

# Adoption Benefits for State Employees and Other Eligible Applicants

## What Law Authorizes the Adoption Benefit?

[Section 409.1664, Florida Statutes](#), authorizes monetary benefits to certain employees who adopt a child from the Florida child welfare system.

## Who Administers the Adoption Benefit?

The Department of Children and Families and the Office of Child & Family Well-Being, administers the program. The Adoption Unit of the Office of Child & Family Well-Being, is responsible for accepting applications, determining the benefit award for each eligible applicant and transferring the budget to each agency or school district that has an eligible employee.

## Who is an Eligible Applicant?

[Section 409.1664, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#), identifies eligible applicants as individuals who are employed full-time or part-time employees of a state agency (Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches, including the Department of Lottery), the state universities, community colleges, school districts, charter schools, Florida Virtual School, Water Management Districts and instructional personnel employed by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. The legislatures have also identified individuals who are veterans, servicemembers, law enforcement officers as defined in s. F.S. 943.10(1), F.S.OPS workers who have been employed with a state agency for at least one year, tax collectors and health care practitioners (gross income must not exceed \$150,000 per year at the time of the adoption).

## What Types of Adoptions are Eligible for the Adoption Benefit?

If, prior to the adoption, the child was in the permanent custody of the Florida Department of Children and Families and the final order of adoption was granted on or after:

- July 1, 2015: State agency (Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches, including the Department of Lottery), the state universities, community colleges, school districts, charter schools, Florida Virtual School, Water Management Districts and instructional personnel employed by the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind;
- July 1, 2020: Veterans and Servicemembers; and

- July 1, 2022: Law Enforcement Officers
- July 1, 2024: Health Care Practitioner and Tax Collector employee

Children adopted internationally, through interventions, or privately are not eligible for this benefit.

## If I Qualify, What Types of Benefit May I Receive?

### Adoption of a Difficult to Place Child

- Adoption of a difficult to place child: a one-time monetary benefit in the amount of \$25,000 per child. (Pro-rated for part-time and OPS employees).

### Adoption of a Non-Difficult to Place Child

- Adoption of a non-difficult to place child: a one-time monetary benefit in the amount of \$10,000 per child. (Pro-rated for part-time and OPS employees).

## Who is Considered a Special Needs Child?

A child whose permanent custody has been awarded to the Florida Department of Children and Families or to a Florida licensed child-placing agency and who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Has established significant emotional ties with his or her foster parents
- Is eight years of age or older;
- Has a developmental disability;
- Has a physical or emotional handicap;
- Is a member of a racial group that is disproportionately represented among children in the child welfare system ( Based on 2022 data: black or mixed descent)
- Is a member of a sibling group of any age, provided that two or more members of a sibling group remain together for purposes of adoption.

## When Are Applications Accepted for Adoption Benefits?

Office of Child & Family Well-Being will accept applications during the annual open enrollment period, beginning the first business day of January and concluding on the last business day of March. To be considered for benefits, applicants must submit a completed Application for Adoption Benefit

# What Else Should I Know About These Monetary Benefits?

The funding of the program varies each year and the amount of the annual appropriation affects how many applicants will receive a monetary benefit. By law, payments must be made in a lump sum and are considered supplemental wages and applicable payroll taxes must be deducted.

## Where Can I Locate the Application?

The applications are located on [DCF Form website](#), and at the Adoption Information Center. Applications must be submitted to Human Resources for completion of the Agency portion. For assistance, contact Tony Lindberg at 850.474.2610 or [tlindberg@uwf.edu](mailto:tlindberg@uwf.edu). Once signed by HR, applications will be emailed to [StateEmployee.Adoption@myflfamilies.com](mailto:StateEmployee.Adoption@myflfamilies.com).

**(Applications from the prior program are not valid)**

**For additional information, contact the Adoption Information Center at 1-800-96-ADOPT**

**Web page link: <http://www.adoptflorida.org/state-emp-benefits.shtml>**