South Dakota Post-Permanency Profile

Updated: August 2026

State Population (2025 Census estimate)

☒ under 1 million

Adoption/Guardianship Assistance Caseload (2026)

☒ under 3,000

- Adoption assistance caseload — 2,388
- Guardianship assistance caseload — 469
- Total — 2,857

State Administration Type

☒ State administered

Pre-Service Training

Prospective foster and adoptive parents receive 30 hours of pre-service training using the state's Foster and Adoptive Parent Training curriculum. If they prefer, families can choose to take Extending Our Families Through UNITY, a 30-hour curriculum that is based on traditions and cultures of Indian people. It is designed to address issues Native American foster parents have identified as important and to prepare current and potential foster parents for their critical role as caregivers for Indian children.

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

Post-permanency services in South Dakota are provided for adoptive families through a contract with a private provider. In fiscal year 2025, South Dakota enhanced its post-permanency services and began to offer them statewide. (Previously, services were mostly limited to case management and therapy in two areas.)

Services include:

- **Assessment** — The post-permanency provider conducts an initial assessment to identify the adoptive family's needs and develop a plan for the family to stabilize and support the placement. The initial assessment can be completed in person, by phone, or virtually.

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- **Information, referral, and advocacy —** After the initial assessment is completed, staff review the assessment results with the family and identify potential need areas. Staff connect families with community resources and supports that will meet their identified needs, including cultural connections, connections with birth families, mental health services, etc. The post-permanency provider also advocates for adoptive families when needed to ensure they are receiving the resources they need to support their adoption and avoid disruption.

  Staff provide follow up support to families and meet with families as needed. This can include in-home support to the family if needed. Beyond the assessment phase, adoptive families can reach out for further help in finding referrals for needed resources.

  Staff also provide information and support to adoptive families as they work to identify if residential placement is the best option for their family. Staff ensure that families have exhausted other community resources and supports prior to seeking residential services. If services are needed, staff can assist families in accessing services. They also provide support to adoptive families as they work toward their youth rejoining their home after residential placement. The Post Adoption Specialist can participate in discharge planning with the residential provider at the family's request. The Specialist provides support to the family before, during, and after the youth transitions home and will be available to offer additional resources and referrals as needed.

  Staff maintain lists of resources and supports that will be available to adoptive families wherever they may be living in South Dakota. The post-permanency provider will develop and maintain a private online website of resources as well, including services, trainings, webinars, parenting education, tools, books, podcasts, videos, etc.

- **24-hour telephone support** — The post-permanency provider has an on-call system to provide adoptive families 24/7 support. Post Adoption Specialists will assist families in identifying crisis stabilization services that are available in their area and will assist in developing a crisis support plan with families. The Post Adoption Specialist will be available by phone to provide crisis management and support.

- **Support groups**— The post-permanency provider provides a virtual support group for all adoptive parents to increase connection and sense of support for those navigating a similar journey. Meetings are offered at least quarterly and can be more often if the need is there.

  The post-permanency provider provides a virtual support group for children who have been adopted to provide support and understanding for youth managing feelings

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around their adoption journey. Meetings are offered at least quarterly and can be more often if the need is there.

- **Respite care** — The Post Adoption Specialists promote the importance of respite care for adoptive families. The team is aware of available respite care programs and options for families throughout the state and makes connections with potential respite care options. Specialists also work with adoptive families to identify natural supports that may be available to provide respite care when needed by the family.

- **Training** — The post-permanency provider provides monthly ongoing training to foster and adoptive families. These trainings are recorded and accessible to families at any time through a private site login.

  The post-permanency provider will be offering an annual workshop focused on strengthening the bond between adoptive parents and their adopted children. This interactive workshop will allow opportunities for parents and children to bond and build their relationship. The workshop will also offer opportunities for adoptive families to connect with each other to assist in building natural support systems.

- **Financial supports** — The Adoption Program provides support to families for services not covered through the post-permanency contract or Medicaid. The Division of Child Protection Services (CPS) may provide education tuition funding if not provided by the child's school district. An example for education tuition funding would be if a child is placed in a residential treatment facility out of state, Adoption Services may cover the cost of the education tuition as the South Dakota Department of Education will not cover the cost out of state.

Geographic Area Covered

Post-adoption services are offered statewide. Services can be provided in person, by phone, or virtually. Services will be provided virtually for families who prefer this method of interaction.

Eligible Population for the Overall Post-Permanency Program

☒ All families who adopted from the state's foster care system

Variations in Eligibility for the Post-Permanency Program

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Private, intercountry and families who adopted from foster care in other states, territories, or tribes can access support groups, resource referrals and trainings.

Outreach and Engagement

The state's Adoption Program Specialist reaches out to families 30 days after adoption finalization to inform them of the post-adoption program, provide contact information to the post-permanency provider and the Adoption Program Specialist, and to answer any questions the family may have. Families can reach out to the Adoption Program Specialist for follow up contact if needed.
Information about the post-adoption program is shared through the following:

- Post-adoption Facebook group
- Support groups
- Community resource services directory
- A quarterly newsletter
- Emails to families — DSS and the post-permanency provider collaborate to maintain a list of families who have adopted through the child welfare system. The post-permanency provider is responsible for generating and sending informational emails.
- Post Adoption Brochure and DSS Post Adoption Booklet

How the Post-Permanency Program Is Operated

☒ Through a contract or grant with one private agency
☒ By specialized state post-permanency support workers

Notes About Who Provides Which Service(s)

The post-permanency provider offers the post-adoption services described above.

The state's Adoption Program Specialist assists families with applications for funding supports. The Adoption Program Specialist also helps families with referrals to treatment.

Adoption/Guardianship Assistance/Subsidy Review and Changes

Adoptive parents can request a change in the adoption assistance agreement whenever there is a change in the child's needs. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. To request an amendment to the adoption assistance agreement, the adoptive family must submit a written request to their adoption assistance worker. The administrator and the adoption program specialist consider the request for change.

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Subsidized guardianship families must submit required review information annually to Child and Family Services to continue receiving a guardianship subsidy.

Tracking Adoption/Guardianship Discontinuity

The Adoption Program Specialist tracks discontinuity on a private document.

Post-Permanency Program Spending (FY 2026)

☒ under $500,000

Funding Sources for the Post-Permanency Program (FY 2026)

1. State funds
2. Adoption/Guardianship Incentive Program Payments (AIPP)
3. Adoption savings (reported on CB 496 Part 4 – Annual Adoption Savings Report)

Contact Information

Hannah Holen
Adoption Program Specialist
Hannah.Holen@state.sd.us

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