

# **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-Effective 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