

Permanent Guardianship of a Dependent Child

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- The child must be adjudicated dependent and residing in out-of-home care.
- The child must be in the placement for no less than 6 months.
- The court must determine that the child and the caregiver are not likely to need supervision or services to ensure the stability of the permanent guardianship.
- The permanent guardian has made a commitment to provide for the child until the child reaches the age of majority and will prepare the child for adulthood and independence.
- The permanent guardian must agree to give notice of any changes in their residential address or the residence of the child by filing a written document with the clerk of the court.

BENEFITS:

- Medicaid until the child reaches the age of 18.
- Relative Caregiver Funds until the child reaches the age of 18, as determined by Economic Social Services.
- Educational Tuition and Fee Exemption upon reaching the age of 18, if the caregiver is eligible for the Relative Caregiver Funds program.
- Postsecondary Educational Services and Support if placed with a court-approved dependency guardian after reaching 16 years of age and had spent at least 6 months in foster care immediately preceding the placement.
- Placement of a child in a permanent guardianship situation does not terminate the parent-child relationship to include the child's right to inherit from his or her parents and the parent's responsibility to provide financial, medical, and other support for the child as ordered by the court.
- The parents can motion the court to reopen the case, if compliant with their case plan tasks and it is in the best interests of the child, in attempt to regain custody.

Notes

For additional information,
please contact:

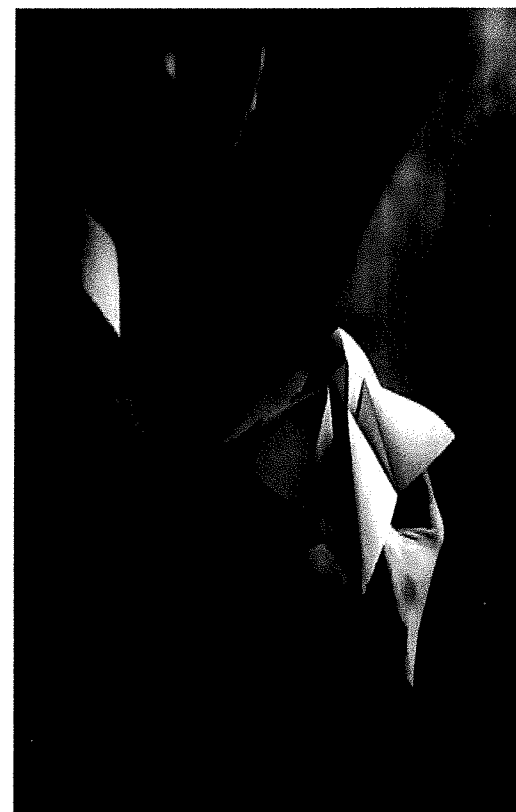


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THE RIGHT TO KNOW

Permanency Options



For Youth in the
Dependency System



Adoption

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Child adjudicated dependent.
- Parental rights have been legally terminated.
- Permanent custody being awarded to DCF or to a licensed child-placing agency.
- Must meet at least a special needs:
 - Black or mixed heritage.
 - Being at least eight years old.
 - Being a member of a sibling group, adopted together, including previously adopted siblings.
 - Being developmentally disabled.
 - Being physically or emotionally handicapped.
 - Having significant or emotional ties to his or her foster parent or relative caregiver.

BENEFITS:

- Maintenance subsidy – Financial assistance in the amount of \$417 per month; provided until age 18.
- Medicaid – Available until age 18. If they are adopted after turning 16, Medicaid to age 21.
- Medical subsidy – Aid of last resort; is paid directly to the medical provider. Adoptive parents should use Medicaid or private Insurance, prior to requesting subsidy. Case Manager must pre-approve before use; need must be documented before finalization.
- Educational Tuition and Fees Exemption – Applies to children adopted after May 5, 1997 through DCF. Waives tuition and student fees through age 28. For use only in Florida at public postsecondary educational institutions.
- Non-recurring expenses – The State may make payments for one-time expenses related to the special needs adoption. Example: attorney's fees. Limited to \$1000 per child.
- Potential tax credit for the year in which the child is adopted.
- Post-Adoption Services – Assistance in locating available services related to the child's special needs. The child becomes the legal heir to the adoptive parents.
- If adopted from foster care at age 16 or 17, see Postsecondary Educational Services and Support requirements.

Independent Living: Services for Young Adults Formerly in Foster Care

I. EXTENDED FOSTER CARE:

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Resided in licensed foster care at the time of turning 18 years of age.
- Has reached 18 years of age but is not yet 21 years of age or, in the case of a young adult with a disability, is not yet 22 years of age.
- Meets one of the following eligibility criteria:
 - ⇒ Attending high school or working on GED.
 - ⇒ Enrolled in college or vocational program.
 - ⇒ Employed at least 80 hours per month.
 - ⇒ Participating in a program designed to promote or eliminate barriers to employment.
 - ⇒ Has a documented diagnosed disability that prevents the young adult from participating in any of the activities listed above.

BENEFITS:

- Placement in an approved supervised living environment, which includes a licensed foster home, college dormitory, shared housing or host home.
- On-going case management to include monthly contacts/ visits by the Case Manager.
- Court oversight and Judicial Review hearings at a minimum of every 6 months.
- Medicaid available until age 26.
- Educational Tuition and Fees Exemption – Waives tuition and student fees through age 28. For use only in Florida at public postsecondary educational institutions.

II. POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Was living in licensed foster care at the time of turning 18 years of age and had spent at least 6 months in foster care prior to turning 18 years of age.
- Was at least 16 years of age and was adopted out of foster care or placed with a court-approved dependency guardian and had spent at least 6 months

Independent Living, cont.

- in foster care in the 12 months immediately preceding such placement or adoption.
- Has reached 18 years of age, but is not yet 23 years of age.
- Has earned a standard high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Is enrolled in a college or vocational school that is Florida Bright Future eligible at a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester.
- Has applied for financial aid, grants and other scholarships.
- Must sign an agreement to allow the agency access to school records.

BENEFITS:

- Financial assistance in the amount of \$1,256 per month.
- ⇒ For young adults who also remain in extended foster care and continue to reside in a licensed foster home, the amount is the established board rate for the foster parents.
- Educational Tuition and Fees Exemption – Waives tuition and student fees through age 28. For use only in Florida at public postsecondary educational institutions.
- Medicaid available until age 26 if the young adult was resided in licensed foster care at the time of turning 18 years of age.
- Case management services.

III. AFTERCARE SUPPORT SERVICES:

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Reached 18 years of age while in licensed foster care but is not yet 23 years of age.
- Is not in Extended Foster Care or Postsecondary Educational Services and Support.

BENEFITS:

- Short-term funding which may include, but is not limited to, mentoring, tutoring, mental health services or substance abuse counseling, life skills classes, parenting classes and temporary financial assistance to prevent homelessness.
- Medicaid available until age 26.