



Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Assistance Case File Contents

Protocol for Adoption

Supplemental to DCS Policy: 15.11 Adoption Assistance

Adoption Assistance file maintenance has varied regarding information required to be maintained in the subsidy file or in TFACTS subsidy record. Case file content requirements are governed by Adoption Assistance policies that were in place at the time the Adoption Assistance Agreement went into effect.

Effective **October 1, 2017**, DCS transitioned from maintaining hard copy files for Adoption Assistance to an electronic filing system. **Beginning June 1, 2019**, the supporting documentation for Adoption Assistance eligibility began to be organized using electronic file sections (subsidy packets). Refer to the [Work Aid-Electronic Filing for Adoption Assistance](#).

Adoption Assistance files created prior to either effective date (October 1, 2017 and June 1, 2019) may vary in the way the file is organized or labeled in TFACTS. However, the Adoption Assistance file should maintain the supporting documentation to validate the approval of a subsidy payment and the Title IV-E Fostering Connections, Title IV-E, or State-Funded Adoption Assistance Agreement.

A. Initial Eligibility and Approval

1. This section/packet consists of initial documentation required to support the approval of an Adoption Assistance Agreement and authorize payment of the approved subsidy rate. Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following:

☐ ***CS-0930, Application for Adoption Assistance;***

☐ ***CS-4200, Adoption Assistance Eligibility;***

☐ ***CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement;***

☐ **[CS-4237, Adoption Assistance Agreement Title IV-E Fostering Connections \(Effective on or after January 1, 2023 for Youth 16 or older\)](#)**

☐ **[CS-0460, Intent to Adopt Placement Agreement](#) ;**

☐ Presentation or Preplacement Summary;

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- ☐ Former [CS-4201, Application for Adoption Assistance](#) ;

- ☐ Documentation to support the special needs factors that made the child eligible for the Adoption Assistance program for Adoption Assistance cases made effective on or after January 1, 2014. Prior to January 1, 2014, the information documented in the initial Application for Adoption Assistance can be used to support the special needs criteria;

- ☐ Final Decree of Adoption for Adoption Assistance cases made effective on or after March 1, 2008. Prior to March 1, 2018, the Final Decree of Adoption was not required to be maintained in the Adoption Assistance file;

- ☐ Court Order that led to the child's removal from the home and resulted in the child's custody being transferred to the Department of Children's Services for cases determined eligible on or after July 1, 2014. For Adoption Assistance cases made effective prior to July 1, 2014, the Court Order that led to the child's removal will be maintained in the Child Welfare Benefits Foster Care Eligibility file;

- ☐ [CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request](#); if applicable

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- ☐ [CS-0934, Special Needs Justification](#), and/or supporting documentation from the licensed provider, board-certified Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) provider, or TEIS provider to support approvals of Special or Extraordinary y Assistance rates, as applicable

- ☐ Documentation of conditions or high-risk factors for which a child is approved for Adoption Assistance. If the child is under current treatment, documentation of current diagnosis and prognosis is obtained from the licensed provider, board-certified ABA provider, or TEIS provider; and or

- ☐ When there is no current treatment or diagnosis, but the child has high-risk factors that indicate there may be a future need for treatment (e.g., an abused child who needs future counseling, etc.), initial documentation reflects the identified risk factors and their causes.

2. In instances where the initial Adoption Assistance Agreement is not included in the subsidy file, subsequent Adoption Assistance Agreements or renewal affidavits in the case file shall serve as the Agreement between the adoptive parent and DCS.

B. Revisions to the Adoption Assistance Agreement

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Revision of the Adoption Assistance Agreement may be requested any time a significant change occurs in the child's circumstances. The Department of Children's Services or the adoptive parents can initiate a revision to the Adoption Assistance Agreement if either party determines a modification is warranted. Any revision to the Adoption Assistance Agreement must be validated by supporting documentation, as listed below, and included in the child's subsidy file:

- ☐ ***CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement;***
- ☐ [*CS-4237, Adoption Assistance Agreement Title IV-E Fostering Connections \(Effective on or after January 1, 2023 for Youth 16 or older\)*](#)
- ☐ [*CS-0559, Authorization of Release of Information and HIPAA Protected Health Information To and From the Department of Children's Services and Notification of Release;*](#) if applicable
- ☐ [*CS-0403, Appeal for Fair Hearing;*](#)
- ☐ [*CS-0686, Notice of Denial, Termination, or Change in Adoption Assistance;*](#)
- ☐ [*CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance*](#) or other documentation to support school enrollment; if applicable
- ☐ SSA, VA, SSI verification; if applicable
- ☐ [*CS-0017, Verification of Financial Responsibility;*](#)
- ☐ [*CS-0934, Special Needs Justification*](#) and/or supporting documentation; if applicable
- ☐ [*CS-0936, Adoption Assistance Renegotiation*](#), if applicable for revision Agreements made effective on or after March 1, 2008;
- ☐ Other supporting documentation.

C. Renewing Adoption Assistance Agreement

State Funded Adoption Assistance Agreements are renewed periodically to ensure that the child/youth remains eligible for the Adoption Assistance program. The items listed below should be maintained in the Adoption Assistance case file/packet for each renewal, as appropriate:

- ☐ ***CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement;***

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- ☐ [CS-4237, Adoption Assistance Agreement Title IV-E Fostering Connections \(Effective on or after January 1, 2023 for Youth 16 or older\);](#)
- ☐ Proof of address;
- ☐ [CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance](#) or other documentation to support school enrollment; if applicable
- ☐ [CS-0934, Special Needs Justification](#); if applicable
- ☐ [CS-4220, Verification of Medical/Mental Health Provider Visit \(for Adoption Assistance\)](#); if applicable
- ☐ Supporting documentation for Special or Extraordinary Adoption Assistance rate; if applicable.

D. Annual Review

Effective July 1, 2021, any person receiving Title IV-E Fostering Connections, Title IV-E, or State Funded Adoption Assistance, from DCS, on behalf of an adopted child is required to provide the Department with medical/mental health or educational documentation. The items listed below should be maintained in the Adoption Assistance file/packet for each annual review, as appropriate:

- ☐ [CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance;](#)
- ☐ [CS-0934, Special Needs Justification](#); or
- ☐ [CS-4220, Verification of Medical/Mental Health Provider Visit \(For Adoption Assistance\)](#); or
- ☐ Documentation to support that efforts were made to secure the required documentation.

E. Review of Eligibility

This section consists of any information related to eligibility reviews of the Adoption Assistance Agreement when youth attains the age of 18, 19, or 20 to support the continuation for approval or denial of the subsidy payment. Appropriate documentation for this section may include the following:

- ☐ [CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance](#) or other supporting documentation to support school enrollment;
- ☐ [CS-4239, Verification of Employment or Employment Readiness Training \(AA/SPG ROE\) ;](#)
- ☐ [CS-0934, Special Needs Justification](#).

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F. Financial/Expenses

This section/packet consists of any financial expenses related to the Adoption Assistance case. Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following: ☐ [W-9](#)

G. Termination of Adoption Assistance

When an Adoption Assistance case is terminated, the following documentation is maintained in the case file:

- ☐ Notification to parents of Adoption Assistance termination and appeal rights; forms [CS-0403, Appeal for Fair Hearing](#) and [CS-0686, Notice of Denial, Termination, or Change in Adoption Assistance](#); if applicable
- ☐ **CS-0513, Adoption Assistance Agreement** indicating the date the Agreement was terminated.
- ☐ [CS-4237, Adoption Assistance Agreement Title IV-E Fostering Connections \(Effective on or after January 1, 2023 for Youth 16 or older\)](#)

H. Appeal Information

Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following:

- ☐ Appeal Summary;
- ☐ Appeal Correspondence;
- ☐ Appeal Orders.

I. Correspondence/Miscellaneous

Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include any Adoption Assistance correspondence or other documents not included in other sections/packets.

J. Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Expenses (ICAMA)

Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following:

- ☐ ICAMA forms (i.e. 7.00, 7.5);
- ☐ ICAMA cover letter to parents.

K. Adoption Childcare Assistance

Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following:

- ☐ [CS-4231, Application, Referral and Authorization for Adoption Childcare Assistance](#)

L. Annual Review

Appropriate documentation for this section/packet may include the following:

- ☐ [CS-0809, Verification of Full-Time School Attendance;](#)
- ☐ [CS-4220, Verification of Medical/Mental Health Provider Visit \(For Adoption Assistance\);](#)
- ☐ [CS-0934, Special Needs Justification,](#) or
- ☐ Documentation to support that efforts were made to secure the required documentation.