



CDSS

JOHN A. WAGNER
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

November 9, 2010

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 10-36

TO: ALL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY ADOPTIONS PROGRAM MANAGERS
ALL COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS
ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES
COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

SUBJECT: FEDERAL INCENTIVE FUNDS FOR POST ADOPTIVE SERVICES

REFERENCE: PUBLIC LAW 110-351; ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 655; WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 16131.5; COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) NO. 09/10-66, DATED JULY 1, 2010, CFL NO. 09/10-66E DATED AUGUST 5, 2010, CFL NO. 10/11-19, DATED SEPTEMBER 22, 2010

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide County Child Welfare Departments and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Adoption District Offices (DOs) with information regarding the federal Adoption Incentive Program (AIP) made possible through the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Public Law 110-351.) As required by state law, the AIP payment shall be reinvested into the child welfare system and directed to counties that reported increased legal permanency outcomes for foster youth in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008.

Based on recent Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System data, California finalized 7,481 adoptions for FFY 2007 and 7,580 adoptions for FFY 2008, representing an increase of 99 adoptions statewide, resulting in \$1,454,711 in federal bonus which will be made available for this program contingent upon approval of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11 Budget Act. According to federal law, this money must be reinvested into services for children and families. It cannot be used to supplant existing programs or as a match for other federal funds, such as foster care. The funds must be used for activities as directed in this ACL. Allocating the funds to counties creates no fiscal impact on the state general fund.

Only finalized adoptions are counted toward the incentive funds by the federal government and California exceeded a baseline number of adoptions to qualify. Incentive funds are earned by exceeding the overall foster child, older child or special needs adoption baselines. California may also earn an additional incentive payment (dependent on the availability of funds) for exceeding the state's highest ever foster child adoption rate from FFY 2008. The term "older child adoptions" means the final adoption of a child who has attained nine years of age or older and if the child was in foster care under the supervision of the state or had an Adoption Assistance Program agreement in effect.

Instructions for how to report and claim eligible costs for AIP was issued on July 1, 2010, in CFL 09/10-66 that transmits the County Welfare Department County Expense Claim Time Study and Claiming Instructions for the September 2010 Quarter. A subsequent Erratum was issued on August 5, 2010, in CFL 09/10-66E, to inform counties of corrections to CFL 09/10-66. The CFL 10/11-19 was issued on September 22, 2010, to inform counties of the FY 2010-11 planning allocation for AIP.

BACKGROUND

In October 2008 the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Public Law 110-351) was signed into law, which implemented the following changes to the federal Adoption Incentive Grant Program:

- Renewed the federal Adoption Incentive Grant Program for five additional years through FFY 2012.
- Doubled the incentive bonuses to states from \$4,000 to \$8,000 per adoption of each older foster youth.
- Doubled the bonuses from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for adoptions of special needs foster youth.

California AB 665, Torrico (Chapter 250, filed with the Secretary of State on October 11, 2009) ensures that the state will reinvest federal adoption incentive payments received through the implementation of the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 into the child welfare system. This is to provide legal permanency outcomes for older children nine years and above, including but not limited to adoption, guardianship and reunification of children whose reunification services were previously terminated.

THE AB 665 ACTIVITIES

The AB 665 encourages counties to put emphasis on permanency for older children such as adoption, guardianship and a second chance reunification for youth who previously had reunification services terminated. Counties and CDSS DOs will receive

monetary incentive payments for all three types of legal permanence. The incentive payments will be distributed to counties and CDSS DOs, when it acts as an adoption agency for a county, to fund activities to improve legal permanency outcomes for foster youth ages nine or older. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Post adoption services to avert adoption disruptions.
- Preparing youth for permanency by resolving barriers to adoption.
- Intensive family finding to locate relatives willing to make lifelong commitments to youth, including adoption and guardianship.
- Support to ensure successful permanency options for older foster youth.
- Many other services and supports to ensure successful permanency options for older foster youth.
- Recruitment of adoptive parents who are committed to keeping sibling groups together.
- Reunification with family members whose services were previously terminated.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Concurrent Planning Policy Unit in the Permanency Policy Bureau, at (916) 657-1858.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

GREGORY E. ROSE
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division