

Children's Administration

Finance Division

Youth in Extended Foster Care receiving SSI Benefits

SUMMARY

With the expansion of the Extended Foster Care program it has become more likely that we will encounter a more diverse population of children in Foster Care remaining in care beyond age 18, including some with disabilities that qualify them to receive Supplemental Security Income, (SSI) payments.

As we have always done, we need to make sure we coordinate the funding used on youths who are eligible for both SSI and Title IV-E. This communication piece discusses the requirements surrounding the use of federal funding and provides guidance on how to handle EFC cases where the youth is eligible for SSI payments.

DISCUSSION

For youths who are in EFC, Social Security Administration determines if the youth is able to be their own payee or if the State should be. This determination made by the SSA will determine how CA coordinates the payments to youth in EFC.

For situations where the State is made the payee:

In this scenario CA will receive the monthly SSI benefit and will deposit it in the child's trust account. The youth will receive the monthly maintenance payment and CA will continue to run the cost of care process to reimburse the maintenance payment expenditure with the funds held in trust.

For situations where the youth is made the payee:

For this scenario there are a several issues that impact the way we coordinate the benefits received by the youth.

- CA would not receive any SSI and would not have anything held in trust to offset the cost of care represented by the monthly maintenance payment of \$575.
- Even though CA does not receive the SSI payment, Title IV-E and SSI benefits cannot be earned at the same time.
 - If the youth is Title IV-E eligible and CA claims the IV-E, SSA will reduce the SSI benefit to \$146, (\$721 - \$575).
 - If the youth is not Title IV-E eligible the SSI payment would not be reduced and would remain \$721.
- This would mean if the youth is not IV-E eligible they would receive a maintenance payment of \$575, and a monthly SSI benefit of \$721 for **\$1,296** in total.
- If they were IV-E eligible they would receive **\$721**, (\$146 SSI + \$575 monthly maintenance).

Given these issues, when the youth is made the payee, CA should withhold the monthly maintenance payment of \$575. This will avoid having inconsistency in payment amounts to youth in EFC simply due to Title IV-E eligibility and will also support the youth receiving the higher \$721 SSI benefit.