



## **Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, and Guardianship**

Foster care and permanency programs are open-ended entitlement programs that provide partial reimbursements to states and certain other jurisdictions for the cost of providing foster care, adoption assistance, and kinship guardian assistance to children who meet certain federal eligibility criteria. Each jurisdiction (the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Indian tribes) is reimbursed for direct financial assistance according to a formula—based on that jurisdiction’s federal medical assistance percentage rate—which can range from 50 percent to 83 percent of the cost per child. Those programs’ administrative and training costs are reimbursed at 50 percent and 75 percent, respectively, for all jurisdictions. About 60 percent of the amount of those federal payments is for spending associated with support for foster care.

## Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, and Guardianship

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2025- 2029	2025- 2034
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>													
Millions of dollars, by fiscal year													
<b>Estimated Outlays</b>	10,159	10,173	10,376	10,629	10,915	11,275	11,582	11,907	12,252	12,617	13,012	<b>53,368</b>	<b>114,738</b>
<b>Estimated Outlays for Foster Care</b>													
Maintenance Payments	1,812	1,799	1,836	1,884	1,943	2,009	2,079	2,152	2,228	2,307	2,394	<b>9,471</b>	<b>20,631</b>
Administration	3,030	3,091	3,177	3,288	3,430	3,596	3,773	3,958	4,153	4,363	4,590	<b>16,582</b>	<b>37,419</b>
Training	304	307	310	314	317	320	323	326	330	333	336	<b>1,568</b>	<b>3,216</b>
Information Technology	254	256	259	261	264	267	269	272	275	277	280	<b>1,307</b>	<b>2,680</b>
Prevention Services and Technical Assistance	176	181	211	251	281	351	351	351	351	351	351	<b>1,275</b>	<b>3,030</b>
Kinship Navigator Program	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<b>70</b>	<b>143</b>
Subtotal	5,589	5,648	5,807	6,012	6,249	6,557	6,809	7,073	7,352	7,646	7,966	<b>30,273</b>	<b>67,119</b>
<b>Estimated Outlays for Adoption Assistance</b>													
Maintenance Payments	3,457	3,411	3,445	3,480	3,515	3,550	3,585	3,621	3,657	3,694	3,731	<b>17,401</b>	<b>35,689</b>
Administration	546	551	557	562	568	573	579	585	591	597	603	<b>2,811</b>	<b>5,766</b>
Training	<u>46</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>	<b>234</b>	<b>480</b>
Subtotal	4,049	4,008	4,048	4,089	4,130	4,171	4,212	4,255	4,297	4,341	4,384	<b>20,446</b>	<b>41,935</b>
<b>Estimated Outlays for Guardianship</b>													
Maintenance Payments	353	349	353	359	367	377	390	407	428	453	482	<b>1,805</b>	<b>3,965</b>
Administration	21	21	21	22	22	23	24	25	27	28	31	<b>109</b>	<b>244</b>
Training	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
Subtotal	376	372	376	383	391	402	416	434	457	483	515	<b>1,924</b>	<b>4,229</b>
<b>Estimated Outlays for Other Components</b>													
Independent Living	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	<b>715</b>	<b>1,430</b>
Tribal Technical Assistance	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>
Sequestration <sup>a</sup>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-2</u>	<u>-1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<b>-10</b>	<b>-14</b>
Subtotal	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	146	147	147	<b>725</b>	<b>1,455</b>

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	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2025-2029	2025-2034
<b>PARTICIPATION INFORMATION</b>													
Thousands of cases, by fiscal year													
<b>Average Monthly Caseload</b>													
Foster Care	134	133	133	134	137	140	143	146	149	152	156	n.a.	n.a.
Adoption Assistance	561	575	590	605	620	636	652	668	686	703	721	n.a.	n.a.
Guardianship	44	45	47	48	50	52	55	58	63	68	74	n.a.	n.a.

Components may not sum to totals because of rounding.

n.a. = not applicable.

The projections account for the estimated effects of three final rules issued by the Children and Family Services Administration: The first provides access to legal representation; the second designates placement and services requirements for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer children; and the third allows child welfare agencies to adopt different licensing standards for kinship foster families, thus making additional kinship caregivers eligible for federal financial assistance.

See Children and Families Administration, "Foster Care Legal Representation," Final Rule, 89 Fed. Reg. 40400 (May 10, 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/32m7n3r8>;

"Designated Placement Requirements Under Titles IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQI+ Children," Final Rule, 89 Fed. Reg. 34818 (April 30, 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/2bustfd>; and

"Separate Licensing or Approval Standards for Relative or Kinship Foster Family Homes," Final Rule, 88 Fed. Reg. 66700 (September 28, 2023), <http://tinyurl.com/we429sn6>;

- a. The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, extended sequestration for mandatory spending through fiscal year 2032. The percentage reduction for that year is smaller than the reduction in place through 2031.