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## OVERVIEW

Nonrecurring adoption expenses (NRE) are reasonable and necessary fees and expenses directly related to the adoption process of a child who meets the criteria for special needs adoption assistance; see [AAM 200, Adoption Assistance Eligibility and Funding Source Determination](#).

Nonrecurring adoption expenses do not include costs or expenses incurred in violation of state or federal laws, such as fines or criminal court fees, or that have been reimbursed from other sources or funds.

The adoptive parent(s) or a third party, with the adoption worker's assistance, must claim expenses within two years of the child's final order of adoption date. If the expenses are not claimed within two years of the final order of adoption date, eligibility for reimbursement ends.

**Note:** A third party is a party who has incurred NRE expenses directly related to the adoption process of a child who meets the criteria for special needs adoption assistance on behalf of the adoptive family, with the family retaining ultimate responsibility for payment.

## CLAIM FORMS

### *Parent Request*

Nonrecurring adoption expenses must be claimed on the DHS-4815, Parent Claim for Reimbursement of Nonrecurring Adoption Expenses. More than one DHS-4815 may be submitted for a child within the two-year period following the final order of adoption date, providing the expenses being claimed were not previously submitted.

### *Third Party Request*

Nonrecurring adoption expenses must be claimed on the DHS-4816, Third Party Claim for Reimbursement of Nonrecurring Adoption Expenses. More than one DHS-4816 may be submitted for a child within the two-year period following the final order of adoption date, providing the expenses being claimed were not previously submitted.

**ADOPTION  
DISRUPTION/  
DISSOLUTION**

If a child's adoption disrupts during the supervision period, the adoptive parent(s) or third party remain eligible for reimbursement of nonrecurring adoption expenses for two years after the date of the order placing child after consent.

If a child's adoption dissolves after the final order of adoption, the adoptive parent(s) or third party remain eligible for reimbursement of nonrecurring adoption expenses for two years after the final order of adoption.

**SIBLING GROUP  
CLAIMS**

Claims for sibling groups must include a form for each child for court fees and birth certificate expenses. Other expenses (for example travel and adoptive family physicals) applying to the entire sibling group may be submitted on one of the siblings claims forms, providing total expenses related to the adoption process do not exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement of \$2,000 per child.

If the expenses exceed \$2,000 for one child, the expenses must be divided and reported on more than one of the siblings claims forms. Receipts or other appropriate documents must be attached to each sibling claim form.

**CHILDREN NOT  
PLACED FOR  
ADOPTION**

The claim/reimbursement process is not available to a family if the child who was certified eligible for the NRE program was never placed into adoption with a signed PCA 320, Order Placing Child After Consent, by the court.

**ADOPTIVE PARENT  
CLAIM/  
REIMBURSEMENT**

Claim procedures for the family who has incurred or will incur expenses are as follows:

- The adoptive parents complete, with the adoption worker's assistance, the DHS-4815. Attach a receipt or appropriate

document for each expense incurred as outlined (see Required Reimbursement Documentation) and submit to the Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Office (AGAO) within two years after the final order of adoption date or sooner.

- The AGAO determines the appropriate reimbursement amounts, authorizes the reimbursement, and initiates payment to the family after the court order placing the child for adoption has been signed and an assistance case is opened by the AGAO.

### THIRD PARTY CLAIM/ REIMBURSEMENT

Claim procedures for a third party that has incurred NRE expenses on behalf of a family who retains ultimate responsibility for payment, which are directly related to the adoption process of a child who meets the criteria for special needs adoption assistance are as follows:

- The adoptive parent(s) and third party complete, with the adoption worker's assistance, the DHS-4816. Attach a receipt or appropriate document for each expense incurred (as outlined in Required Reimbursement Documentation) and submit to the AGAO within two years after the final order of adoption date or sooner.

If more than one third party has incurred expenses on behalf of a family, a DHS-4816 must be submitted for each third party and one for each child in a sibling group.

- The AGAO determines the appropriate reimbursement amounts, authorizes the reimbursement, and initiates payment to the third party after the court order placing the child for adoption has been signed and an adoption assistance case is opened by the AGAO.

### UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Expenses which are **not** reimbursable include but are not limited to:

- Fees relating to prospective adoptive parent's birth certificate, marriage certificate, or divorce decree.

- Medical, psychological, clothing or camp expenses for the child being adopted.
- Entertainment mileage during visitations.
- Physical remodeling, renovation, and alterations of the adoptive parents' home or property to accommodate needs for the child within the family environment.
- Family counseling.
- Adoptive parent lost wages due to time off work.

**REQUIRED  
REIMBURSEMENT  
DOCUMENTATION*****Birth Certificate (One Per Child)***

Copy of check, money order, or receipt for birth certificate. Expenses relating to a prospective adoptive parent's birth certificate are not reimbursable.

***Court***

Court receipt including child's or adoptive family's name or copy of adoptive parent's check to court or copy of money order.

***Travel***

Mileage needs to have a detailed travel log including dates traveled, addresses traveled to and from, and purpose of travel. Documentation that provides clear calculation of mileage such as MapQuest, Yahoo Maps, Google Maps, etc. Mileage must be approved by the worker for the purpose of visitation with the child or other reasonable mileage required by the adoption agency. Entertainment/excursion mileage, for visitations for example, is not reimbursable. The AGAO will determine the reimbursable amount based on the state mileage rate in effect at the time of travel.

When requesting reimbursement of airfare there must be a receipt showing passenger's name, flight dates, points of travel, and cost of ticket. Airfare may be reimbursable if determined necessary by the adoption worker for the purpose of visitation or court hearing. Airfare would typically apply to interstate travel of a prospective adoptive parent.

**Note:** Prior to travel, adoption workers should contact the MDHHS Interstate Office regarding available transportation for a child over age five, or a child aged five or under and a transporter (such as prospective adoptive parent) when a child is required to travel between Michigan and another state.

Gas expenses are not specifically reimbursable. Mileage reimbursement includes coverage for gas expenses.

A receipt showing fee paid for bridge/toll fee is required. These expenses may be reimbursable if associated with mileage as described above.

### ***Lodging***

A receipt for lodging if the adoptive parent(s) travel is more than 50 miles from the family residence for the purpose of visiting the child. The AGAO will determine the reimbursable amount based on the state rate plus taxes in effect at the time of travel.

### ***Meals***

When traveling meals may be reimbursed. A receipt for each meal for immediate family members and the child to be adopted plus the date of travel, the meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) and the number of people for whom a meal was purchased is required. The maximum daily meal reimbursement rates for regular travel are indicated in the state rate schedule. Individual meal reimbursement will be based on the following schedule:

- Breakfast - When travel begins before 6 a.m. and extends beyond 8:30 a.m.
- Lunch - When travel begins before 11:30 a.m. and extends beyond 2 p.m.
- Dinner - When travel begins before 6:30 p.m. and extends beyond 8 p.m.

### ***Medical***

Reimbursable medical expenses are for adoption physicals only. Prescription costs are not reimbursable. A physician's invoice or an insurance explanation of benefits identifying the patient's name, date of services, description of service, and amount the family must pay is required.

***Psychological Evaluation***

Reimbursable expenses related to a psychological evaluation for a prospective adoptive parent when required by the adoption worker. A psychologist's invoice or insurance explanation of benefits identifying the adoptive parent's name, date of service, description of service, and the amount the family is responsible for and written correspondence from the adoption worker documenting agency's requirement for the evaluation is required.

***Adoptive Family Assessment***

Adoptive family assessments are completed without charge for adoption of state wards and permanent court wards in the state of Michigan. For non-state wards, a detailed invoice from the adoption agency describing the expense that was incurred by the adoptive family for an adoptive family assessment, and written correspondence from the adoption worker detailing the circumstances surrounding the necessity of the expense is required.

***Attorney Fees***

An invoice from the attorney including dates of service, description of services, amount billed for services, attorney's signature, and parent's signature verifying services. Reimbursable attorney fees are those incurred due to services to complete an adoption and/or to obtain a new birth certificate for the adopted child, if required.

***Adoption Supervision***

Adoption supervision is completed without charge for state wards and permanent court wards placed in Michigan. For non-state wards or Michigan wards adopted outside the state of Michigan, a detailed invoice from the adoption agency where an expense was incurred by the adoptive family for adoption supervision must be submitted.

**POLICY CONTACT**

Direct questions about this policy to the [Child Welfare Policy Mailbox](mailto:Child-Welfare-Policy@michigan.gov) ([Child-Welfare-Policy@michigan.gov](mailto:Child-Welfare-Policy@michigan.gov)).