

# Minnesota Permanency Demonstration

## Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement for Families

The Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement Program was created under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act and is funded by federal and state dollars. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) administers this program for families who are not enrolled in the Adoption Assistance Program pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 259.73. Adoptive parent(s) who receive the Minnesota Permanency Demonstration financial benefit may apply for reimbursement of expenses that are reasonable and necessary for the adoption to occur, subject to a maximum of \$2,000.00 per child, under Minnesota Statutes, Section 259.73. The required Certification and Agreement forms listed below must be submitted to DHS and a decision on eligibility must be made by DHS prior to the date the adoption is finalized. Expenses that may be reimbursed include agency adoption fees, travel, meals, attorney fees, court filing fees, and replacement birth record fee. The request for reimbursement must be made within 21 months of the date of the child's adoption decree.

### The Forms

The forms and instructions are entitled, “**Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement Program – Instructions – English – 5/05.**” The complete five page form is also known as **DHS-4426-ENG**. The first page is an instruction sheet. Please read the instructions prior to attempting to fill out the corresponding application. The parents and the adoption resource social worker need to work together to complete the forms.

The second and third pages are labeled “**Certification of Eligibility for Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement.**” The certification form requires information and documentation about the child and parents necessary to determine the eligibility of the child/family for the program.

The fourth and fifth pages are labeled “**Agreement for Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement.**” This agreement is the document that DHS will sign and return to the parents if the application is approved. This document also gives specific instructions on what type of expenses can be covered and how the parents should submit claims for reimbursement of those expenses once their application is approved.

### Locating the Form

The instructions and forms can be located in several different ways. Adobe Reader is necessary to open the documents from the DHS website.

- The direct link: <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-4426-ENG>
- Enter the DHS website ([www.dhs.state.mn.us](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us)), at the top of the Home Page; select the grey tab “Children”. On the left side column, select “Adoption”. Select the words “DHS forms” at the bottom of the middle column. Select “N” for Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement.
- Enter the DHS website ([www.dhs.state.mn.us](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us)); select the “Forms (eDocs)” heading at the top of the page. On the eDocs page, select “Search”. In the “Search for” box type “Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement Program” then click on the “Search Now” box located on the right side of the page.

## Overview of Instructions

- The form is a “fillable form” in Adobe Reader. The parents or the adoption resource social worker can type in the information on the form. DHS will accept forms that have been completed by **hand in readable print**.
- The **child’s adoptive name** should be put on the Certification and Agreement forms.
- DHS requires that parents submit **one set of forms for each child**.
- Parents should send **copies** of any requested documentation to DHS.
- Parents must give a brief statement of **why they are unable to adopt the child without** the Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement Program.
- The **adoption resource social worker** must provide specific details regarding the **type of recruitment efforts expended as well as the length of time of these efforts OR** documentation of circumstances why recruitment efforts would not be in the best interests of the child.

## General Program Information

- Adoption resource social workers should provide parents with **the child’s DHS number** to include on their **Certification and Agreement forms**. The DHS number can be found on any child-specific correspondence from DHS.
- One of the eligibility requirements for the program is that the child must have one or more existing **special needs** prior to adoption. Documentation of the child's special needs is required on the **Certification and Agreement** forms. Documentation is also required of the child’s disability.

### **Special Needs are defined as:**

- (1) The child is a member of a sibling group to be adopted together where at least one sibling is older than 15 months of age or is described in number 2 or 3 below.
- (2) The child has one or more physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disabilities.
- (3) The child's background history indicates a high risk of developing one or more physical, mental, emotional or behavioral disabilities.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Parents are only eligible for reimbursement under this program if their **Agreement** is signed by DHS **prior** to the date the child's adoption is legally finalized. Upon receipt of the forms, at least **15 working days** are needed for DHS to process the application, determine eligibility, and notify the parents.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: this program has a TWO STEP process.**

The parents should first submit to DHS the ***Certification and Agreement*** forms and any required documentation. DHS will respond to the application by either sending a letter of denial (outlining the reasons for denial) or sending a **letter of approval, plus the Agreement, signed by a DHS representative.**

If the Agreement has been approved, **after the child's adoption has been finalized**, the parents should then submit to DHS a request for reimbursement of adoption expenses including the following:

- (1) A **letter listing the adoption expenses** for which the parents are claiming reimbursement.
- (2) **Copies** of all itemized bills and receipts of payment, or canceled checks for any expenses for which the parents are claiming reimbursement.
- (3) A **copy of the adoption decree.**

**DHS Contact**

Applications for nonrecurring adoption expense reimbursement should be sent to the following address:

Paulette E. Lonzo, MA  
Social Services Program Advisor  
Adoption & Guardianship  
MN Department of Human Services  
P.O. Box 64944  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0944  
Phone: (651) 431-4716  
Fax: (651) 431-7491  
Email: [paulette.lonzo@state.mn.us](mailto:paulette.lonzo@state.mn.us)

If you have questions about the Nonrecurring Adoption Expense Reimbursement Program, please contact, Paulette Lonzo, at (651) 431-4716 or [paulette.lonzo@state.mn.us](mailto:paulette.lonzo@state.mn.us).

If you have questions about the Minnesota Permanency Demonstration Project, please contact, John Hanna, at (651) 431-4678 or [John.Hanna@state.mn.us](mailto:John.Hanna@state.mn.us)

(Form updated: 3-22-06)