


MEMORANDUM

DATE: 4/9/2021

TO: Directors, Local Department of Social Services
Assistant Directors, Local Department of Social Services

FROM: Michelle L. Farr, LCSW-C, LICSW 
Executive Director, Social Services Administration

RE: COVID-19 Reimbursement Funding Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why are stipends being provided?

As a result of the extraordinary experience of caring for youth during the pandemic, the Department of Human Services, Social Services Administration (DHS/SSA) was awarded federal emergency COVID-19 funds to support youth, families, vulnerable adults, and providers.

What is the purpose of the Funding?

The purpose of the DHS/SSA funding is to provide appropriate assistance to a range of children, youth, adults, and caregivers who were impacted by COVID-19. The goal is to ensure that children and adults remain stable in their homes and foster care placements while promoting permanency, safety, and well-being.

What allotments are being provided?

DHS/SSA is providing a one-time stipend of \$450 per quarter (maximum of \$900) for *Resource Parents* caring for children during the period of July-December 2020 (FY21 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2).

In addition, a one-time stipend is provided for *Resource Parents* caring for a child who was exposed or tested positive for coronavirus to cover 14 days of isolation and/or quarantine expenses per child during the period of July - December 2020 (FY21 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2).

Who qualifies for the one-time stipend of \$450?

Families licensed as Private Treatment Foster Care Homes, Public Foster Care Homes, and Kinship Foster Homes to cover the additional costs of caring for youth during the public health emergency (July – December 2020).

Do Residential Care Center (RCC) and Independent Living Program (ILP) providers receive the one-time stipend of \$450?

No, RCC and ILP providers do not receive the one-time \$450.00 stipend. However, the RCC and ILPs received a one-time supplement grant award based upon contract capacity and the IRC rate.

If I qualify to receive funds, how will they be distributed?

Checks will be distributed directly to *resource parents* from DHS. RCCs and ILPs will receive their payment via the normal payment practice.



If *resource parents* receive the \$450 one-time stipend and then a youth in their home test positive or were exposed will they be getting a second stipend?

These are two separate allotments. Only *resource parents* with children in their home during the time period of July - December 2020 will receive a stipend of \$450 per quarter. If there was at least one child in their home during both quarters, they will receive \$450 for both quarters (totaling \$900.) If there were children in the home for only one quarter, they will receive \$450.

A separate stipend will be provided, if the *resource parent* was also caring for a child who was COVID-19 exposed (\$200 per day for 14 days of quarantine) or tested positive (\$300 per day for 14-days isolation) during the July - December 2020 time period.

How does SSA determine which parents to pay for COVID-19 Exposure/Infections?

SSA will utilize Critical Incident reports (Form 1080A) received from the local departments, Placement data in CJAMS, and medical verification if available of the youth's illness to determine which *Resource Parents* are eligible to receive the stipends.

What happens if I did not receive a list from the Local Department to verify children in the foster home that may have been exposed or tested positive?

Please contact your local department if you have not received a list, and believe you have a resource parent eligible to receive a stipend.

When will stipends be issued?

Stipends will be issued beginning on April 15, 2021.

How were Public and Private Resource Parents notified about the stipends?

SSA submitted a memorandum regarding the Children's Cabinet funds to the Resource Parents via the local departments of social services and private provider agencies on December 23, 2020. An updated memorandum was submitted on March 2, 2021 (see both memorandums attached).

How were Local Departments of Social Services notified about the stipends?

SSA submitted a memorandum on December 18, 2020 notifying them of the Children's Cabinet Funds and an updated memorandum was sent on March 2, 2021 (see both memorandums attached).

P-EBT Inquiry:

P-EBT benefits are issued in the name of recipients. The benefits are available to children participating in the National School Lunch Program but are unable to access the free or reduced-price school meals due to school closures resulting from COVID-19. For the current school year, FIA issued benefits for the month of September only. They are waiting for the federal government to approve our State Plan before benefits for subsequent months can be issued. Subject to the plan approval, we are hoping to issue October and November benefits before the end of April.

DHS//FIA has issued last year benefits for all children approved as eligible by MSDE. Anyone who believes that they were eligible but did not receive benefits should submit a customer inquiry form using the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1P4IxDeXfhILxAQsAbG0mSmtTtPQTma4OsIQP95TOO2Q/viewform?ts=5ef119a6&edit_requested=true