

## **Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), Medi-Cal and Social Security Income/Supplemental Security Payment (SSI/SSP) Benefits**

If you have any questions or problems regarding AAP benefits or Medi-Cal coverage for your child, call the Foster Care/AAP Hotline at 1-800-697-4444.

### **AAP and SSI/SSP Benefits**

The SSI Program is a federally funded program which provides income support to you if you are aged 65 or older, blind or disabled. SSI benefits are also available to qualified blind or disabled children. The SSP Program is the state program which supplements SSI. Both SSI and SSP benefits are administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Eligibility for both programs is determined by SSA using federal criteria. If you qualify for SSI, you qualify for SSP. The benefits are in the form of cash assistance.

#### **If your child is receiving SSI/SSP:**

- If the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is the payee for SSI/SSP payments before adoptive placement, the DCFS SSI Unit will notify the Social Security Administration office to stop payment of the SSI/SSP to DCFS as of the date your AAP payments start.
- You can go to the Social Security Administration office to fill out an application to become the payee for the SSI/SSP.
- **IMPORTANT** – If your child is receiving AAP and SSI/SSP, is it your responsibility to inform the Social Security Administration that you are receiving AAP. Failure to report receipt of AAP benefits to the SSA could result in you being charged with an overpayment.
- The Social Security Administration may treat your AAP benefits as countable income, meaning that the amount the child receives in SSI/SSP may be reduced or stopped as a result. In some cases, the SSI/SSP payment will be reduced dollar for dollar by the amount of the AAP, meaning that the SSI/SSP amount may be reduced to zero.
  - If the SSI/SSP is terminated, the child's Medi-cal through SSI/SSI will also end. See the section below titled "How to Request Medical Through AAP".
- If after you report receipt of AAP to the Social Security Administration you continue to receive SSI/SSP payments, you should know that after the adoption finalizes, your income and assets will be considered and used to compute the child's monthly SSI/SSP benefit amount, meaning

that the SSI/SSP payment may be reduced or terminated after the adoption.

- If the SSI/SSP is terminated after you make your report, the child's Medi-Cal through SSI/SSP will also end. See the section below titled "How to Request Medical Through AAP."

### **How to Request Medi-Cal Through AAP**

- If you receive Medi-Cal for your child through SSI/SSP and the SSI/SSP terminates, **call the Foster Care/AAP Hotline at 1-800-697-4444 as soon as possible** to request Medi-Cal through AAP.

### **AAP and Social Security Benefits**

- Some children qualify to receive Social Security benefits. Social Security benefits are benefits because one or both of the child's birth parents is deceased, becomes disabled or reaches retirement age.
- If DCFS is the payee for the Social Security benefits before adoptive placement, the DCFS SSI Unit will notify the Social Security Administration (SSA) office to stop payment of the Social Security Benefits to DCFS as of the date your AAP payments start.
- You can go to the Social Security Administration office to fill out an application to become the payee for the Social Security benefit payments.
- Receipt of AAP payments does not impact your eligibility for or amount of Social Security benefits. As a result, the Social Security benefits will not be reduced because you start receiving AAP payments for the child.