



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, the U.S. 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. Administrative and training costs associated with foster care and permanency programs 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.

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	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2027- 2031	2027- 2036
BUDGET INFORMATION													
Millions of dollars, by fiscal year													
Estimated Outlays for Foster Care													
Maintenance Payments	1,854	1,918	2,002	2,096	2,197	2,302	2,410	2,527	2,651	2,779	2,913	10,515	23,795
Administration	3,199	3,326	3,478	3,650	3,834	4,030	4,235	4,449	4,680	4,920	5,163	18,318	41,765
Training	310	314	317	320	323	326	330	333	336	340	343	1,600	3,282
Information Technology	259	261	264	267	269	272	275	277	280	283	286	1,333	2,734
Prevention Services and Technical Assistance	211	251	281	351	351	351	351	351	351	351	351	1,585	3,340
Kinship Navigator Program	14	14	14	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	15	70	145
Subtotal	5,847	6,084	6,356	6,698	6,988	7,295	7,616	7,952	8,313	8,688	9,071	33,421	75,061
Estimated Outlays for Adoption Assistance													
Maintenance Payments	3,428	3,446	3,463	3,480	3,497	3,515	3,533	3,550	3,568	3,586	3,604	17,401	35,242
Administration	557	562	568	573	579	585	591	597	603	609	615	2,867	5,882
Training	46	47	47	48	48	49	49	50	50	51	51	239	490
Subtotal	4,031	4,055	4,078	4,101	4,124	4,149	4,173	4,197	4,221	4,246	4,270	20,507	41,614
Estimated Outlays for Guardianship													
Maintenance Payments	352	357	366	377	392	411	434	460	490	521	523	1,903	4,331
Administration	21	22	22	23	24	25	27	28	31	33	36	116	271
Training	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	10	20
Subtotal	375	381	390	402	418	438	463	490	523	556	561	2,029	4,622
Estimated Outlays for Other Components													
Independent Living	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	143	715	1,430
Tribal Technical Assistance	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	20	40
Sequestration ^a	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-1	0	0	0	0	-10	-11
Subtotal	145	145	145	145	145	145	146	147	147	147	147	725	1,459
Total Outlays	10,398	10,665	10,969	11,346	11,675	12,027	12,398	12,786	13,204	13,637	14,049	56,682	122,756

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	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2027- 2031	2027- 2036
PARTICIPATION INFORMATION													
Thousands of cases, by fiscal year													
Average Monthly Caseload													
Foster Care	123	125	128	131	135	138	141	145	149	152	151	n.a.	n.a.
Adoption Assistance	603	619	634	650	667	684	702	719	737	756	775	n.a.	n.a.
Guardianship	49	51	53	56	60	64	69	76	83	91	93	n.a.	n.a.

n.a. = not applicable.

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.