation. Be sure your medical provider is thorough and you pursue all available avenues of the appeal process.

7. What is ICAMA and why is it important?

The Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) was established in 1986 to safeguard and protect the interstate interests of children covered by an adoption assistance agreement when they move or are adopted across state lines.

ICAMA is an agreement between and among its member states that enables members to coordinate the provision of medical benefits and services to children receiving adoption assistance in interstate cases. The Compact, which has the force of law within and among party states, provides a framework for uniformity and consistency in administrative procedures when a child with special needs is adopted by a family in another state, or the adoptive family moves to another state. By providing substantive guarantees and workable procedures for interstate cooperation,

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ICAMA prevents or eliminates geographic barriers that may delay or deny the provision of medical assistance and post-adoption services to families who have adopted children with special needs.

8. What happens if a child is receiving a financial and/or medical insurance subsidy and my family moves out of state or out of the country?

If/when you move out of state it is very important to follow the directions under number three. If you do not, it may impact your timely receipt of the financial subsidy. It takes many weeks to process a change in direct deposit and you may wish to change receipt of the financial subsidy to be by check until you are established in your new residence.

If you move to an ICAMA reciprocating state and plan to continue to use a Title XIX medical insurance in the state you plan to reside in, you must contact Rhonda Little at 860-550-6676 or via e-mail at DCF.MAUCTICAMA@CT.GOV or rhonda.c.little@ct.gov **60 days before you move** so the proper paperwork can be sent to your new state of residence.

Children who meet IV-E federal criteria automatically qualify for medical coverage if the new state of residence is a IV-E state. If your child is not IV-E eligible, some states do not provide Medicaid medical insurance for non IV-E children. When this occurs, CT will provide medical coverage if your medical provider agrees to accept CT Medicaid payments. This includes a child who remains in your home up to the age of 21.

If you move out of the country and your child's primary insurance is provided by CT or another state's Medicaid program, you would need to contact medical providers to inquire as to whether they will accept CT Medicaid reimbursement. There are no other medical insurance options for out of country residents.

9. Does my child's financial subsidy continue past their 18 birthday if they are in school or have disabilities?

In accordance with CT law (CGS 17a-116-119) the financial subsidy ends on the child's 18th birthday.

If a child was adopted after age 16, the financial subsidy ends on the child's 21st birthday. In order to receive the subsidy until age 21 the youth **must be enrolled and attending** a post-secondary educational program **on a full time basis**. An annual review of the subsidy agreement and educational certificate to confirm enrollment will be required.

10. Does my child's medical subsidy continue past their 18 birthday if they are in school or have disabilities?

For Connecticut residents: Your child's Title XIX Medicaid medical coverage may continue until the child's 21st birthday if your child resides with you.

For out of state residents: Your child's Medicaid based insurance is provided by your state of residence's Medicaid program under the ICAMA federal program as described on the previous page. Their medical coverage will end at age 18. Continued coverage is provided by CT Medicaid. Your medical providers should be contacted prior to your child's 18th birthday to ensure they will accept CT Medicaid or you can locate other medical providers who will.

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11. What do I do if my child leaves my home?

If your child leaves your home for any reason (including in patient hospitalization, residential treatment, etc) ***it is your responsibility to notify the subsidy unit immediately.*** The subsidies will need to be negotiated to end or reduced if it is determined the child is no longer receiving financial support from you.

When your child returns to your home the financial subsidy can be reinstated if you continue to have parental legal rights to your child.

12. I have not received my subsidy check this month, what do I do?

OFTEN, THE FIRST POST-ADOPTION CHECK ONLY COVERS UP TO THE ADOPTION. THE FOLLOWING MONTH YOU SHOULD RECEIVE A CHECK THAT MAKES UP THE DIFFERENCE.

Subsidy checks are issued on the 15th of every month, however, many times due to unforeseen issues with the post office you may not receive your check until the 18th or 20th of the month. Please note you must wait 10 business days after the 15th, to report a missing check.

The subsidy unit will not be able to assist you in this regard until after the 10 days have past so please do not call the subsidy unit until the 10th business day after the 15th of that month. Call the DCF subsidy unit at 860-550-6608 (or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document) to report a missing check.

13. Please use direct deposit. It can avoid the possibility of a check getting lost or stolen. Please call the DCF subsidy unit at 860-550-6608 (or by reaching out to one of the processing technicians via the telephone list at the end of this document) if you would like the direct deposit form mailed to you.

14. My child was assessed as a child with complex medical needs, how does this impact the subsidy?

If your child was initially eligible as a child with complex medical issues the subsidy will be reviewed after his/her adoption is finalized. The recertification process entails the child's medical doctor assessing your child's medical condition and providing this information to the Department. The DCF subsidy unit will send you a release to allow DCF direct contact with your child's medical provider.

The good news for many children is their medical condition improves! We are all grateful when a child's condition is stable and/or no longer suffers from a debilitating condition. When this happens one or both of the following may occur: 1) your child is no longer deemed a child with special needs and the subsidies will end or 2) your child may still be considered a child with special needs and the financial subsidy will be reduced to the basic rate subsidy based on their age.

Psychiatric, behavioral and developmental conditions do not qualify a child as being one with complex medical needs. If you have any questions about your subsidy, please contact the subsidy unit.

15. Is my financial subsidy considered income?

The financial subsidy you receive for your child is not considered income. Since 1974, the IRS has reported that adoptive parents do not need to include adoption assistance benefits in their taxable income. Please check each with the IRS website for verification of that information. DCF is not able

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offer advice on federal or state taxes. You can contact the IRS or access the IRS website for further information.

16. If I apply for public assistance is my financial subsidy considered income?

For some state and federal programs a financial subsidy and other monetary benefits, including Social Security benefits, may impact your ability to receive other state/federal assistance including; housing, food stamps or CT cash benefits from the CT Dept of Social Services. This may differ from state to state.

17. Can I add my adopted child to my family's private insurance?

Yes, you can add your child to your private insurance which will automatically make the CT Title XIX Medicaid coverage your secondary insurance. If in the future you wish to have CT Title XIX Medicaid insurance as your child's primary coverage, you must attain a letter from your private insurance company with the end date of its coverage. You will need to send that letter to the subsidized adoption unit. This will be provided to the CT Department of Social Services.

18. What can I do if my family, my adopted child, or I need help after his/her adoption is finalized?

The adoption subsidy unit works in collaboration with the Adoption Assistance Program to provide referral and services to adopted children and their families. Families can all AAP directly for support, referral, and other related services.

Contact information: The *Adoption Assistance Program* 1-877-679-1961 <http://aap.uchc.edu>

Within available appropriations, services from the Department's Voluntary Services program may be requested by adoptive families. To request an application for this program, you must call the DCF Careline directly at 1-800-842-2288.

19. If my adopted child wishes to find his/her biological family, what can they do?

The Department's Search Program is available to supply certain historical information to adult adoptees and their birth families. They are also available to assist in a search for connections after a child turns 18. Call the following number for more information or to speak to a Search consultant 1-860-550-6319. More information is available on the DCF website; www.ctfosteradopt.com

20. Is there post-secondary education financial assistance for children adopted from DCF?

Any child/youth adopted from DCF foster care after 12/31/04, is eligible for the college/post secondary training incentive program (DCF policy 48-20-2). When your adopted child begins the second semester of their senior year in high school, call Paul Gressly, DCF adoption subsidy unit, at 860-550-6559. He will provide specific information regarding the policy, what documentation will be needed and how the process works.

21. Federal Adoption Tax credit for special Needs Adoptions:

Families adopting a child with special needs from DCF foster care may be eligible for a federal adoption tax credit. You may consult the IRS website; <http://www.irs.gov> or a certified public accountant for specifics when filing your taxes.

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More information is available on the website of: The North American Council on Adoptable Children
www.nacac.org

Helpful links for families:

www.ct.gov/dcf and www.ctfosteradopt.com For more information regarding DCF programs and policies

<http://aap.uchc.edu> or <http://ctadoption.com> For more information from the Adoption Assistance Program regarding available community based programs, including the Adoption Community Network an advocacy group of adoptive parents and professionals.

<http://cafafct.org> For more information from the CT Association of Foster and Adoptive Families

www.ct.gov For more information on state programs and departments

www.nacac.org The North American Council on Adoptable Children provides information and support to adoptive families in the United States.

www.favor-ct.org FAVOR is a non-profit Statewide Family Advocacy Organization serving families, children and youth dealing with a broad spectrum of behavioral and mental health needs, by providing policy and family advocacy.

CONTACTS:

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