



Gladys Carrión
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

Susan Nuccio
Deputy Commissioner
Chief Financial Officer
Financial Services

DATE: July 28, 2016

David Brandwein
Chief Operating Officer
Financial Services

TO: Executive Directors, Program Directors and Fiscal Directors
Foster Care Programs

Richard Beck
Assistant Commissioner
Financial Services/
Payment Services

FROM: Jackie Roth 

Jackie Roth
Sr. Executive Director
Financial Services/
Payment Services

SUBJECT: Discharge Grants: Interim Guidance and Business Process-FY 2017

150 William Street
9th Floor
New York, NY 10038

The ACS Division of Financial Services is pleased to announce the reinstatement of Discharge Grants for children and youth leaving care on trial discharge [M970 date] or final discharge [M990 date], on or after July 1, 2016 (Fiscal Year 2017). Discharge Grants are provided to facilitate a child's/youth's transition from foster care placement to community living and may be used to cover the costs of any needs that would aid in this transition.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a discharge grant a youth must have resided in continuous care and custody of the Commissioner for nine (9) consecutive months or more, and have an approved permanency planning goal of Return to Parents (01)/ Discharge to Primary Resource Person /Fit and Willing Relative (02) or; Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement Discharge (APPLA) (05). (Note: This does not apply to youth who are discharged to relative awarded subsidized Kinship Guardianship, Adoption, Close to Home or PINS youth).

In addition, Discharge plans must be approved by the case/child planning program director as outlined in Schedule B (youth who refuse to consent to remain in foster care must have a viable discharge plan); and the youth must not have received a discharge grant within two years of the date of the current discharge.

DISBURSMENT

Discharge Grants should be disbursed prior to or during trial discharge or in some circumstances at the time of final discharge (i.e., APPLA youth leaving care). A Family Team Conference must take place in order to be eligible to receive the discharge grant reimbursement.

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORMS

Discharge Grant Itemized Invoice: FSS Form A

Discharge Grant Detail Reimbursement Request Form: FSS Form B

We are implementing the use of new forms to facilitate the reimbursement process for discharge grant expenditures. Foster Care agencies will be required to complete and submit the *Discharge Grant Itemized Invoice*, Form A (Attachment A) and the *Discharge Grant Detail Reimbursement Request*, Form B (Attachment B) to ACS, as outlined in the attached, to facilitate the reimbursement for Discharge Grants for eligible children and youth. Foster Care Agencies are required to submit requests for Discharge Grant Reimbursements by the 15th of each month. Upon receipt of all required and completed forms (in addition to other required documentation (detailed within)) ACS will process requests as promptly as possible.

For additional supporting information, refer to Appendix I, *Discharge Grant Fact Sheet*.

For questions, please contact Cheryl Church at Cheryl.Church@acs.nyc.gov

Discharge Grants: Guidance and Business Process

I. Eligibility:

In order to be eligible to receive discharge grants funds, the youth being discharged must meet the following criteria:

A. The youth must have:

1. Resided in continuous care and custody of the Commissioner for nine (9) months or more.
2. An approved permanency planning goal of either:
 - i. Return to Parents (01)
 - ii. Discharge to Primary Resource Person/Fit and Willing Relative (02) (*Note: This does not apply to youth who are discharged to relative awarded subsidized Kinship Guardianship*),
 - iii. Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement/ Discharge to Independent Living (05).
3. A discharge plan that is either approved by the case/child planning or the program director as outlined in Schedule B (youth who do not consent to remain in foster care must have a viable discharge plan); and
4. The youth must not have received a discharge grant within

the last two years of the date of the current discharge.

II. Maximum Reimbursable Amount

The maximum reimbursable amount available for **each eligible child/youth** is up to \$1,000. This amount should not be considered as an automatic flat grant and the needs for each youth must be evaluated by foster care agency staff on an individual basis.

III. Use of Funds

Allowable items considered for the discharge grant should fall outside of the “one-shot” housing subsidy grant that families and youth may be eligible for. Discharge grants may include items such as: food, Metrocards, furniture, bedding, clothing, toiletries, and other necessary household items (i.e.: cookware, flatware, towels, cleaning products, etc.). Please note that ACS will not reimburse for sales tax.

IV. Discharge Grant Payment Request Process

In order to receive the Discharge Grant reimbursement, foster care agency Fiscal Directors must complete the following forms and submit all payment requests once per month (submit by the 15th of each month):

A. *Discharge Grant Itemized Invoice*, Form A [Attachment A].

1. All fields of this form must be completed for each child/youth for whom a grant is being requested along with the specific items being requested (e.g CIN and case numbers) as well as the associated costs with exact dollar amounts must be specified (Note: The costs should not include sales tax).
2. The sum must equal the total amount being requested.
3. The attestations must be signed by either the parent or guardian if goal is (01) or (02) or signed by the youth if the goal is (05) and the foster care supervisor/program director.

Note: The attestation states that services/goods or funds were provided and/or received by the parent/guardian or youth.

B. *Discharge Grant Detail Reimbursement Request*, Form B [Attachment B]

1. All fields of this form must be completed including the total Discharge Grant expenditure.

Note: Foster care agencies are required to provide the facility ID number where the child/youth resided prior to discharge.

2. The attestations must be signed by both the foster care agency

Supervisor and Program Director.

Note: The attestation states that the information being provided meets the eligibility criteria.

- C. Foster care agencies must also attach a copy of the CNNX Progress Note and/or Plan Amendment indicating approval for the discharge grant by the Contract Agency Foster Care Agency Program Director or a court order.
- D. Submit payment requests and supporting documents via the Special Payments Processing [SPPT] mailbox: DFS.SPPT@acs.nyc.gov
- E. When submitting requests for reimbursement to the SPPT email box:
 - Submit only one invoice per child. Do not submit multiple invoices per child.
 - Request for reimbursements are to be submitted within 30 days of the discharge event. However, for youth on Trial Discharge, invoices may be submitted no later than 30-days after the end of the Trial Discharge period.

EMAIL to include:

Subject Line: Discharge Grant Reimbursement Request FY17

Include Attachments:

- 1. Discharge Grant Detail Reimbursement Request Form
 - 2. Discharge Grant Itemized Invoice Form
 - 3. CNNX Activity Screen documenting:
 - Trial Discharge [M970 date] ; or
 - Final Discharge [M990date]; and
 - Progress Note and/or Plan Amendment or court order where applicable approving discharge
- F. Foster care agency staff must maintain the following documents with your fiscal department staff once the grant has been issued and be made available for audit upon ACS request:
- 1. A copy of the completed Discharge Grant Detail Reimbursement Request Form
 - 2. A copy of the Discharge Grant Itemized Invoice, signed by parent/guardian or youth
 - 3. Original receipts and copy of check for funds issued.

Discharge Grants will be disallowed and the funds advanced will be recouped if documentation is not provided upon request.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the children and families we serve.

