

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Administrative Issuance: CFSA-11-2

TO: All CFSA Staff

FROM: Sandra Jackson, Acting Deputy Director for Agency Programs

DATE: August 16, 2011

RE: Graduation Expenses

With the start of each new school year, the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) anticipates that many youth will be achieving the significant goal of graduating from high school. CFSA encourages youth to partner with resource parents and social workers to begin budgeting for graduation expenses early in the school year, based on the allotted sum provided. To ensure that our youth's financial expenses for graduation activities are met, the following guidelines are provided.

If you have questions regarding this issuance, please contact the Office of Youth Empowerment (OYE).

1. To the extent that funds are available, youth who are graduating from high school shall be allowed a maximum of \$500 in expenditures for activities related to their graduation (excluding prom expenses). Graduation activities may include but are not limited to the following items:
 - cap and gown
 - pictures
 - class ring
 - invitations
 - class trip

Note: In general, foster parents and provider agencies should budget from foster care board payments to provide prom-related clothing and other expenses. Youth may also be referred to the Office of Partners for Kids in Care for some prom related items.

2. The assigned social worker must submit all requests in writing to his or her program manager no later than 30 days prior to the due date for the specific expense.
3. All requests must include an itemized list of items being purchased in relation to high school graduation only, along with the name and address of the vendor(s) providing the graduation-related items.
4. Payments shall not exceed \$500 and shall be paid directly to the vendor.
5. All receipts shall be submitted to the youth's social worker to ensure a proper accounting.
6. When applicable, reimbursements shall be issued within 30 days upon submission of invoice/receipt.

7. The assigned program manager shall provide final approval for all graduation expenses. For private agency cases, the program manager for CFSA's Contract Monitoring and Program Improvement Administration must approve all requests.
8. In the event that a youth's graduation expenses exceed \$500 despite a youth's careful budgeting process, it is expected that the resource parent shall contribute to the cost from foster care board payments provided by CFSA. CFSA also encourages resource parents to assist youth in budgeting and saving their own money from other income sources (e.g., part-time employment) to supplement any special graduation activities that go beyond the allotted \$500.
9. Social workers shall not request a court order to cover prom expenses or graduation expenses above the \$500 amount noted.