

# POST ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES



Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services



# Post Adoption and Guardianship Services

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) realizes the valuable contribution families make in giving a child a permanent family through adoption or guardianship. This undertaking is one that will change lives forever.

By making the lifelong commitment to be there for a child, adoptive and guardianship parents have ended the formal, day-to-day involvement of DCFS. That prospect can raise many emotions and perhaps even some concerns. Your family now makes the important decisions for the children now in your home. You, not a caseworker, are responsible for finding information and programs.

It is important that children and families do more than survive. They should thrive. There are many resources through the department, other government agencies, and in the community that can help you meet your responsibilities.

The Post Adoption and Guardianship Services booklet is designed to present families with an overview of the many services available to meet your child's ongoing needs. The first section outlines services that the department provides or funds for children previously in its care. It also includes resources outside of DCFS that you may contact for services. At the end of the booklet there is a collection of information available to all families that is not specific to adoption but may be of special interest to adoptive and guardianship families. Please keep this booklet as a handy reference.



# Table of Contents

## Part 1: Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy and Other Financial Considerations

### Information on subsidies

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Components of the subsidy.....          | 5 |
| Mediation and appeals of subsidies..... | 6 |

### Other financial considerations

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Medical card.....  | 6 |
| Dental/orthodontic services.....   | 6 |
| Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) .....      | 7 |
| Federal Income Tax with adoption and guardianship .....                  | 8 |
| Education and employment resources after adoption and guardianship ..... | 8 |

## Part 2: Services and Supports for Adoptive and Guardianship Families

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Post adoption and guardianship contacts .....        | 9  |
| Adoption and guardianship preservation services..... | 9  |
| Respite .....  | 13 |
| Search and reunion services.....                     | 15 |
| Illinois Adoption Registry .....                     | 15 |
| Arranging future plans for your child.....           | 16 |

## Part 3: Resources for Training and Advocacy after Adoption and Guardianship

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Information ..... | 18 |
| Office of Training Information .....                  | 18 |
| Adoption Learning Partners .....                      | 18 |
| Illinois Adoption Advisory Council.....               | 18 |
| Advocacy Office.....                                  | 18 |
| National organizations and Internet resources.....    | 19 |

## Part 4: Additional Family Resources

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Income-based services and resources.....          | 20 |
| • Day care for children over three                |    |
| • Kid Care health services                        |    |
| • Earned Income Tax Credit                        |    |
| Resources for older parents.....                  | 21 |
| Resources for individuals with disabilities ..... | 21 |

# Part 1: Adoption and Guardianship Subsidy and Other Financial Considerations

## The Adoption/Guardianship Subsidy

Families adopting waiting children or becoming guardians of children in the care of DCFS may receive subsidies to assist them after adoption or guardianship.

### Subsidy components

Subsidies for eligible children may include any or all of the following:

- Payment for non-recurring expenses directly related to the adoption is available in an amount not to exceed \$1,500 per child for the adoption and \$2,000 for the guardianship.
- Monthly cash payments are available based on the needs of the child and the family circumstances, not to exceed the amount received in care.
- A Medicaid card is available to cover Medicaid-eligible services.
- Payment or reimbursement payment can be made for physical, emotional and mental health needs that are not covered through insurance or public resources and that resulted from a pre-existing condition. Services must be pre-approved by DCFS to receive payment or reimbursement.
- Employment-related day care payments are available for children under the age of three years, if day care is required due to the parent or guardian's employment or participation in a training program that will lead to employment.
- Therapeutic day care is available for children who are determined to have a disability that requires special education services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) and is not fundable through another source. Child must be unable to be maintained in employment-related daycare programs and services must be pre-approved by DCFS. These services must be approved through the child's subsidy and the provider must have the appropriate credentials/training to provide therapeutic daycare for the children.
- Respite care for medically-fragile/technology-dependent children may be available for children who meet the medical eligibility guidelines used by the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS).



If you have questions about your subsidy, contact the DCFS Adoption Support Line at 866-538-8892 or 312-808-5250 and you will be connected to the assigned adoption worker in your region. You can also go to [www.pathbeyondadoption.illinois.gov](http://www.pathbeyondadoption.illinois.gov) for assistance and resources and up to date information

## Mediation and appeals of subsidies

If you believe that your rights under an adoption assistance or subsidized guardianship agreement have been violated in some way, an Administrative Appeal may be available to you. A written appeal must be filed within 45 calendar days of the department's determination.

### Submit requests for an appeal to:

Administrative Hearings Unit  
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
406 East Monroe Street  
Springfield IL 62701

For additional information about the DCFS Administrative Hearing process, call 217-782-6655 if you live outside of Cook county. If you live in Cook county, call 312-814-5540.

### Missing subsidy checks

If you have been receiving subsidy checks regularly and suddenly don't receive your monthly subsidy check, call the DCFS Payment Unit at 800-525-0499 select #2.



## Medical Care Benefits

### Medical card

DCFS Youth in Care and Former Youth in Care are transitioning into Medicaid managed care plans through HealthChoice Illinois. Former Youth in Care are youth under 18 years of age, or 21 years of age if the child has been found to have specialized needs by the department, who were previously under the guardianship of DCFS prior to adoption or subsidized guardianship. Former Youth in Care will automatically be enrolled in YouthCare Health Plan. Adoptive parents or Guardians may choose a different health plan for their Former Youth in Care, upon case opening of their subsidy. Each youth will receive a medical card that will cover all Medicaid-eligible services provided by a contracted Medicaid provider under the enrolled health plan.

- Anyone who did not pick an alternate MCO (managed care health plan) by January 15, 2020 is automatically enrolled with YouthCare starting February 1, 2020.
- However, anyone can change their MCO (managed care health plan) for up to 90 days after they select their managed care plan. After the one time switch or when 90 days is up, the plan cannot be changed for one year from the anniversary date of selection. To change the plan they can call Client Enrollment Services at (877) 912-8880.

For any YouthCare related questions including but not limited to coverage questions, PCP questions, or to verify that providers are part of the YouthCare network, they may call (844) 289-2264 and ask for the Rapid Response Team or send an email to [ILYouthCare@Centene.com](mailto:ILYouthCare@Centene.com)

To find out information regarding different health plans, please see below for contact information:

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Blue Cross Community Health Plan (all counties) ..... | 877-860-2837 |
| CountyCare Health Plan (Cook county only) .....       | 855-444-1661 |
| IlliniCare Health (All counties) .....                | 866-329-4701 |
| Meridian Health Plan (All counties).....              | 866-606-3700 |
| Molina Healthcare (All counties) .....                | 855-687-7861 |
| NextLevel Health Partners (Cook county only) .....    | 833-275-6547 |

If you have a primary care doctor (PCP) or specialist you want to keep seeing, check to see what health plans they accept before you enroll. There are two ways to enroll:

- Online: Go to [EnrollHFS.Illinois.gov](http://EnrollHFS.Illinois.gov) and click “Enroll” or
- By phone: Call Client Enrollment Services at 1-877-912-8880 (TTY: 866-565-8576). Call Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## Dental/Orthodontic services

If you need to find a dental or orthodontic provider in your area who accepts Medicaid, contact your managed care provider to find a provider near your home.

## Subsidy and Medical Coverage Payments When Moving Out of Illinois

### Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

#### ICAMA and adoptive families

Families often worry about what will happen to their child’s subsidy if they move out of state. Illinois is a member of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA), which assists adoptive families moving in or out of Illinois.

#### Moving prior to adoption finalization

Your adoption worker will provide you with information about your child’s medical coverage prior to the adoption. If you will be moving out of state, there are a number of options for medical care in your new state of residence. Be sure to contact your adoption worker or contact the Interstate Compact Office at 217-785-2680 to discuss these options before moving out of state.

#### Moving after finalization

If you plan an out-of-state move after the adoption is finalized, contact your adoption worker for information on the steps that will be taken to ensure that the new state has all of the necessary information. **Illinois will continue to process your monthly subsidy payment and you may contact your adoption worker as needed.** Your adoption worker will provide information about the options for medical coverage described above.

Guardianship families can contact the Interstate Compact Office at 217-785-2680 to discuss their options before moving out of state, as they may differ from families who have adopted.

Illinois will continue to process your monthly subsidy payment and you may continue to contact your adoption worker as needed.

## Tax Information for Foster and Adoptive Families

Since 2003, families who adopt a child with special needs from foster care can claim a federal adoption tax credit without needing to incur or document expenses. For non-special needs adoptions (except step-parent adoptions, which do not qualify for the credit), parents can claim the credit with the same rules as below, except that they have to document qualified adoption expenses. You do not have to submit documents to IRS, but must keep them for your files.



The amount of the credit is based on the year the adoption finalized.

To qualify for the credit without documenting expenses, families must:

- have adopted a child with special needs, and
- have a modified adjusted gross income of a certain level

For example, how much, if any, of the credit you can use is based on your income. Families with a 2018 federal modified adjusted gross income above \$247,140 cannot claim the credit at all; Those with incomes from \$207,140 to \$247,140 can claim a portion of the credit.

To claim the credit, complete IRS Form 8839 in addition to filing your usual IRS Form 1040. Forms are available on [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or <https://www.nacac.org/help/adoption-tax-credit/irs-forms-related-to-the-adoption-tax-credit/>. As documentation of your adoption of a child with special needs, the IRS requires a copy of your adoption decree and adoption assistance agreement.

For more information, visit <https://www.nacac.org/help/adoption-tax-credit/>, e-mail [taxcredit@nacac.org](mailto:taxcredit@nacac.org), or call 651-644-3036. NACAC is not a tax professional organization and this information should not be considered to be legal or tax advice.

## Education and Transition Services After Adoption and Guardianship

Youth in a subsidized adoption or subsidized guardianship from DCFS may access the following services as they transition to adulthood:

**Youth in Scholarship:** Youth may apply to this program in which they may receive free tuition at state universities and community colleges +\$511/mos.+ medical card (up to 25) + books. They must have been adopted or went to guardianship at age 16 or older. Also, any youth who was a prior youth in care is eligible for in-state tuition waivers for any public Illinois college or university.

**Education Training Vouchers Program:** Youth adopted or moved to guardianship after their 16th birthday may be eligible for these vouchers that assist in providing for post-secondary school expenses up to \$5,000/yr.

**Youth Housing Assistance Program:** Youth adopted or moved to guardianship after their 14th birthday and are currently between 17½ and their 21st birthday may access housing advocacy services. Housing Advocacy services assist youth in obtaining and/or maintaining stable housing. Services include:

- Assistance in securing affordable housing;
- Help budgeting
- Cash for security deposit, beds, utilities, appliances, etc.

Call 312-814-5959 (Chicago) or 21-557-2689 (Springfield) for more information or you can find the Get Goal'd book at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/brighterfutures/independence/Documents/GetGoaldHandbook.pdf>



# Part 2: Services and Supports for Adoptive and Guardianship Families

## Statewide Post Adoption and Guardianship Information

### Post adoption and guardianship contacts

For most services listed in this booklet you can contact the agencies directly at the numbers listed with the service such as Adoption and Guardianship Preservation, Respite, etc. **For any of the services listed in your subsidy agreement, you must contact your adoption worker to obtain prior approval.** To speak to your regional adoption worker, contact the Statewide Post Adoption Number at 866-538-8892 or 312-808-5250.

### Support and Preservation Services

Families created through adoption or guardianship may experience problems that require intensive services to help a family gain stability and to reduce the risk of out-of-home placement. The Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Program recognizes that families built through adoption or guardianship may have characteristics significantly different from those created through birth. This can result in unique challenges for the family. The Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation Program helps families who often feel they need assistance to meet their family's needs by offering family-centered support and services. Testimonials from families who have used support services reveal that these services worked, while other traditional, less intensive services they had tried, did not. DCFS contracts with agencies statewide to provide Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation Services.

The goals of all preservation programs are to help parents:

- Feel better about their ability to parent
- Understand adoption and guardianship and its impact on children
- Connect current behavior to past history
- Understand the child's past losses
- Gain skills to help their child
- Preventative skill building

Each adoption support and preservation agency can provide services to help meet the following needs.



- **Comprehensive assessment/Crisis intervention:** Preservation staff will respond by phone within 24 hours and make an in-home visit within three days. A therapist will help a family identify their own strengths, complete an assessment and develop a family treatment plan within 30 days of the referral to the program.
- **Clinical services:** The therapist will provide the clinical services in the family treatment plan.
- **Support groups:** Support groups are offered for both parents and youth at times and locations that meet the family's needs.
- **Case management/Advocacy services:** The preservation agency will manage the case and the services as outlined in the family treatment plan.



- **Children's mental health advocacy services:** If a child has significant mental health needs, the program will provide or facilitate the services.
- **Cash assistance:** If a family participating in the program experiences economic hardships or require specialized services that cannot be obtained through other resources, a cash assistance payment (limited to \$500 per family per fiscal year) may be provided.
- **START (Start Early, Trauma-informed, Attachment-focused, Resiliency-building, Therapeutic services):** A customizable and flexible short-term prevention service to address the family's specific needs. START services are family-focused, provides interactive and meaningful activities with children and caregivers, and links family's to experienced clinicians trained in the most effective techniques for working with the toughest situations.

The key to support and preservation services is that they serve the whole family to keep the family together. The support specialists/therapists work with all members of the family, not just the child with the identified concerns, to identify ways they can work as a unit. The adoption and guardianship support and preservation service agencies understand the rhythms of the special families they serve and are able to respond to crisis situations. Families that find they need intensive intervention to keep their family supported can call the appropriate agency from the list on the following pages.

### **DCFS Cook County Regions**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Catholic Charities–Chicago                       | 312-655-8357 |
| Metropolitan Family Services (Chicago)           | 773-884-2211 |
| Jewish Children and Family Services (Cook, Will) | 312-673-2711 |
| Ada S. McKinley                                  | 312-385-2050 |

(Families in Cook County can contact either agency for service)

### **DCFS Northern Region**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Children's Home & Aid Society–Rockford<br>(Serves Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Winnebago & Whiteside counties) | 815-720-2111 |
| Metropolitan Family Services–Wheaton<br>(Serves DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Kankakee and Will counties)                    | 630-784-4800 |

### **DCFS Central Region**

Cornerstone–Quincy 217-222-8254  
(Serves Adams, Brown, Cass, Northern Calhoun, Greene, Hancock, Morgan,  
Pike, Schuyler and Scott counties)

Lutheran Social Services–Peoria, Galesburg, Rock Island 309-671-0300 x4237  
(Serves Bureau, Fulton, Henderson, Henry, Knox, LaSalle, Logan, Marshall, Mason,  
McDonough, Mercer, Peoria, Putnam, Rock Island, Stark, Tazewell,  
Warren and Woodford counties)

The Baby Fold–Bloomington, Champaign, Springfield 309-557-1127  
(Serves Champaign, Christian, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Edgar,  
Douglas, Ford, Iroquois, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, McLean,  
Menard, Montgomery, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, Shelby and Vermilion counties)

Family Core–Peoria 309-676-2400 x259  
(Serves Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, McDonough, Mason, Logan,  
Dewitt, McClean, Livingston, Marshall, Putnam, Bureau,  
Stark, Knox, Fulton and Warren counties)

**DCFS Southern Region**

Children’s Home & Aid Society–Granite City 618-452-8900 x147  
(Serves Bond, Clinton, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Monroe, Randolph,  
S. Calhoun, St. Clair and Washington counties)

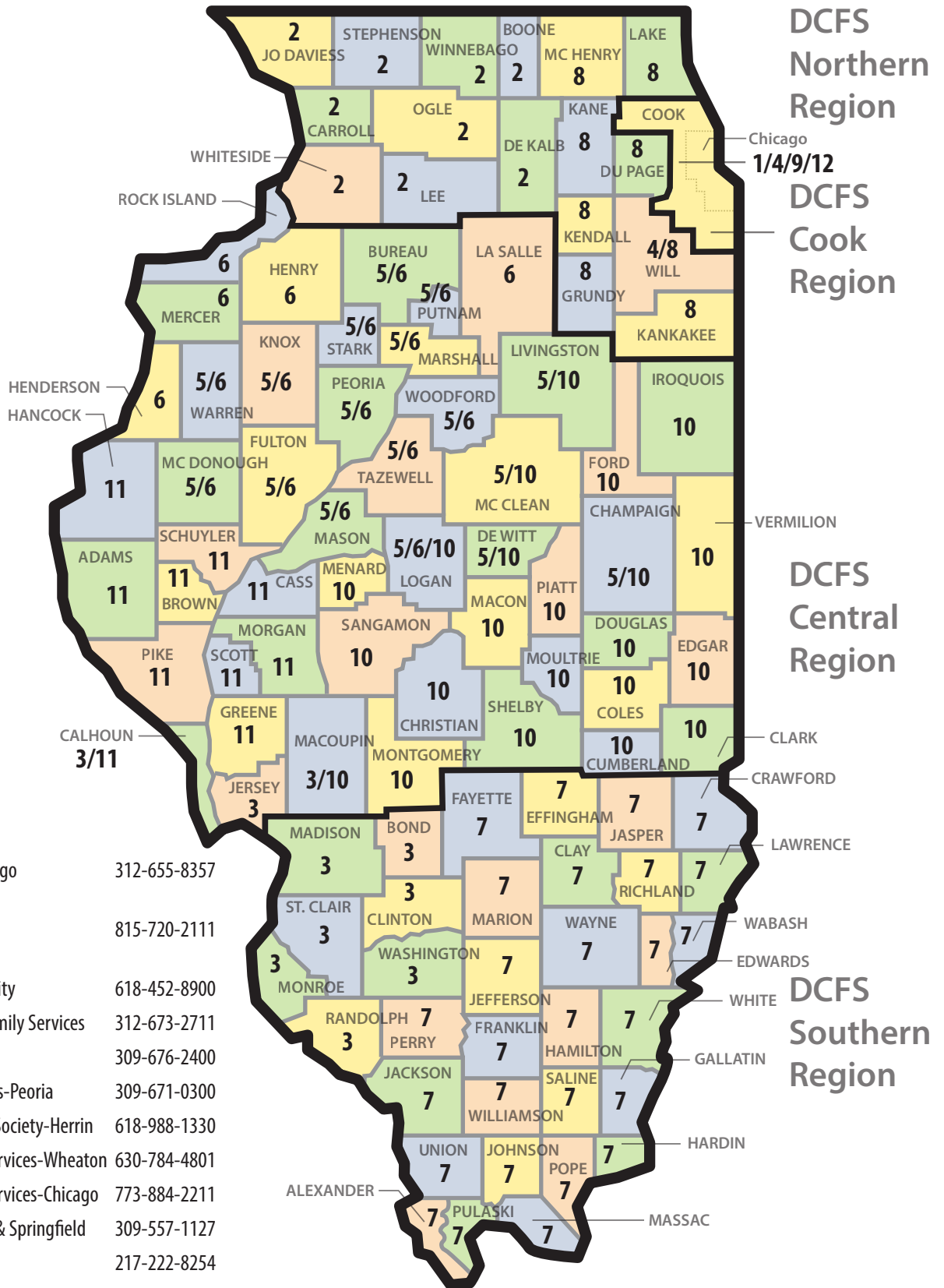
Children’s Home & Aid Society–Herrin 618-988-1330 x105  
(Serves Alexander, Clay, Crawford, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Franklin,  
Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson,  
Lawrence, Marion, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Richland, Saline,  
Union, Wabash, Wayne, White and Williamson counties)

Families in counties that are served by two or more agencies, according to address can choose between them or call to be referred to the appropriate agency.

For specialty counseling service needs, please contact your DCFS Adoption worker for availability and prior approval.



# Illinois Sites: Adoption and Guardianship Preservation Providers



1. Catholic Charities-Chicago 312-655-8357
2. Children's Home & Aid Society-Rockford 815-720-2111
3. Childrens' Home & Aid Society-Granite City 618-452-8900
4. Jewish Children and Family Services 312-673-2711
5. Family Core 309-676-2400
6. Lutheran Social Services-Peoria 309-671-0300
7. Childrens' Home & Aid Society-Herrin 618-988-1330
8. Metropolitan Family Services-Wheaton 630-784-4801
9. Metropolitan Family Services-Chicago 773-884-2211
10. The Baby Fold-Normal & Springfield 309-557-1127
11. Cornerstone-Quincy 217-222-8254
12. Ada S. McKinley 312-385-2050

# Support and Preservation Services (cont'd)

## Adoption and Guardianship Respite Program

Respite Services are available through purchase of service contracts between DCFS and licensed child welfare agencies in Illinois. These services are available to children who were former youth in care who were adopted or who were in a subsidized guardianship placement with IDCFS.

Respite Services are defined as short-term, temporary care provided for children accepted for service to give some relief to the adoption or guardianship family. Respite components may include any or all of the following: mentoring, hourly in-home, out-of-home and overnight respite care; and specialized camp experiences. The respite care may be regularly scheduled or may be requested on an emergency basis.

An initial assessment is completed on the family and child to develop a service plan which will offer the appropriate type of respite for that family. Services may be provided up to one year. There is no cost for participation in this respite program.



## Agency Respite Service Providers

### DCFS Cook County Regions

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Catholic Charities-Chicago   | 312-655-8357 |
| Metropolitan Family Services | 773-257-2211 |

### DCFS Northern Region

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| CHASI-Rockford<br>(Serves Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle,<br>Stephenson, Winnebago and Whiteside counties) | 815-720-2111 |
| Metropolitan Family Services<br>(Serves DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake,<br>McHenry and Will counties)                | 630-784-4801 |

### DCFS Central Region

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Baby Fold<br>(Serves Christian, Clark, Cumberland, Coles, DeWitt,<br>Douglas, Edgar, Iroquois, Macon, Macoupin, McLean,<br>Menard, Montgomery, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, Shelby<br>and Vermilion counties) | 309-557-1127 |
| Cornerstone<br>(Serves Adams, Brown, Northern Calhoun, Cass, Greene,<br>Hancock, Morgan, Pike, Schuyler and Scott counties)   | 217-222-8254 |

Family Core 309-676-2400 x259  
(Serves Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties)

One Hope United - Hudelson 217-347-5880  
(Serves Coles, Cumberland, Clark, Douglas, Edgar,  
Shelby and Moultrie counties)

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois 309-671-0300 x4237  
(Serves Bureau, Fulton, Henderson, Henry, Knox, LaSalle, Logan,  
Marshall, Mason, McDonough, Mercer, Peoria, Putnam,  
Rock Island, S. Calhoun, Tazewell, Warren and Woodford counties)

### **DCFS Southern Region**

CHASI-Granite City 618-452-8900 x147  
(Serves Bond, Clinton, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison,  
Monroe, Randolph, S. Calhoun, St. Clair and Washington counties)

CHASI-Herrin 618-988-1330 x105  
(Serves Alexander, Clay, Crawford, Edwards, Effingham,  
Fayette, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson,  
Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Marion, Massac, Perry, Pope,  
Pulaski, Richland, Saline, Union, Wabash, Wayne, White and Williamson counties)



## Search and Reunion Services

The DCFS Closed File Information and Search program provides information from DCFS files and can help you locate birth relatives. If you are an adult adopted person or the adoptive or guardianship parent of a minor, you are entitled to receive certain information. Midwest Adoption Center (MAC) will attempt to locate DCFS files and prepare a written report for you. It can include information about biological relatives, medical and social history, a description of how the child came into care and a record of placements before adoption or guardianship.

The law does not permit DCFS to release identifying information from the files such as the names and addresses of others. However, you can request search service to help locate relatives including birth parents, siblings, grandparents and others. In most cases, the person being sought is located. The MAC caseworker will explain the reason for the outreach and every attempt will be made to negotiate an arrangement that is comfortable for everyone. You may want to exchange some information through your MAC caseworker worker; communicate by letter without revealing your name; or you and your relative may decide to have direct contact. This program is not intended to provide in-depth counseling, but assistance and support will be offered to you and to your birth relative throughout the process. There is no fee for service.

To request service, please call or email Midwest Adoption Center. Forms can also be downloaded from the MAC website.

### **Midwest Adoption Center**

847-298-9096

[www.macadopt.org](http://www.macadopt.org)

[mac@macadopt.org](mailto:mac@macadopt.org)

## Adoption Registry

The Illinois Adoption Registry provides a way for certain individuals involved in an adoption in Illinois to locate other people involved in the adoption. Persons who were adopted or surrendered for adoption, their birth parents, birth siblings, adoptive parents and legal guardians of an adopted person may file their consent to exchange information with others involved in the adoption. If done in compliance with the law, information may be exchanged without the need for a court order.

Confidential facts may be released to registrants only after at least two parties to the adoption have filed their consent to exchange the specified information.

The following individuals may register:

- Birth parents
- Adopted or surrendered person, 21 years of age or older
- Surviving relative of deceased (adult child of adopted or remaining adoptive parent of minor child or adoptive parent)
- Surviving relative of deceased birth parent (adult child or brother or sister of parent)
- Adoptive parents of adopted individuals under age 21
- Legal guardians of adopted or surrendered persons



The Adoption Registry also includes a medical exchange. The Medical Information Exchange Questionnaire asks questions about diseases or conditions that medical professionals believe may be inherited or have a genetic link, this is, illnesses that “run in families.” These diseases and conditions are of interest to other biological family members and their physicians because knowing about them may alert the family members and physicians to watch more carefully for certain signs and symptoms and to take preventive action. Medical



history can be exchanged confidentially without revealing identities. No identity will be exchanged unless all parties agree.

For more information about the Adoption Registry, contact: Illinois Department of Public Health Division of Vital Records, 925 E. Ridgeley Ave. Springfield 62702-2737, 877-323-5299, [dphvitals@illinois.gov](mailto:dphvitals@illinois.gov). Forms and application can be found at:

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/birth-death-other-records/adoption/iarmie>

## Arranging Future Plans for Your Child

Families are often concerned about planning for an adopted or guardianship child in their care in the event something unforeseen occurs. There are a number of options available to assist you in future planning for your child. **Your attorney can assist you with the legal requirements for the following options:**

### Greenlight Family Services

Greenlight Family Services, previously known as The Center for Law and Social Work, mission is to create, preserve and protect families. The agency assists families who have gone through adoption and guardianship with legal, therapeutic and case management services. They provide direction and assistance with backup planning, adult guardianship for adults with disabilities, minor guardianship, educational advocacy, assistance with transference of adoption after death of a caregiver or incapacitation, crisis clinical services and adoption. Greenlight Services covers the entire state of Illinois. For more information, visit <https://greenlightfamilyservices.org> at 319 E. Madison Suite 4G, Springfield, IL 62701 or contact them at 3636 S. Iron St. Chicago, IL 60609 or call 773-728-7800.

### Standby Adoption

Standby adoption is a court-approved arrangement that provides for a future adoption of your child if needed. Standby adoption allows you to ask the court to appoint a person or persons as standby adoptive parent(s) of your child, and that person “stands by” until needed. The standby adoptive parent doesn’t take custody of your child until the adoption becomes final, when a) you decide that you want the adoption to be final or b) upon your death. In the meantime, you retain all of your rights as a parent, and custody of your child.

### Standby Guardianship

A standby guardianship is a legal arrangement approved by a judge that provides for future care for your child, but only if it is needed. It allows you to appoint someone as legal guard-



ian of your child, but that person “stands by” until needed. In other words, the standby guardian does not take custody of your children immediately, but only at some point in the future when you are no longer able to take care of your children yourself.

## Short-Term Guardianship

A short-term guardianship is a private legal arrangement between you and the person you want to take care of your child. **A short-term guardian is not a permanent arrangement.** The person that you appoint as short-term guardian will only have authority to act as guardian **for as long as 365 days**. It is very useful if you are going to be hospitalized, or are entering a residential program or facility where you will need to be without your children.

## Notifying Adoption Staff

\*Please note that you will need to advise your regional adoption staff of any standby or short-term arrangements that you are contemplating. Eligibility for a subsidy in a subsequent adoption or guardianship must be determined by adoption staff and a new subsidy document must be signed prior to the finalization of a new adoption or guardianship.



## **Part 3: Resources for Training and Advocacy after Adoption and Guardianship**

### **DCFS Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Information**

All Statewide DCFS Foster and Adoptive Parent Training is scheduled and coordinated by the DCFS Office of Training in Springfield. Contact the Office of Training's Registration Unit at 877-800-3393 to register to attend the Caregivers Institutes, to register for classes, track training credit and have questions answered.

### **Adoption Learning Partners**

AdoptionLearningPartners.org offers courses and webinars that give parents tools they can use immediately at home. The courses offer advice on: what children need to know, what words to use to explain adoption, how to help your child, coping with grief and loss, forming identity in the teenage years, disciplining an adopted child and advocating for your child.

Many courses are FREE to DCFS families and training credits are available. During registration make sure to choose Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as your agency. Courses never expire and are in your account forever. Registration takes a few minutes; information lasts a lifetime!

For more information, visit [www.AdoptionLearningPartners.org](http://www.AdoptionLearningPartners.org), call 800-566-3995, or e-mail [info@adoptionlearningpartners.org](mailto:info@adoptionlearningpartners.org).

### **The Illinois Adoption Advisory Council**

The Council began in November 2000 and was created to guide the department in several areas: assisting the department with finding new homes for waiting children, supporting families and children in the adoption process, and supporting these families after they adopt. The Adoption Council's membership includes adoptive parents, adoptees, and other experts throughout the state of Illinois.

### **Advocacy Office for Children and Families**

DCFS established The Advocacy Office for Children and Families to receive and respond to concerns presented to DCFS regarding the child welfare system in Illinois. Advocacy Office staff function as advocates on behalf of the best interest of the child, providing assistance in seeking resolution to a problem when the caller has not been able, or does not know how, to find a satisfactory resolution.

The Advocacy Office accepts concerns by phone, electronic mail, letters, or in person. Anyone can call the Advocacy Office and speak with an Advocate. The Advocacy Office has a statewide toll-free number (1-800-232-3798) that may be used to present issues or obtain information about child welfare services from DCFS or its agents.

## National and Internet Resources

The Internet has become an important source of information for busy families with computer access at home or through their local public library. You will find a wealth of state and national information about adoption and guardianship on the Internet.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services website: [www2.illinois.gov/DCFS](http://www2.illinois.gov/DCFS) is one place to obtain information regarding post-adoption and guardianship resources. Other websites are as follows:

**Adopt America Network**  
3100 W. Central Ave., Ste. 225  
Toledo, OH 43606  
800-246-1731  
[www.adoptamericanetwork.org](http://www.adoptamericanetwork.org)  
email:  
[adoption@adoptamericanetwork.org](mailto:adoption@adoptamericanetwork.org)

**Adoptive Families of America (AFA) Magazine**  
108 W. 39th St., Ste. 805  
New York, NY 10018  
800-372-3300  
[www.adoptivefamilies.com](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com)  
email:  
[customerservice@adoptivefamilies.com](mailto:customerservice@adoptivefamilies.com)

**Center for Adoption Support and Education Headquarters**  
3919 National Drive, Suite 200  
Burtonsville, MD 20866  
301-476-8525  
Fax: 301-476-8526  
<https://adoptionssupport.org/>

**Child Welfare Information Gateway Children's Bureau/ACYF**  
330 C St., SW  
Washington, DC 20201  
800-394-3366  
[www.childwelfare.gov/index.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/index.cfm)  
email: [email.info@childwelfare.gov](mailto:email.info@childwelfare.gov)

**Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)**  
727 15th St. NW, 12th Fl.  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-688-4200  
Fax: 202-833-1689  
[www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)  
email: [cwla@cwla.org](mailto:cwla@cwla.org)

**Children Awaiting Parents, Inc. (CAP)**  
274 N. Goodman St, Ste. D103  
Rochester, NY 14607  
888-835-8802 or 585-232-5110  
<https://childrenawaitingparents.org/>  
email: [info@capbook.org](mailto:info@capbook.org)

**Collaboration to Adopt US Kids Adoption Exchange Association**  
605 Global Way, Ste. 100  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
888-200-4005  
877-236-7831 (Español)  
[www.adoptuskids.org](http://www.adoptuskids.org)  
email: [info@adoptuskids](mailto:info@adoptuskids)  
[espanol@adoptuskids.org](mailto:espanol@adoptuskids.org) (Español)

**Heart Gallery of Illinois**  
4753 N. Broadway, Suite 918  
Chicago, IL 60640  
800-572-2390  
<http://www.cls.w.org/heartgalleryofil/>

**National Adoption Center (NAC)**  
1500 Walnut Street, 701  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
215-735-9988  
800-TO ADOPT  
Fax: 215-735-9410  
[www.adopt.org](http://www.adopt.org)  
email: [ac@adopt.org](mailto:ac@adopt.org)

**North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)**  
970 Raymond Ave., Ste 106  
St. Paul, MN 55114-1149  
651-644-3036  
[www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org)  
email: [info@nacac.org](mailto:info@nacac.org)

**National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption & Guardianship Support & Preservation**  
16250 Northland Dr, Suite 100  
Southfield, MI 48075  
248-443-0306  
Fax: 248-443-7099  
<https://qic-ag.org/>

**PACT, An Adoption Alliance**  
5515 Doyle St., Ste. 1  
Emeryville, CA 94608  
510-243-9460  
Fax: 510-243-9970  
[www.pactadopt.org](http://www.pactadopt.org)  
email: [info@pactadopt.org](mailto:info@pactadopt.org)

**Spaulding for Children / National Resource Center for Special Needs Adoption**  
16250 Northland Dr., Ste 120  
Southfield, MI 48075  
248-443-0300  
Fax: 248-443-7099  
[www.spaulding.org](http://www.spaulding.org)

**NOTE:** Websites listed in this booklet are solely for the convenience of the reader. Inclusion in this listing does not imply an endorsement of that organization, website or individual by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). DCFS is not responsible for the maintenance of any website shown other than its own.

## Part 4: Additional Family Resources

### Income-based Services and Resources

#### Day care for children over three

Adoptive or guardianship families with children three years of age and older who do not qualify for therapeutic day care may still be eligible for day care assistance through the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS). Parents must meet the following criteria to receive daycare assistance:



- Illinois resident
- you are working and meet income requirements, or
- you receive TANF
- you are a teen parent enrolled full-time in elementary or high school, or GED program, or
- Family with a special needs child(ren)

All families pay a portion of the cost as a co-payment. The amount of the family's co-payment is based on income and family size. Call the DHS toll-free day care referral line, 877-20-CHILD or visit the website: [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us) and click the link child care. By entering a zip code, the call will be connected to the referral agency serving that area.

#### Need help finding child care?

Call **Illinois Action for Children** at 312-823-1100 option 3. If you are located outside of Cook County, ask for a Parent Referral Line that serves your county. Families from around the state can also call the DHS toll-free referral line (877-20-CHILD). Visit the website at [www.actforchildren.org](http://www.actforchildren.org)

#### All Kids Healthcare

**All Kids** is a state program offering health care coverage or help in paying premiums of employer-sponsored or private insurance plans for children through age 18. For eligibility requirements or more information, call 866-255-5437.

## Earned Income Tax Credit

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) is a special tax benefit for people who work full or part-time. Families that qualify may owe less in taxes or even get cash back. Even working families who don't owe any taxes may be able to receive a tax credit. Benefits and eligibility may change each year. To obtain this benefit, families only need to complete their tax form (1040 or 1040A) and attach Schedule EIC. More information on EIC can be obtained by calling the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-1040 or go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## Resources For Older Parents

Are you over 60 and raising children or grandchildren? The Illinois Department of Aging's Senior Helpline at **800-252-8966** (Voice) and 888-206-1327 (TTY) refers callers to programs or services related to any health or aging issue. Website: [www.illinois.gov/aging](http://www.illinois.gov/aging). Email: [aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov](mailto:aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov)

Anyone over age 60 will also find a wealth of information through AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) English: 1-888-687-2277, Spanish: 1-866-238-9488 (TTY English: 1-877-434-7598, TTY Spanish: 1-866-238-9488) or visit [aarp.org](http://aarp.org). AARP also maintains a separate Grandparent Information Center for grandparents raising grandchildren.

## Metropolitan Older Caregivers Project

This Metropolitan Family Services program serves caregivers 60 years old and over, who are currently raising children they have adopted or obtained guardianship of, and are under the age of 18 years old. The goal of the program is to establish a stronger support system that will help caregivers continue to care for the children in their care. In cases where this is not possible, program staff assists families in making new and more appropriate arrangements that ensures the safety, well-being and permanency of the children. These services are only provided to residents of Cook County and some surrounding counties. Contact them at 773-884-2260.

## Resources for Individuals with Disabilities

### Home services

The Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) offers Home Services to qualifying Illinois residents aimed at enabling individuals with disabilities to remain at home. Available services include: Personal Assistant, Homemaker Services, Maintenance Home Health, Electronic Home Response, Home Delivered Meals, Adult Day Care, Assistive Equipment, Environmental Modification and Respite Care. To find your local DHS counselor to see if you, your child, or your family qualifies, call 800-843-6154 (Voice) and 800-324-5553 (TTY).

All DHS rules and services are also given on the website: [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)



## Advocacy services

Equip for Equality, Inc. is the corporation designated in Illinois as the protection and advocacy system for people with physical disabilities, mental illness and developmental disabilities.

Equip for Equality, Inc. offers

- Professional advocates and attorneys who provide technical assistance and advice in self-advocacy and direct legal services
- Monitoring of agencies responsible for delivering services to people with disabilities to ensure compliance with individual rights
- Lobbying for laws to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities
- A quarterly publication, *The Equalizer*

For further information about services, contact [www.equipforequality.org/](http://www.equipforequality.org/) or your nearest regional office.

### Main Office

20 N. Michigan Ave., Ste. 300  
Chicago, IL 60602  
312-341-0022  
800-537-2632  
800-610-2779 (TTY line)

### Southern Region

300 E. Main St., Ste. 18  
Carbondale, IL 62901  
800-758-0559

[www.equipforequality.org/](http://www.equipforequality.org/)

### Central Region

1 W. Old State Capitol Plaza, Ste. 816  
Springfield, IL 62701  
800-758-0464

## Training funds for family members of persons with a disability

Each year Illinois allocates training funds to families of persons with a disability to attend training related to the family member's disability. Only individuals — not agencies or organizations — may apply. Amount of funds available and eligibility guidelines may change each state fiscal year. They also have a free Lending library consisting of books, journals and DVDs related to early childhood, parenting and young children with special needs.

Call the Early Intervention Clearinghouse at 877-275-3227 or email at [Illinois-eic@illinois.edu](mailto:Illinois-eic@illinois.edu) for information or for an application and training opportunities. You can also visit at <https://eicclearinghouse.org>





[www.pathbeyondadoption.illinois.gov](http://www.pathbeyondadoption.illinois.gov)

**DCFS POST ADOPTION TOLL-FREE LINE 866-538-8892**

[www2.illinois.gov/DCFS](http://www2.illinois.gov/DCFS)

DCFS is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and/or services.