

# Delaware Adoption Assistance- Who Do You Contact?

## State Contact Information

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>State Adoption Assistance Specialist</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Frank Perfiniski</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:frank.perfiniski@state.de.us">frank.perfiniski@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2655</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICAMA Compact Administrator</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Rose Holmquist</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:rose.holmquist@state.de.us">rose.holmquist@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2698</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adoption Program Manager or Contact</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Frank Perfiniski</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:frank.perfiniski@state.de.us">frank.perfiniski@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2655</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ICPC Compact Administrator</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Rose Holmquist</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:rose.holmquist@state.de.us">rose.holmquist@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2698</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Post Adoption Services Contact</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Lauren Arnold</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:Lauren.Arnold@state.de.us">Lauren.Arnold@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2661</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Medical Assistance Specialist</b></p> <p><b>NAME:</b> Rose Holmquist</p> <p><b>ADDRESS:</b> Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families, Division of Family Services 1825 Faulkland Road Wilmington, Delaware 19805</p> <p><b>E-MAIL:</b> <a href="mailto:rose.holmquist@state.de.us">rose.holmquist@state.de.us</a></p> <p><b>TELEPHONE:</b> 302.633.2698</p>

## **Adoption Assistance- Who is Eligible?**

**A good place to start.** Public adoption in Delaware is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families (DSCYF). The DSCYF and adoption links: [www.state.de.us/kids/index.htm](http://www.state.de.us/kids/index.htm) and [www.state.de.us/kids/adoption.htm](http://www.state.de.us/kids/adoption.htm).

- 1. What specific factors or conditions does your state consider to determine that a child cannot be placed with adoptive parents without providing financial assistance? ("What is your state definition of special needs?")**

A child with special needs is defined as a child that has at least one of the following needs or circumstances that may be a barrier to placement or adoption without financial assistance:

- Eight years of age or older
- Member of a minority race or ethnic background
- Member of a sibling group of two or more children to be adopted in the same placement
- Mental or emotional condition(s), verified by a psychologist, psychiatrist, or other qualified professional
- Medical condition, physical handicap, or disease which requires ongoing medical attention as verified by a physician

Note: Children must be legally free for adoption, in foster care, and in the custody of the state of Delaware prior to adoption to be eligible for adoption assistance.

- 2. What are the eligibility criteria for your state-funded adoption assistance program?**

In order to be eligible for state-funded adoption assistance a child must be a special needs child as defined above, legally free for adoption, in foster care, and in the custody of the state of Delaware prior to adoption.

- 2. What is the maximum amount a family may receive in non-recurring adoption expenses from your state? Adoptive parents can receive reimbursement of certain approved, "one-time" adoption expenses incurred in the process of finalizing a special needs adoption.**

\$2,000.00 per placement

Note: Delaware covers adoption expenses (needs and services) all up front (\$2,000 available).

- 4. Does your state enter into deferred adoption assistance agreements? In some states, adoptive parents can enter into an agreement in which they choose to defer the receipt of a Medicaid card, the monthly monetary payment, or both and can elect to receive the Medicaid card and/or monetary payment at another time.**

Delaware offers deferred adoption assistance agreements.

- 5. When do adoption assistance payments and benefits begin in your state?**

Adoption assistance payments may begin in Delaware after adoption finalization.

## 6. How are changes made to the adoption assistance agreement in your state?

- a. When can a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- b. How does a parent request a change in the adoption assistance agreement?
- c. What if a parent does not receive the change they request in the adoption assistance agreement?

Adoptive parents can request a change in an adoption assistance agreement at any time. Requests for change should be made in writing with accompanying documentation supporting the request. The adoptive family must request the necessary documentation from a physician, psychologist, or other professional to substantiate the need for the change. This information is then presented to the Adoption Program Manager or designee for review and approval. Agreements can be renegotiated by the family and the adoption assistance specialist at any time upon request or at the annual review. Assistance agreements are reviewed annually and additional reviews can be requested when necessary. In a review, adoptive parents furnish the state agency with information on the child's well being and the family's financial circumstance. Information regarding the child's well-being includes achievements of the previous year, goals for the coming year, and school grades and comments.

If parents do not receive a requested change in the adoption assistance agreement, they can appeal the decision. Appeals or requests for fair hearing should be made in writing within thirty calendar days of the date of an adverse decision or notice. In the request for fair hearing, adoptive parents should explain the reason for the request and the relief they are requesting. Send requests for change to the following address:

Adoption Program Manager  
Division of Family Services  
1825 Faulkland Road  
Wilmington, Delaware 19805

## **Adoption Assistance- Post Adoption Services**

### 7. What types of post adoption services are available in your state and how do I find out more about them?

Post adoption services in Delaware are administered by DSCYF through contracted agencies. Post adoption services include the following examples:

1. Information
2. Referral
3. Support groups
4. Newsletter publication
5. Respite

Adoptive Families with Information and Support (AFIS) is the contact agency for adoptive families in Delaware. Adoptive families can call the Delaware Help Line at 800.464.4357 or the AFIS Help Line at 302.239.6232 for information and support services. Many private organizations offer a variety of respite options, see Delaware's Respite Programs, link: [www.respitelocator.org/dstates.htm](http://www.respitelocator.org/dstates.htm).

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or post adoption services contact for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

## **Adoption Assistance- Medical Assistance**

### **8. What mental health services are provided by your state?**

Public mental health services for children in Delaware are administered by the DSCYF Division of Child Mental Health Services (DCMHS). DCMHS's mental health services include the following examples: outpatient care, support and crisis services, day and residential treatment, and hospital treatment services. More information is available on the Division of Child Mental Health Service's (DCMHS) website at [www.state.de.us/kids/cmhs.htm](http://www.state.de.us/kids/cmhs.htm) or contact the DCMHS by phone at 302.633.2600 or e-mail: [cmh.dscyf@state.de.us](mailto:cmh.dscyf@state.de.us).

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker or medical assistance specialist for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

### **9. Does your state provide additional finances or services for medical or therapeutic need not covered under your state medical plan to children receiving adoption assistance?**

Delaware offers an assistance known as a *Medical/Psychological Subsidy*. The program provides financial assistance for treatment of an identified medical or psychological problem, either existing or potential. Assistance is limited to \$3,000 per year for expenses not covered by the family medical insurance plan or by Medicaid.

Note: Not all services may be available in all cases. Contact your adoption assistance worker for information regarding process, eligibility, availability, and duration of services.

## **Adoption Assistance- Fair Hearings**

### **10. What is your state's process for applying for a fair hearing? A fair hearing is a legal, administrative procedure that provides a forum to address disagreements with agency decisions.**

Adoptive parents have the right to request a fair hearing whenever they wish to appeal a DFS decision affecting their child's adoption assistance benefits. Requests for fair hearing are made by submitting a written request to the DFS Director within thirty days of the date of the decision or notice. Requests should explain the reason that parents are requesting a fair hearing and what relief (benefits) they are seeking. Denial of an application for assistance or of a request for the continuation of adoption assistance may be appealed by the adoptive parent(s) or by the agency submitting the application by requesting an administrative review of the case and the decision. The Division Director will conduct the review or appoint a member of their staff to do so. Families can be represented and bring witnesses and substantiating documentation of their claim with them to the hearing. The Director's office will review the request to determine if the appeal was made timely and to determine that the request is being made by the person affected by the decision. A Hearing Officer is assigned to hear the appeal. The Hearing Officer is an impartial fact finder and decision maker who will create a respectful, non-adversarial environment to which to discuss the case. The Hearing Officer performs the following functions: schedules the fair hearing (appeal), ensures that all parties have been notified of the date, time, and location of the hearing, decides which evidence and witnesses will be considered, mediates the hearing, decides the merits of the appeal (reasons for the adoptive parent's claims), writes an appeal decision, and ensures that all parties receive a copy of the decision within thirty calendar days of the final hearing date. Send requests for fair hearing to the following address:

Director, Division of Family Services  
1825 Faulkland Road  
Wilmington, Delaware 19805

## **Adoption Assistance- Web/Internet Information**

11. What is your state Web address for general adoption information?

Delaware's general adoption link: [www.state.de.us/kids/adoption.htm](http://www.state.de.us/kids/adoption.htm)

12. What is your state Web address for adoption assistance information?

Delaware does not have a link to adoption assistance information. Delaware Health and Social Services offers a link to the [Delaware Central Directory of Services for Young Children with Special Needs, 2002](#)

12. What is your state Web address for state-specific medical assistance information for children?

Delaware's state-specific medical assistance link: [www.state.de.us/dhss/dss/medicaid.html](http://www.state.de.us/dhss/dss/medicaid.html)