

## Iowa Post-Permanency Profile

Updated: November 2024

### State Population (2023 Census estimate)

2 – 3,999,999 million

### Adoption/Guardianship Assistance Caseload (2022)

10,000 – 13,999

- Adoption Assistance Caseload – 10,023
- Guardianship Assistance Caseload – 79
- Total Caseload – 10,102

### State Administration Type

State administered

### Pre-Service Training

Prospective adoptive parents, including relatives who are planning to adopt a child in their care, must attend an orientation meeting and complete the National Training and Development Curriculum for Foster and Adoptive Parents (NTDC) training, which is 33 hours.

Families who want to foster or receive subsidized guardianship must become licensed. They must complete the NTDC training, as well as CPR and First Aid, Mandatory Reporter Training, Medication Management, Universal Precautions, Human Need for Belonging, and Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards, for a total of 39 hours.

Relatives or fictive kin taking placement of a specific child may have the NTDC training requirement waived.

### Services Offered Through the State’s Post-Permanency Support Program

The Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) contracts with Four Oaks Foster Care and Adoption to provide statewide post-permanency services. Services include:

- **Pre-permanency supports** — Families who wish to adopt or who have a subsidized guardianship agreement meet in person with Four Oaks staff who explain the range of permanency support services available to them until finalization and beyond. The Four Oaks staff and the family will work together to determine what supports are





- best, which may include connection to support groups, training, or referrals to other services.
- **Case management** — Families can request case management services through Four Oaks with staff providing in-home services. These services may include information sharing; assistance with referrals to other community-based providers; helping the family build a network of informal respite providers; or connection to a mentor, support groups, and training. A service plan is written with the family, and services cease once the family feels they are no longer in need of supportive services.
  - **Crisis intervention** — The program provides intensive case management to adoptive and guardianship families who may be facing or at risk of crisis that could jeopardize the stability and permanency of the child. Services typically consist of weekly 45-minute in-home visits with the family and may last up to six weeks. However, families can request to extend or cease services as needed. Staff provide the family with training, connection to support groups, assistance with referrals to community services, and other support as needed.
  - **Support groups** — Monthly virtual and in-person support groups are available for adoptive and guardianship families in each region. Facilitated by Four Oaks staff, who often have lived experience, some sessions focus on psychoeducation, training, or general support. The program offers specialized groups for LGBTQ2S+ and kinship caregivers as well as support groups for tribal families.
  - **Educational advocacy** — Staff work directly with families to offer support, education, assistance, and advocacy and will attend meetings with the school if requested by the family.
  - **Respite care** — Adoptive and guardianship families receive 10 paid respite days annually, reimbursed by Four Oaks. The program assists in finding a respite provider if needed, but families can choose any trusted adult for respite care.
  - **Information and referral** — Adoptive and guardianship families receive a monthly e-newsletter and assistance in accessing community provider services when needed.
  - **Mentoring** — Adoptive and guardianship families may request to be connected to a seasoned family mentor for one-on-one support. Mentor families are identified by caseworkers and approved by HHS. Mentor families are trained and receive a stipend.
  - **Training** — The program offers virtual and in-person training on topics related to post-permanency, including tailored training for tribal families in partnership with tribal nations.





- **Events** — The program facilitates activities for adoptive and guardianship families during November to celebrate National Adoption Month and National Adoption Day. These may vary in the different regions.
- **Financial supports** — Stability grants are available to adoptive and guardianship families to cover one-time expenses or purchases that are not otherwise covered by insurance or the subsidy agreement. Examples include, but are not limited to, sensory items, equine or canine therapy, etc.

The program served 3,062 adoptive and guardianship families in fiscal year 2023.

For more information, visit <https://iowafosterandadoption.org/i-already-adopted/>

### Geographic Area Covered

All services are offered statewide. Four Oaks has staff statewide to serve families in all areas and many services are offered virtually to expand access. Four Oaks ensures enough staff are available to make home visits as necessary. Access to private therapists and community-based services is a struggle in more rural areas due to limited providers.

### Eligible Population for the Overall Post-Permanency Program

- Only families receiving adoption assistance
- Only families receiving guardianship assistance
- Other (listed below)
  - Relatives who took custody of a child from foster care

### Variations in Eligibility for the Post-Permanency Program

None

### Accessibility

The post-permanency program collaborates with tribal nations to ensure services are culturally responsive to the needs of Native American families. They offer specialized training, support groups, and outreach to support tribal families.

Four Oaks also offers specialized support groups for LGBTQ2S+ and kinship families.

HHS has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with one tribal nation currently to assist with child welfare services and is working on developing MOUs with other tribal nations in the state.



## Outreach and Engagement

HHS shares a monthly list of new families receiving subsidy with Four Oaks. Four Oaks ensures both new and existing families receive a monthly e-newsletter and postal mail outreach every four to six months. The program also provides information as children reach different ages. All families who adopt Iowa children are provided with a brochure that outlines available post-adoption services after an adoption is finalized.

## How the Post-Permanency Program Is Operated

Through a contract or grant with one private agency

### Notes About Who Provides Which Service(s)

Four Oaks Foster Care and Adoption provides all post-permanency services statewide.

## Adoption/Guardianship Assistance/Subsidy Review and Changes

Families can request a change in their subsidy agreement by submitting a request to HHS. Families are asked to provide documentation as to the need for the change.

HHS sends a letter to families when a child reaches age 17.5 that outlines the eligibility criteria for continued subsidy eligibility. The letter also explains the process for families to make application for continued subsidy to HHS.

## Tracking Adoption/Guardianship Discontinuity

Information not available

## Post-Permanency Program Spending (FY 2023)

\$500,000 – \$999,999

## Funding Sources for the Post-Permanency Program (FY 2023)

1. Title IV-B, Part 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families/PSSF)
2. State funds

