

## **ADOPTION SUPPORT FUND – COVID-19 SCHEME - GUIDANCE NOTES**

The scheme enables regional adoption agencies and local authority adoption teams that are not yet in a regional adoption agency (RAAs/LAs) to access ASF funds to deliver new immediate therapeutic support to families eligible for ASF funding during the current corona virus situation only. RAA/LA 's will be expected to liaise with their respective LA Special Guardianship teams in their area to ensure that any funding sought includes services to eligible special guardian families.

To access this funding, RAAs/LAs will need to complete and return the attached application form to [asf@mottmac.com](mailto:asf@mottmac.com) and not use the normal ASF application process. Decisions are expected to be made within 5 working days. RAAs/LA's can continue to make ASF applications for specific therapeutic support for eligible individual children and families under the current ASF eligibility and scope criteria.

Each RAA/LA has been allocated a proportion of the overall budget based on the funding model used by the government to distribute funding to local authorities to help respond to COVID-19 pressures across all services. RAAs/LAs will be notified of their allocation around 14 April 2020.

LA/RAAs can make more than one application during the life of the scheme but each RAA/LA cannot exceed their overall funding allocation.

RAA/LAs can join together and pool their allocations, with a single organisation submitting an application as a consortium approach for example. However, for audit purposes, we ask that you provide confirmation of partner LA/RAA agreement e.g. confirmation email from the other authority/ies

The scheme will be for three months to the end of June 2020. Funding for the scheme will be reviewed during and at the end of that process.

The types of activities that can be funded include:

- Buying services from voluntary sector providers to provide virtual support to groups of families and children through for example a helpline or virtual peer to peer support or paying for adopters to access membership support services from voluntary sector organisations.
- Bringing in agency or using voluntary sector staff to provide adoption/SGO support to cover LA/RAA staff who may have been temporarily redeployed to deliver other frontline children's services.
- Providing any other urgent therapeutic support that is currently outside the scope of the ASF that can be provided during the lifetime of the scheme e.g. couples therapy, online training courses.

The above list is not exhaustive and we would welcome creative and innovative solutions to provide therapeutic support to families during the current situation.

Funding for the following is out of scope of the scheme:

- Activities in school settings. This should be funded by Pupil Premium or other sources of funding
- Respite support
- Electronic equipment or computers for families and children

Activities for which funding is being sought should take place during the duration of the scheme. However, in some instances it may be pragmatic and more cost effective to purchase services that will continue beyond the three months e.g. annual membership subscriptions or courses/sessions that may not complete before the end of June 2020.

At the end of the scheme, LAs/RAAs will be required to provide assurance that the spend was used for the intended purpose and return any unused funds back to Fund.

For further information please contact: [asf@mottmac.com](mailto:asf@mottmac.com)

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