



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

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Jeb Bush
Governor

Lucy D. Hadi
Secretary

DEC 12 2005

Nancy Dreicer
Zone Leader

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DATE: December 6, 2005

TO: Lucy Hadi

FROM: Nancy Dreicer, District Administrator, District 4

SUBJECT: Request for Exception to Adoption Subsidy Policy for Corey Fears, Child

ISSUE: As per Florida Administrative Code 65C-16.012(2), Family Support Services, Inc. (Lead Agency for Duval County) is requesting an increase in adoption subsidy for Corey Fears. Family Support Services (FSS) feels this child may have possible mental, emotional and behavioral needs that require structure and special services, which go beyond what is normally provided in a regular family setting. They have provided copies of the child's psychological evaluation (dated 07/19/2005), psychiatric evaluation (dated 2/8/2005) and comprehensive assessment (dated 8/17/2004). The psychiatric evaluation indicates the child has a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder-Mostly Inattentive Type.

Corey Fears, is a fourteen-year-old male who has resided in the home of his maternal cousin Cynthia Fears for the past five years. Ms. Fears is willing to adopt Corey only if she can maintain the board rate of \$564.00 which she currently receives. FSS has discussed alternative permanency options, including Long Term Relative Custody, and the cousin is unwilling to accept this as a permanency plan, as it would also mean a reduction in her monthly check through the Relative Caregiver Program. It should be noted that Ms. Fears did accept Long Term Relative Custody as the permanency option for Corey's older brother.

The Zone Family Safety Program Office has reviewed the recommendation put forth by Family Support Services. It is felt by the District that the documentation provided does not support the need for additional assistance above and beyond the normal care for special needs children. We have had preliminary correspondence with Kim Grosdidier in the Family Safety Central Office. Kim has not rendered an opinion, but she is concerned about permanency for this child since he has been in this relative placement for 5 years.

We are forwarding this information to you per Florida Administrative Code 65C-16.012(2) for final determination, since the Rule does not allow local determination.

NORTHEAST ZONE

District 3 (Alachua Bradford Columbia Dixie Gilchrist Hamilton Lafayette Levy Putnam Suwannee Union Counties)
District 4 (Baker Clay Duval Nassau St. Johns Counties) and District 12 (Flagler Volusia Counties)
5920 Arlington Expressway • P. O. Box 2417 • Jacksonville, Florida 32231-0083

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency



Family Support Services
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

4613 Philips Highway, Suite 205, Jacksonville, FL 32207
Phone 904-448-4340 – Fax 448-4347

DATE: October 26, 2005

TO: Lucy Hadi, Secretary, Department of Children and Families
State Office of Child Welfare and Community Based Care

FROM: Jaime Bavier, Adoption Specialist
Family Support Services of North Florida, District 4

SUBJECT: Request for Exception to Adoption Subsidy Policy
RE: Corey Fears, Child

Issue: As instructed by Department of Children and Families Administrative Rule 65C-16.013 (10), District 4 adoption staff is requesting an exception to the adoption subsidy policy for Corey Fears. Corey may have possible mental, emotional and behavioral needs that require structure and special services, which go beyond what is normally provided in a regular family setting. The potential adoptive parent is requesting a maintenance adoption subsidy of \$563 per month. This amount exceeds the normal subsidy of 80% of standard foster care board rate, but does not exceed the foster care rate currently required to maintain the child in his placement.

Background: Corey Fears is a fourteen-year-old African American child who has been in the same foster home for the past five years. The foster parent, Ms. Cynthia Fears, is also Corey's maternal cousin, and is very interested in adopting him. Ms. Fears has established a significant relationship with the Corey and his brother who also resides in the home, and wants to give Corey the added security of legal adoption into the family.

Ms. Fears is familiar with Corey's emotional and behavioral difficulties and feels that with proper services, Corey can become a productive member of society when he reaches adulthood. Corey has had two arrests for violence. One incident was for throwing a knife at someone and one was for poking his teacher in the back with a pencil. The case for throwing a knife was dropped, but he was convicted for assault on a school official for stabbing the teacher. Corey has a strong potential to need intensive counseling in the future.

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Since Corey's current placement is with his maternal cousin, he has a significant relationship with most of his maternal family and sees aunts, uncles, and cousins on a regular basis. If Corey is able to be adopted by his current foster mother, he would be able to maintain all of these relationships.

Options:

Option 1: Corey's adjustment and stability in the Fears home indicate that it is an excellent permanency resource for him and his brother (whose goal is long-term licensed custody). Payment of the \$564 monthly subsidy requested by Ms. Fears will enable Corey to achieve adoption in the same home as his older brother lives and will enable the adoptive parent to provide the intensive services he will need now and in the future.


Option 2: Corey can remain in foster care placement at the current board rate of \$564. The Department and community based care agency will make efforts to recruit a family to adopt Corey for less subsidy than that requested by the current caregiver.

Recommendations:

District 4 adoption staff and Family Support Services of North Florida, the community based care provider for Corey, have made every possible effort to work out the most desirable permanent plan for Corey Fears. Family Support Services of North Florida is recommending Option 1, approve the supplemental maintenance subsidy of \$564.00 a month.

Concur with Recommendation

Do not Concur



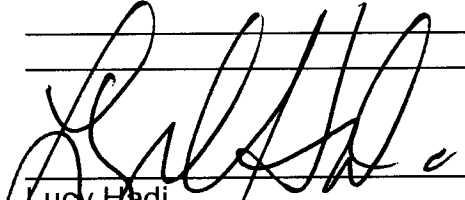
Jim Adams, Chief Executive Officer
Family Support Services of North Florida

10-31-05
Date

Concur with Recommendation

Do not Concur

Comments:



Lucy Hadi
Secretary, DCF

12/16/05
Date