



## Washington Post-Permanency Profile

Updated: November 2024

### State Population (2023 Census estimate)

7 – 11 million

### Adoption/Guardianship Assistance Caseload (2022)

14,000 – 19,999

- Adoption assistance caseload — 15,428
- Guardianship assistance caseload — 618
- Total — 16,4046

### State Administration Type

State administered

### Pre-Service Training

Washington State requires adoptive families be licensed foster parents or to be relatives or suitable others who have a prior relationship with the child. Licensed caregivers are required to take training before there is approval for adoption. To become licensed, foster parents must complete the 24-hour Caregiver Core Training, a self-paced online e-learning training program. As part of the foster home licensing process, participants must complete a field experience with an experienced foster parent or attend a dependency hearing. In addition, participants participate in a coaching session with a trainer from the Alliance for Professional Development, Training, and Caregiver Excellence. Relatives and suitable others are strongly encouraged to participate in training through the Alliance before adoption finalization.

Kinship Core Training, a version of Caregiver Core Training specific to relatives, is designed to help caregivers develop skills necessary to care for children who have experienced trauma. The training consists of four sessions.

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

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) provides post-permanency support services through its Adoption Support program. Like other states' subsidy programs, the Adoption Support program provides Medicaid coverage, support, and a monthly stipend for adoptive families. The Guardianship Assistance program provides stipends and Medicaid coverage to youth in guardianships. In addition, adoptive and guardianship families with adoption support and guardianship agreements can receive the following services:





- **Pre-permanency supports** — DCYF can provide financial support to overcome barriers that are preventing permanency, such as helping families install elevators or chair lifts for children who use a wheelchair.
- **Information, referral, and navigation** — Adoption Support program consultants provide information on available resources and help families access services that are part of the adoption support agreement and other community-based services. DCYF also publishes a quarterly newsletter with information on resources, training, parenting tips, and community events for families. The agency also offers a website with links to information and resources, including what to do in crisis.
- **Financial support for parental counseling and in-home services** — Families who receive pre-authorization can receive financial support to cover community-based individual or parent counseling from master's level clinicians. The support covers up to six sessions per month with approval for one year at a time, with services paid at the agency-approved rates.

Support can also be provided for the following in-home, evidence-based services: Promoting First Relationships, Incredible Years, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), Project Safe Care, and Family Preservation Services. In both cases, the funding can be used only to support services not covered by Medicaid or the family's private insurance. DCYF pays the providers directly, with reimbursement rates set by legislation.

- **Other financial supports** — Families who are experiencing hardship such as a natural disaster, death in the family, child with mental health crisis, or other catastrophic events are eligible for a one-time payment of up to \$1,500.

Families are also eligible for some additional financial support to establish or maintain permanency.

In addition to the Adoption Support program, the state funds the Alliance for Professional Development, Training, and Caregiver Excellence to offer the following:

- **Training** — The Alliance offers an array of virtual training for caregivers (including adoptive and guardianship caregivers) designed to respond to specific challenges such as parenting a child who has experienced trauma or loss.

Apple Health Core Connections, a Centene-run company, provides the state's managed care organization for Medicaid, and also offers support groups and training for adoptive and guardianship families.





For more information, visit:

- Adoption Support Program Webpage — <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/adoption-support-program/benefits>
- The Alliance Website — <https://risewiththealliance.org/programs/development-and-support-for-caregivers/>
- Post Adoption Q&A — [https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP\\_0063.pdf](https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pubs/CWP_0063.pdf)

### **Geographic Area Covered**

The Adoption Support program is the same statewide and training courses are virtual so they can be accessed anywhere. Availability of counseling and evidence-based services may vary by community.

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

- Only families receiving adoption assistance
- Only families receiving guardianship assistance

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

The training provided by the Alliance is available to any caregiver.

### **Accessibility**

The state is undertaking efforts to ensure that culturally responsive community-based services are available statewide.

### **Outreach and Engagement**

The state hosts, and promotes on its website, a monthly virtual training about the Adoption Support program and its benefits. The state also provides all families with an Adoption Support flyer at the time of finalization. Each quarter, the state shares a newsletter in English and Spanish that includes information about the available supports. All families receiving adoption support are added to the email list at the time of adoption and they can also sign up on the state website.

The state will soon be conducting a survey of adoptive parents to assess their needs.





## How the Post-Permanency Program Is Operated

By specialized state post-permanency support workers

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

The Adoption Support program is operated by state staff.

Training is provided through a contract with the Alliance for Professional Development, Training, and Caregiver Excellence, which is a collaboration of the University of Washington, Eastern Washington University, University of Washington—Tacoma, and Partners for Our Children.

## Adoption/Guardianship Assistance/Subsidy Review and Changes

The state conducts regular reviews of adoption and guardianship assistance agreements.

Adoptive parents and guardians may request a change in their assistance agreement if there is a change in the child's needs or in the family's circumstances. The request must be in writing to the adoption support program consultant. Supporting documentation of the change must be provided, including the family's most recent IRS Form 1040, or financial statement.

Documentation of the change in the child's needs must be specific to a change in the child's diagnosis or treatment plan and include recommendations from the relevant professional. The adoption support program consultant or guardianship assistance program staff may also refer the family for an updated rate assessment to determine the child's current level of need.

## Tracking Adoption/Guardianship Discontinuity

DCYF staff are working with the state's Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability (OIAA) to track discontinuity in adoptions. DCYF staff will review this data, along with the responses from the parent survey mentioned above, to assess what changes to make in services or support.

## Post-Permanency Program Spending (FY 2023)

Information not available.





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

Funds include (but are not limited to):

1. Title IV-B, Part 1 (Child Welfare Services/CWS)
2. Title IV-B, Part 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families/PSSF)
3. Adoption savings (reported on CB 496 Part 4 – Annual Adoption Savings Report)
4. Adoption/Guardianship Incentive Program Payments (AIPP)
5. State funds

