

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



May 6, 1988

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE 1-37-88

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADOPTION AGENCIES
ALL SDSS ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES

SUBJECT: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AAP AND SSI PAYMENTS

This Department often receives questions about the relationship between Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) or Aid to the Adoption of Children (AAC) benefits and Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI). This letter discusses the effect of adoption and AAP or AAC payments on SSI benefits.

Effect of Adoption on SSI Benefits

Adoption affects both SSI eligibility and, for those who continue to be eligible, the maximum SSI grant amount.

When a child who is receiving SSI benefits is adopted, the adoptive family's income and resources are considered in determining whether the child is eligible for SSI. Frequently the adopting family's income or resources will be too high to allow the child to continue to qualify for SSI benefits.

As of January 1, 1988, the maximum SSI grant in California for a child living in a foster care setting is the non-medical out-of-home care rate of \$648 per month. However, when adoption occurs the maximum grant is \$456 per month, the grant for a disabled child living at home. Factoring in the adoptive family's income may result in an actual SSI grant authorization below this maximum. If the family moves to another state, the SSI grant payment would probably change. Most states' rates are substantially below California's.

Relationship Between AAP/AAC and SSI

Adoptions Assistance benefits are treated as income by the Social Security Administration when determining the SSI grant amount. For Federally funded AAP cases, the SSI grant is reduced by an amount equal to the AAP grant. Thus, if the child has an AAP grant of \$200 per month, the child's SSI grant would be reduced \$200.

For State AAP cases and all AAC cases, Federal policy requires reduction of the SSI grant by an amount equal to the AAP/AAC grant after the first \$20 of adoption assistance (or any other unearned income) is disregarded. Thus, if the child has an AAP/AAC grant of \$200 per month, the child's SSI grant would be reduced \$180. This policy is based on the conclusion of the Department of Health and Human Services that State funded AAP/AAC does not meet the definition of assistance based on need.

The net effect is that it is not possible to significantly increase total benefits to a child receiving SSI by also providing AAP or AAC.

For the family receiving AFDC-FG or U, agencies should advise the family to seek information from their eligibility worker regarding the impact of AAP or AAC on the AFDC payment.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact Ms. Jan Darvas, Adoptions Assistance Program Consultant at (916) 323-0468 (ATSS 473-0468).



LOREN D. SUTER
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Adult and Family Services

cc: CWDA