

ADOPTION REIMBURSEMENT



CANNON LAW CENTER

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Active duty military members may apply for and possibly receive thousands of dollars in reimbursement for the expense of adoption. Recent questions, however, indicate that the program, referred to as the DoD Adoption Reimbursement Program, is not well known. The program, which was created in 1988, suspended in 1990, then reinstated permanently by the 1993 Defense Authorization Act, is primarily the responsibility of the Defense Finance Account Service (DFAS). The basic provisions include, at the time of the application, the member must be on active duty and have served at least 180 consecutive days of active duty. Also, the adoption must be final; the application must be filed no later than one year after the adoption; and the adoption must have occurred since 5 December 1991.

Additionally, the adoption must have been arranged through a state or local government agency or through a non-profit, voluntary adoption agency. Private adoptions are not covered. *Adoption of stepchildren is covered only if adoption is through a non-profit, voluntary adoption agency.*

Members may be reimbursed a maximum of \$2,000.00 per child for qualifying expenses related to the adoption, and a maximum of \$5,000.00 for multiple adoptions per calendar year. Categories of adoption qualifying for reimbursement are:

- a. Adoptions by a married couple.
- b. Adoptions by a single person.
- c. Adoption of children under 18 years of age.
- d. Adoptions of children with special needs.

Adoption expenses are reimbursable, as long as they are “reasonable and necessary.” These

include placement fees, legal fees and court costs, certain medical expenses, and temporary foster care fees (when required by the adoption process). Military members should maintain copies of all receipts they may have pertaining to the adoption to submit with the application. Travel costs are not reimbursable.

Air Force members who want to apply for adoption reimbursement should contact their local military personnel flight, customer service section, for guidance.

The reimbursement form can be found here:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2675.pdf>

or in the Worksheets and Forms Folder on the Cannon Legal Assistance website.