
Supports for Permanency (SFP)

An Overview of Supports and Services

January 2024



Alberta

This presentation will help you understand:

The purpose of Supports for Permanency (SFP)

Who qualifies for SFP under legislation

Program ineligibility

Services and supports available

How to access the program



What is the Purpose of Supports for Permanency (SFP)?

What is the Purpose of SFP?

The Government of Alberta recognizes the following:

- The importance of supporting lifelong connections for a child or youth, with legal connection providing the security and sense of belonging to a family
- The importance of eliminating financial barriers for families who, without supports, would not be able to provide legal permanency to a child or youth.
- The additional demands of parenting children and youth in permanent care who can present with a range of special needs.
- The importance of supporting and maintaining connections with culture and cultural communities, on behalf of child or youth who is a First Nation Individual (Registered person under the *Indian Act*).

Who qualifies for SFP?

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Legislation outlines who qualifies for SFP. Section 105.795 of the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* (CYFEA) allows for financial assistance to be provided to adoptive parents and guardians whose child was formerly in the permanent care of the Alberta government (subject of either a Permanent Guardianship Order (PGO) or Permanent Guardianship Agreement (PGA)) if:

- An adoption order is granted,
- A private guardianship order is granted,
- A guardianship order under the Family Law Act is granted, or **
- A subsequent guardian or adoptive parent is appointed for the child or youth. **

**Where a guardian or adoptive parent of a child or youth who was formerly the subject of a PGO or PGA in Alberta is unable or unwilling to continue care for the child or youth, financial assistance can be extended to an adult person who is caring for the child or youth and who has applied to a court for either guardianship or adoption of the child or youth.

Program Ineligibility

Program Ineligibility:

The child or youth was never the subject of a PGO or PGA in Alberta.

Guardianship of the child or youth was resumed by the child or youth's former guardians under section 35.1 of CYFEA.

The child or youth's PGO or PGA was terminated by the court as supported by the director, and the child or youth's former guardians resumed guardianship of the child or youth.

Important information about the program

Important information about the program:

- SFP is a voluntary, parent-driven program.
- SFP agreements are negotiated annually and, like all contracts, are not valid until fully signed.
 - Contracts will vary between different caregivers.
- SFP agreements cannot be backdated. They terminate one day before the youth's 18th birthday.
- The SFP program is a payer-of-last-resort, meaning that families need to access all other benefit programs first.
 - This includes private health insurance and Non-Insured Health Benefits for First Nations Individuals.
 - SFP supports must be coordinated with other benefit plans.

Important information about the program:

- Benefits paid cannot exceed what can be paid for a child in government care.
- Receipts must be submitted by a family for reimbursement of agreed upon services.
 - Receipts for some services do not need to be submitted for payment, however, they should be kept by a family for 10 years, as provincial or Canada Revenue Agency audits are possible.
- Parents must notify their SFP worker, if there are any changes to their banking information or residence, or if the child/youth is not residing in the home full-time.

Supports and Services Available Under SFP

Supports and Services Available Under SFP

Basic Maintenance

- The basic maintenance rate is the same as that provided to caregivers of an in-care child or youth, as per the current Caregiver Rate Schedule.
- This provision is meant to assist in covering costs associated with food, shelter and clothing.

Respite

- Maximum of 576 hours of respite per family annually.
- Rates are negotiated based on the needs of the individual child(ren).
- Can be used for overnight/camps.

Support for Maintaining Cultural Connections

- Negotiated maximum annual financial assistance to support travel costs associated with respecting and preserving a First Nation child/youth's culture, identity, heritage, language and traditions.
- Costs covered under this provision include those associated with transportation, subsistence and lodging.

Medically Necessary Orthodontic Treatment Assistance

- Cost or partial cost of orthodontic treatment when recommended by a dentist as medically necessary.
- Must be approved by the Alberta Dental Services Corporation (ADSC).

Counselling

- Up to 10, one-hour counselling sessions annually.

Residential Treatment

- Cost of an out-of-home placement in a residential treatment facility, satisfactory to the director, when the child/youth's emotional and behavioural problems are likely to cause a breakdown of the permanency placement.

Medical or Psychological Assessment Assistance

- Cost or partial cost of an assessment recommended by a professional within their scope of practice to support access to other programs or services.
- For example, a pediatrician recommends the completion of an assessment so that a youth can access adult services like Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)/Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) once they turn 18.


Additional Needs Funding (ANF)

- Up to \$70 per week to purchase additional services/supports needed to address a child/youth's emotional and behavioural needs. ANF is paid monthly after a plan for services to be purchased is agreed upon.
- Examples of services that may be purchased include:
 - Medications (approved by Alberta Health and not fully covered by private health care)
 - Tutoring
 - Additional counselling
 - Sports fees and equipment
 - Orthodontic care (not approved as medically necessary)
 - Overnight/day camps
 - Gender affirming supplies and equipment
 - Indigenous regalia

How to access SFP

How to access SFP:

Prior to a Private Guardianship Order or Adoption Order being granted, your Child Intervention Practitioner will refer you to the SFP program.




A Practitioner will initiate contact with you after they receive the referral and will arrange a time to meet with you to complete an intake assessment.



The Practitioner will draft an SFP agreement.



Once your permanency order is in place, the agreement will be signed by all parties and will immediately come into effect.



Circumstances can change throughout the year. If you need support or alterations to your agreement, contact your Practitioner so that an amendment can be made.

Contact the SFP Program:

- Southern Alberta: CS.SouthRegionSFP@gov.ab.ca
- Calgary: CS.SFP@gov.ab.ca
- Central Alberta: CS.CentralSFP@gov.ab.ca
- Edmonton: CS.EdmRegionSupForPerm@gov.ab.ca
- Northern Alberta: Charla.Erick@gov.ab.ca