

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



Guide to Adoption and Foster Care Programs for Federal Employees

July 2012

a New Day for Federal Service

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INTRODUCTION

Every year thousands of individuals decide to adopt a child or become a foster parent. Both can be incredibly rewarding and beneficial experiences. Similar to other significant life changes, adoption and foster care can also present new, unfamiliar challenges. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) *Guide to Adoption and Foster Care Programs for Federal Employees* orients adoptive and foster parents with Federal leave, work/life, insurance, and flexible spending account programs. These benefits help Federal employees manage their work and family lives throughout the adoption and foster care processes.

Adoption

Adoption is the “social, emotional, and legal process through which children who will not be raised by their birth parents become full and permanent legal members of another family while maintaining genetic and psychological connections to their birth family” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families, 2012, <http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/intro.cfm>). Five primary types of adoption are recognized by HHS: public agency, private agency, intercountry, tribal/customary, and nonagency. Nonagency adoptions are further categorized as facilitated, independent, and stepparent adoptions. See Table 1, adopted from HHS' Child Welfare Information Gateway's "[How Many Children Were Adopted in 2007 and 2008?](#)" publication for definitions; please note, these terms may vary across jurisdictions. In 2008, approximately 136,000 children were adopted in the United States. Forty-one percent of U.S. adoptions were public, 13 percent were intercountry, and 46 percent were other (e.g., private agency, Tribal, nonagency). These percentages have remained fairly consistent since 2000.

Table 1: Definitions of Adoption Types

Adoption Type	Definition
Public agency	An adoption with public agency involvement, either directly through a public agency or through a private agency that is contracted by a public agency. The public agency usually has legal and physical custody of the child.
Private agency	An adoption through a private agency that facilitates the adoption of the child after the birth parents relinquish their parental rights to the agency.
Intercountry	An adoption of a child who is a citizen of one country by parents who are citizens of a different country.
Tribal/Customary	An adoption in an American Indian community that does not always require the termination of the birth parents' parental rights.
Nonagency	There are three general types of nonagency adoptions:

Facilitated: An adoption through which a facilitator links prospective adoptive parents with expectant birth mothers for a fee.

Independent: An adoption in which an attorney or other person assists the prospective parents with the adoption process. The birth parents relinquish parental rights directly to the adoptive parents rather than an agency.

Stepparent: An adoption of a spouse's child by the stepparent.

In general, any single adult or a husband and wife jointly can be eligible to adopt. In addition, many states permit second parent adoptions that allow same sex couples to adopt jointly. State laws vary immensely, however, and may specify further conditions of eligibility. A few examples of possible disparities include provisions relating to age, residency, marital status, and sexual orientation.

If you are **considering adoption**, it is important to review and understand the adoption laws specific to your State. We also encourage you to review the [Resources](#) section of this guide for information on a wide array of adoption topics.

Foster Care

Foster care is a temporary living arrangement for children who cannot safely remain in their homes. In 2010, over 400,000 children were in foster care (HHS, Administration for Children and Families' [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System \(AFCARS\) FY 2010 Data](#)), a decline of approximately 22 percent since 2000. The majority of foster children in 2010 were placed in either a non-relative foster family home (48 percent) or a relative foster case family home (26 percent). See Table 2 for definitions of types of foster care, according to HHS' AFCARS; it is important to note that these terms vary across jurisdictions.

Table 2: Definitions of Foster Care Types

Foster Care Types	Definition
Foster family home, relative	A licensed or unlicensed home of the child's relatives regarded by the state as a foster care living arrangement for the child.
Foster family home, non-relative	A licensed foster family home regarded by the State as a foster care living arrangement.
Group home or Institution	A group home is a licensed or approved home providing 24-hour care for children in a small group setting that generally has from 7 to 12 children. An institution is a facility operated by a public or private agency and providing 24-hour care and/or treatment for children who require separation from their own homes and group

living experience. These facilities may include child care institutions, residential treatment facilities, or maternity homes.

Other

Includes supervised independent living runaways, pre-adoptive homes, and trial home visits.

For more information on foster care, we encourage you to review the [Resources](#) section of this guide.

LEAVE PROGRAMS

The Federal Government offers numerous leave programs to assist employees in meeting their work and family obligations. The administration of these programs typically is addressed in agency internal policies and/or collective bargaining agreements. Therefore, you should discuss your specific situation with your local Human Resources office.

OPM's [Definitions of Family Member and Immediate Relative for Purposes of Sick Leave, Funeral Leave, Voluntary Leave Transfer, Voluntary Leave Bank, and Emergency Leave Transfer](#) specify that a family member includes an individual who is the son or daughter of the employee. Son or daughter is further defined as:

1. A biological, **adopted**, step, or **foster** son or daughter of the employee;
2. A person who is a legal ward or was a legal ward of the employee when that individual was a minor or required a legal guardian;
3. A person for whom the employee stands in *loco parentis* or stood in *loco parentis* when that individual was a minor or required someone to stand in *loco parentis*; or
4. A son or daughter (as described in 1-3) of an employee's spouse or domestic partner¹

Sick Leave for Adoption

In accordance with [5 U.S.C. 6307\(c\)](#), an adoptive parent² may use sick leave for purposes related to the adoption of a child. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- appointments with adoption agencies, social workers, and attorneys,
- court proceedings,
- required travel,

¹ Domestic partner means an adult in a committed relationship with another adult, including both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships. [See definitions fact sheet for more information.](#)

² For the purposes of this guide, the term "adoptive parent" refers to both those pursuing adoption and those who have finalized an adoption. The law, introduced as "Legislation for Federal employees Who Plan to Adopt," does **not** restrict the use of sick leave for parents to sick leave taken after a placement match has been made.

- any periods of time during which adoptive parents are ordered or required by an adoption agency or by a court to take time off from work to care for the adopted child, and
- any other activities necessary to allow the adoption to proceed.

An agency may request administratively acceptable evidence for the use of sick leave for absences related to adoption proceedings. Employees should consult their agency-specific human resources guidance and review applicable policies set forth in collective bargaining agreements for information specific to their agency. If the employee complies with the agency's notification and medical evidence/certification requirements, the agency **must** grant sick leave.

Sick leave for adoption-related purposes does not count towards the 104-hour (13-day) limit of sick leave each leave year for family care and bereavement purposes or the overall limit of 12 weeks of sick leave each leave year for all family care purposes. There is no limitation on the amount of sick leave that may be used for adoption-related purposes. Please note that there is no statutory authority to allow for the use of sick leave for foster care-related purposes.

General information and guidance regarding sick leave for adoption is available at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/html/skadpt.asp>

Sick Leave to Care for a Family Member

While the statute does not allow the use of sick leave for purposes related to arranging foster care, sick leave may be used to care for a family member, and by definition (as previously discussed), a family member includes a foster child.

Employees are entitled to use up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each leave year to:

- provide care for a family member who is incapacitated as a result of physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy, or childbirth,
- attend to a family member receiving medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment,
- provide care for a family member who would, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others by that family member's presence in the community because of exposure to a communicable disease, or
- make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member, or attend the funeral of a family member.

Employees are entitled to a total of 12 weeks (480 hours) of sick leave each leave year to care for a family member with a serious health condition (which includes 13 days (104 hours) of sick leave for general family care or bereavement purposes). If the employee previously has used any portion of the 13 days of sick leave for general family care or bereavement purposes in a leave year, that amount must be subtracted from the 12-week entitlement. If an employee has already used 12 weeks of sick leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition, he or she cannot use an additional 13 days in the same leave year for general family care purposes. An

employee is entitled to no more than a combined total of 12 weeks of sick leave each leave year for all family care purposes.

Sick leave may not be used by an employee who voluntarily chooses to be absent from work to bond with or care for a healthy adopted child. (An employee likewise may not use sick leave to voluntarily be absent from work to bond with or care for a healthy biological child.) There is no provision in law or regulation that permits the use of sick leave to care for a healthy child, bond with a healthy child, or for other child care responsibilities.

General information and guidance regarding sick leave is available at:

<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/sicklv.asp>.

<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/sickfam.asp>.

<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/12week.asp>.

Advanced Sick Leave

An agency may, but is not required to, advance sick leave for all sick leave purposes. An agency may advance a maximum of 240 hours (30 days) of sick leave to an employee for adoption-related purposes or to care for a child with a serious illness. An agency may grant up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave for general family care purposes.

General information and guidance regarding advanced sick leave is available at:

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/html/advsk.asp>.

Donated Leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer and Leave Bank Programs

The Federal leave sharing program allows Federal employees to donate annual leave to assist another Federal employee who has a personal or family medical emergency and who has exhausted her or his own available paid leave. If an employee exhausts her or his available paid leave, she or he may receive donated annual leave under the employing agency's voluntary leave transfer and/or leave bank programs. An employee may receive donated annual leave from both the agency leave transfer and leave bank programs. Donated annual leave may be used **only** for a medical emergency--e.g., to care for a child with a serious health condition--and may not be used to care for or bond with a healthy child or for adoption or foster care-related purposes.

General information and guidance on Voluntary Leave Bank Programs is available at:

<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/VLBP.asp>.

General information and guidance on Voluntary Leave Transfer Programs is available at:

<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/VLTP.asp>.

Family and Medical Leave

To help balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of the family, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was enacted, entitling employees to a total of 12 administrative workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for certain family and medical needs. This law ensures that family and medical leave is available on a gender-neutral basis and mandates job security for employees who take leave.

FMLA for Placement of a Son or Daughter with Employee for Adoption or Foster Care

An employee is entitled to use FMLA leave for the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care. Subject to the supervisor's approval, FMLA leave may be used on an intermittent basis for absences in connection with adoption or foster care.

The entitlement to FMLA leave expires at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the date of placement. Leave for a placement must be concluded within this 12-month period. FMLA leave may begin prior to or on the date of the actual date of placement for adoption or foster care, and the 12-month period begins on that date.

An employee may elect to substitute annual leave and/or sick leave for any or all of the leave without pay used under the FMLA, consistent with the laws and regulations for using annual and sick leave. (See **Sick Leave**, above, for the limitations on the use of sick leave for adoption and family care.)

FMLA for Serious Health Condition of the Child

An employee is entitled to use FMLA leave to care for a son or daughter with a serious health condition.

The definitions for FMLA purposes are different from those in OPM's sick leave, voluntary leave transfer, and voluntary leave bank regulations. The FMLA statute does not use the term "family member." Employees may use FMLA leave for a serious health condition only to care for a spouse, son or daughter, or parent. FMLA defines "son or daughter" as a biological, adopted, or foster child; a step child; a legal ward; or a child of a person standing *in loco parentis* who is under 18 years of age, or 18 years of age or older and incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability. Employees who have no biological or legal relationship with a child may nonetheless stand *in loco parentis* to the child and be entitled to FMLA leave, and in all cases, whether an employee stands *in loco parentis* to a child will depend on the particular facts of the situation³.

³*In loco parentis* refers to the situation of an individual who has day-to-day responsibility for the care of and financial support of a child, or in the case of an employee, who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. A biological or legal relationship is not necessary. Please see [CPM 2010-15 Interpretation of "Son or Daughter" Under the Family and Medical Leave Act](#) for more information.

FMLA leave is **in addition to** other leave programs available.

If the need for the leave is foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the agency of his or her intention to take leave at least 30 calendar days before the date the leave is to begin. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, for example, because of a medical emergency, or short-notice placement of a child, the employee must provide notice within a reasonable period of time appropriate to the circumstances involved. An agency *may* require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition and may require second or third opinions (at the agency's expense).

If an employee cannot provide the required medical certification for a request for FMLA leave for a serious health condition before the leave is to begin, the agency must grant *provisional* leave. If the employee fails to provide medical certification once the leave has commenced, the agency may charge the employee as absent without leave (AWOL) or may allow the employee to request that the provisional leave be charged as leave without pay or to the employee's annual or sick leave account, as appropriate.

An employee may elect, but the agency may **not** require the employee, to substitute advanced, accrued or accumulated annual and/or sick leave, or annual leave donated under the Voluntary Leave Transfer or Voluntary Leave Bank Programs, for any or all of the leave without pay under FMLA in accordance with current law and regulations governing that type of leave. An employee may **not** retroactively substitute paid leave for leave without pay under FMLA.

General information and guidance regarding FMLA can be found at:
<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/fmlafac2.asp>.

Annual Leave for Adoption

Employees may request the use of annual leave for purposes related to adoption and/or foster care. In addition, adoptive and foster parents may request annual leave to be absent from work to bond with or care for a healthy child. The use of annual leave is subject to the right of the supervisor to approve a time at which annual leave may be taken.

General information and guidance regarding annual leave can be found at:
<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/ANNUAL.asp>.

Advanced Annual Leave

An agency may, but is not required to, advance annual leave for adoption-related purposes or to care for a child who is ill. An agency may advance the amount of **annual leave** an employee would accrue during the remainder of the leave year.

General information and guidance regarding advanced annual leave is available at:
<http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/html/advANNUAL.asp>.

Leave Without Pay

Leave without pay (LWOP) is a temporary nonpay status and absence from duty that, in most cases, is granted at the employee's request. Granting LWOP is a matter of supervisory discretion and may be limited by agency internal policy.

Subject to supervisory approval, an employee may request leave without pay for adoption and foster care proceedings or to be absent from work to bond with or care for an adopted or foster care child. Supervisors should refer to agency internal policy and negotiated bargaining union agreements prior to approval.

General information and guidance on leave without pay is available at:
<http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/leave/html/lwop.asp>.

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

If the work requirements and agency needs permit, an adoptive parent may consider working an alternative work schedule (AWS). AWS enables employees to select and alter their work schedules to better fit their needs and help manage work, personal, and family responsibilities. Since AWS programs for bargaining unit employees are established by negotiated agreements, bargaining unit employees and their supervisors/managers should consult the applicable collective bargaining agreement for its AWS provisions.

There are two categories of AWS: flexible work schedules (FWS) and compressed work schedules (CWS).

Flexible Work Schedules

FWS consist of workdays with (1) core hours and (2) flexible hours. Core hours are the designated period of the day, set by their agency, when all employees must be at work. Flexible hours are the part of the workday when employees may, within limits or "bands" set by their agencies, choose their time of arrival and departure.

General information and guidance on flexible work schedules is available at:
<http://www.opm.gov/oca/WORKSCH/HTML/AWSFWS.asp>.

Compressed Work Schedules

CWS are fixed work schedules, but they enable full-time employees to complete the basic 80-hour biweekly work requirement in less than 10 workdays. For example, an employee may work 10 hours every day Mondays-Thursdays and not work on Fridays.

General information and guidance on compressed work schedules is available at: <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/html/AWScws.asp>.

For more information on alternative work schedules, please review the [Handbook on Alternative Work Schedules](#).

FEDERAL WORK/LIFE PROGRAMS

Telework

Under an agency's telework policy, employees may be permitted to work at home or from a remote telework site. Telework can provide employees with valuable additional time to spend with their family members by reducing commuting time. Teleworkers, however, may not use telework as a mode for providing care to a child or other family members. If you are interested in teleworking, or already telework but want to ensure that you are an effective teleworker, we recommend you review the training material entitled [Telework Basics for Employees](#). It is also recommended that you consult your agency's Telework Managing Officer or [telework coordinator](#).

General information and guidance on Telework is available at: www.telework.gov.

Federal Child Care Subsidy Program

The Federal Child Care Subsidy Program (FCCSP) is another work/life program that may benefit some adoptive and foster parents. Established in 2001 ([Public Law 107-67, Sec. 630](#)), the FCCSP **allows** agencies to use appropriated and revolving funds, to help lower income Federal employees pay for child care. Federal agencies choose whether or not they wish to participate, based on considerations such as budget, mission priorities, and the demographics and needs of their employee population.

Regulations ([5 CFR 792.213](#)) issued by OPM on the FCCSP define the term *child* to include a child who bears any of the following relationships to either an employee, the employee's spouse or the employee's same sex domestic partner.⁴:

- a) a biological child who lives with the Federal employee,
- b) **an adopted child,**
- c) a stepchild,
- d) **a foster child,**
- e) a child for whom a judicial determination of support has been obtained, or
- f) a child to whose support the Federal employee, who is a parent or legal guardian, makes regular and substantial contributions

⁴ OPM issued a proposed rule covering the children of employees' same sex domestic partners in July, 2011. 76 FR 45208 (July 28, 2011). As of time this handbook was prepared, the final regulation effecting this change was expected to be published within the next several months.

FCCSP applies to employees whose children are under the age of 13, or disabled and under the age of 18, and are enrolled, or will be enrolled, in licensed family child care homes or center-based child care. The child care **must** be licensed and/or regulated by State and/or local authorities.

If you are interested in the FCCSP, we encourage you to seek out your [Child Care Subsidy Point of Contact](#) (POC). Because each agency may create internal policies regarding the administration of its subsidy program, you will need to discuss details with your agency's POCs.

Please note, the FCCSP is not mandatory; therefore, some agencies may not offer the program. If your agency is not listed on the Child Care Subsidy POC website, we encourage you to contact your agency's Work/Life Coordinator(s) to determine what other options your agency may have for child care and whether they have any immediate plans to implement a subsidy program. You can find your agency's Work/Life Coordinator(s) by searching OPM's [Work/Life Agency POC tool](#), or querying your local Human Resources office.

General information and guidance on the Federal Child Care Subsidy Program is available at: http://www.opm.gov/employment_and_benefits/worklife/familycareissues/childcare_subsidy/index.asp.

DEPENDENT CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (DCFSA)

DCFSA is another resource that can provide financial assistance for child care to adoptive and foster parents. DCFSA allows a Federal employee to be reimbursed on a pre-tax basis for child care expenses for qualified dependents that are necessary to allow the employee or his or her spouse to work, look for work, or attend school full-time. **A qualifying dependent for the DCFSA is your dependent for income tax purposes:**

- who is under age 13, or
- of any age (including, but not limited to, your parents and parents-in-laws, or your spouse) who is mentally or physically incapable of caring for himself or herself.

In order to have a DCFSA, you (and your spouse if you are married) **must** have earned income during the year. Under section 129 of the Internal Revenue Code (http://www.irs.gov/publications/p15b/ar02.html#en_US_2012_publink1000193662), the maximum amount that can be elected for a DCFSA is the lesser of:

- \$5,000 for single individuals or married couples filing joint returns,
- \$2,500 for married couples filing separate returns,
- the employee's earned income (if less than \$5,000/\$2,500), or
- the spouse's earned income (if less than \$5,000/\$2,500).

It is very important to discuss your elections with your spouse to ensure the household limit is not exceeded. If you and your spouse elect more than the \$5,000 household limit, the Federal

Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS) will not be able to cancel your election per IRS guidelines. You will need to resolve the over-deduction through your Federal income tax return. For more information regarding tax dependents and/or your Federal income tax return, please visit: <http://www.irs.gov/>.

General information and guidance regarding DCFSA is available at:
<https://www.fsafeds.com/fsafeds/SummaryOfBenefits.asp#WhatIsADCFSA>.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM (FEHB)

Children under age 26, including legally adopted children, are eligible for coverage under your FEHB Self and Family enrollment. Foster children are eligible if they meet certain requirements described below. Your employing agency makes the determination whether the child meets the requirements for an adopted or foster child based on documents you provide.

For adopted children, applicable State law governs whether and when a child has been adopted. The child is adopted if the adoption decree is final. The child also is considered adopted if the adoption decree is interlocutory⁵ and State law provides that the rights of the child generally are the same as those of an adopted child. The effective date of your adopted child's coverage as a family member is the day the adoption decree is final. **A child living with you under a pre-adoption agreement may qualify as a foster child.**

Foster children are also eligible for FEHB coverage if they meet the requirements listed here:

- the child must be under age 26 (if the child is age 26 or over, he or she must be incapable of self-support⁶),
- the child must currently live with you,
- the parent-child relationship⁷ must be with you, not the child's biological parent,
- you must currently be the primary source of financial support for the child, and
- you must expect to raise the child to adulthood.

A grandchild is **not** an eligible family member, *unless* the child qualifies as your foster child.

⁵ Interlocutory refers to an adoption that is not final. Since terms may vary among jurisdictions, you should review applicable laws and guidance for your State.

⁶ Your agency is responsible for determining whether your dependent child age 26 or over is incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that began before age 26. Guidance for making the determine is available at: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/reference/handbook/fehb29.asp#childincapableofselfsupport>.

⁷ A "regular parent-child relationship" is one in which you are exercising parental authority, responsibility, and control over the child by caring for, supporting, disciplining, and guiding the child, including making decisions about the child's education and health care.

For your foster child to be covered under your FEHB enrollment, you must provide documentation of your regular and substantial support of the child; and sign a certification stating that your foster child meets all the requirements described above. More information is available in the [Family Matters section of the Federal Health Benefits Program Handbook](#).

The effective date of your foster child's coverage as a family member is the first day of the pay period in which your employing office receives all of the properly completed documents that establish the eligibility of the child as a foster child. When your foster child's mother is an eligible family member under your enrollment, you may request that the effective date be the first day of the pay period in which the child is born.

Additional information on coverage of adopted children and foster children may be found in the FEHB Handbook at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/reference/handbook/fehb28.asp#famcoverage>.

For further information on the FEHB Program and on coverage for adopted children and foster children, we also encourage you to **contact your local Human Resources office**.

General information and guidance on **eligibility** for FEHB coverage is available at: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/eligibility/index.asp>.

Lastly, general information and guidance on FEHB is available at: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/index.asp>.

RESOURCES

There are many great organizations and resources that focus on adoption and foster care. Below is a sample which may provide you with additional information.

Your agency's Work/Life coordinator(s) can help you navigate the benefits and programs applicable to you, as an adoptive or foster parent. You can find your agency's Work/Life coordinator(s) by searching OPM's Work/life Agency POC tool at www.opm.gov/worklife or querying your local Human Resources office.

General Adoption Topics

[HHS' Administration for Children and Families' Adoption](#) website has resources on all aspects of domestic and intercountry adoption. Here you can find information on the U.S. history of adoption, adoption definitions and language, and core issues of adoption.

[AdoptUSKids](#) is a service of HHS' Administration for Children and Families' [Children's Bureau](#). The mission is two-fold: to raise public awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families for children in the public child welfare system, and to assist U.S. States, Territories and Tribes to recruit and retain foster and adoptive families and connect them with children.

General Foster Care Topics

[HHS' Child Welfare Information Gateway's Child Welfare/Foster Care Statistics website](#) offers resources with State and national data on the number of children in the child welfare system, trends in foster care caseloads, and well-being outcomes.

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[The National Military Family Association](#) shares information and resources on adoption benefits available to military families, including getting started, reimbursements, leave, and health care issues.

[HHS' Caring for Children in Foster Care](#) provides resources and information for foster parents about caring for foster children. Resources cover a wide array of topics, such as considerations for children affected by abuse or neglect, strategies for helping foster children succeed, making cultural connections, and child empowerment.

Financial Resources

[HHS' Cost of Adoption Factsheet](#) describes universal expenses, adoption-specific expenses, resources to help defray the costs of adoption, and additional financial resources.

Legal Issues & Adoption

[HHS's "Who May Adopt, Be Adopted, or Place a Child for Adoption?: Summary of State Laws"](#) provides information on State-specific adoption laws.

Tax Issues & Adoption

[The U.S. Internal Revenue Office \(IRS\) Adoption Credit and Adoption Assistance Programs](#) provide information on a tax credit and exclusion available for qualified expenses paid to adopt an eligible child.

Developing a Workplace Adoption Program

The resources in this section are intended for Federal Work/Life coordinators interested in planning and implementing a workplace adoption program.

[The Employer Provided Adoptions Benefits Factsheet](#) developed by HHS' Child Welfare Information Gateway describes the types of workplace benefits, eligibility and conditions, and employers that offer adoption benefits.



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