

VOLUME 7A, APPENDIX A: “REIMBURSEMENT OF ADOPTION EXPENSES”**SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES**

All changes are denoted by **blue font**.

Substantive revisions are denoted by an * symbol preceding the section, paragraph, table, or figure that includes the revision.

Unless otherwise noted, chapters referenced are contained in this volume.

Hyperlinks are denoted by **bold, italic, blue, and underlined font**.

The previous version dated August 2011 is archived.

PARAGRAPH	EXPLANATION OF CHANGE/REVISION	PURPOSE
A00502 A00503	Changed the contact information for the DFAS – CL office of responsibility.	Update

Table of Contents

VOLUME 7A, APPENDIX A: “REIMBURSEMENT OF ADOPTION EXPENSES” 1

A001 PURPOSE 3

A002 APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE 3

A003 POLICY 3

A004 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 3

 A00401. Active Duty Requirements 3

 A00402. Period of Eligibility 4

 A00403. Eligible Members 4

 A00404. Qualifying Adoptions 4

A005 RESPONSIBILITIES 5

 A00501. Member Responsibilities 5

 *A00502. Servicing Personnel Activity Responsibilities 6

 *A00503. DFAS-CL Responsibilities 6

 A00504. Military Services’ Adoption Expense Reimbursement Funding Responsibilities 7

A006 ADOPTION REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES 7

 A00601. Authorized Reimbursable Expenses 7

 A00602. Unqualified Expenses 7

 A00603. Payment Processing Requirements 8

 A00604. Appeals 8

BIBLIOGRAPHY 9

APPENDIX A

REIMBURSEMENT OF ADOPTION EXPENSES

A001 PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures necessary to reimburse adoption expenses to qualified members, as authorized by [Title 10, United States Code \(U.S.C.\), section 1052.](#)

A002 APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This chapter applies to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service-Cleveland (DFAS-CL) site, each Military Service personnel activity, and active duty members serving on continuous active duty for at least 180 days. This also includes full-time Active Guard/Reserve members on active duty orders for at least 180 days.

A003 POLICY

Service members specified in section A004, whose adoption of a child under 18 years of age has been finalized may be reimbursed a maximum of \$2,000 per child for qualified expenses related to the adoption. In the event of multiple adoptions, the maximum reimbursable amount is \$5,000 per calendar year. A benefit may not be paid for any expense paid to or for a member of the Armed Forces under any other adoption benefits program administered by the Federal Government or under any such program administered by a State or local government. The DFAS-CL site is responsible for paying all approved adoption reimbursement claims. DFAS-CL is also responsible for providing primary guidance concerning adoption expense reimbursement procedures. The date the claim form is served on the DFAS-CL by certified mail determines the creditable calendar year for determining the maximum reimbursable amount for multiple adoptions.

A004 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A00401. Active Duty Requirements

Service members must serve on continuous active duty for at least 180 days. In addition, members are not entitled to reimbursement expenses if they leave active duty before the adoption is final. Applicants are eligible for reimbursement expenses if the adoption is finalized before leaving active duty, the claim form has been signed and certified by the member's commanding officer, and the claim is submitted to the DFAS-CL site prior to discharge. Members may request a voluntary extension of assignment beyond their normal expiration of term of service to complete the adoption process.

A00402. Period of Eligibility

An active duty member, who incurs expenses when adopting a child under 18 years of age, must have the adoption finalized while on active duty to be eligible for reimbursement. Members must submit a reimbursement request **in person** or via certified mail to the nearest military personnel office no later than 1 year after finalization of the adoption and prior to separation from active duty. **If submitted in person**, the member must obtain a receipt for his or her records from the military personnel office showing the date the application was submitted. The date of the receipt shall be used to determine if the 1-year requirement has been satisfied.

A00403. Eligible Members

Adoption expense reimbursements may be paid to married or single members. If both parents are Service members (including members of the Coast Guard when operating as a Military Service in the Navy), then only one member may be reimbursed for expenses related to the adoption of the same child.

A00404. Qualifying Adoptions

Adoption expenses that may be reimbursed include: the adoption of a child under the age of 18; an adoption by a single person; an infant adoption, an inter-country adoption; and an adoption of a child with special needs (as defined in section 473(c) of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 673\(c\)](#)) and, for adoptions finalized after November 2, 2007, stepchildren adopted by the military member. Adoptions qualify for reimbursement only if the adoption is arranged by a qualified adoption agency, or for adoptions finalized after November 2, 2007, those arranged by either a qualified adoption agency or other source authorized to place children for adoption under state or local law. A qualified adoption agency means a state or local government agency that has responsibility under state or local law for child placement through adoption; or a nonprofit, voluntary adoption agency that is authorized by state or local law to place children for adoption; or any other source authorized by a state to provide adoption placement, if the adoption is supervised by a court under state or local law. (As used in this chapter, "state or local" refers to a state or locality in the United States.) A qualified adoption agency for inter-country adoptions would be a foreign government or an agency authorized by a foreign government to place children for adoption, in any case which:

A. The adopted child is entitled to automatic citizenship under section 320 of the Immigration and Nationality Act ([8 U.S.C. 1431](#)); or

B. A certificate of citizenship has been issued for such child under section 322 of the Immigration and Nationality Act ([8 U.S.C. 1433](#));

C. **In either case**, documentation that describes the mission of the foreign agency and the authority delegated from the foreign government should be provided.

A005 RESPONSIBILITIES

A00501. Member Responsibilities

A. A Service member must submit requests for reimbursement of qualified adoption expenses using a separate [Department of Defense \(DD\) Form 2675](#) (Reimbursement Request for Adoption Expenses) for each qualifying adoption. Hard-copy forms can be obtained from the member's servicing personnel activity. The completed DD Form 2675 and substantiating documentation must be submitted for review to the member's servicing personnel activity no later than 1 year after finalization of the adoption. If the request and documentation appear to be complete, then the member's commanding officer or designee will certify the member's eligibility for reimbursement by completing block 30 of the DD Form 2675.

B. If neither the member nor the spouse is able to appear personally at the servicing personnel activity, then the completed claim forms may be mailed to the personnel activity. The spouse of a Service member who is unable to complete a claims package due to military duty can sign a claim form under a power of attorney. All claims signed by a spouse must include the power of attorney as a part of the claims package. Also, exceptions can be made by the Service-certifying official when deployment responsibilities impact the member's ability to comply with the 1-year deadline. In these cases, the certifying official who signed the DD Form 2675 shall submit a letter stating that the member's deployment impacted the member's ability to comply with the 1-year deadline.

C. Service members must substantiate all expenses with documentation, such as receipts marked "PAID" or cancelled checks. If the receipts are from a foreign entity, then they should list the U.S. currency equivalency. Reconstruction of expense records is permissible when the original records are unavailable and the Service member submits a notarized affidavit stating the costs. In addition, the member is responsible for providing the appropriate documentation, which establishes that the adoption is final and that it was arranged by a qualified adoption agency, as defined in paragraph A00404. With respect to documents originating from a state or other authorized adoption agency, copies of those documents must be certified as true copies of the original by the state or adoption agency. If the original document is filed with the court, then the member must submit a copy of the adoption order certified by the clerk of courts. The member must submit a full English translation of any foreign language document, to include the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate the foreign language to English and that his or her translation is complete and correct. These documents will not be returned to the member.

D. In determining whether an adoption of a child in a foreign country is final, the member must submit a copy of the final court documents, as well as proof of U.S. citizenship for the child. The following documents are acceptable forms of proof of U.S. citizenship:

1. A copy of the front and back of the Permanent Resident Alien Card (green card) or visa showing the IR-3 code;

2. A copy of the front and back of the Permanent Resident Alien Card (green card) or visa showing the IH-3 code;

3. A copy of a U.S. court order that recognizes foreign adoption, or documents the “re-adopting” of the child in the United States;

4. A letter from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services which states the status of the child’s adoption;

5. A copy of U.S. passport (page with personal information only); or

6. A copy of U.S. Certificate of Citizenship.

E. The Service member is responsible for maintaining a file for the reimbursement claim. This file should contain copies of all paperwork related to the claim, including the receipts, agency documentation, and court papers associated with the adoption proceedings or court-certified copies, until the claim is paid or denied.

F. The Service member will submit only one reimbursement claim per adoption.

*A00502. Servicing Personnel Activity Responsibilities

The member’s servicing personnel activity is the primary coordinating activity and the first point of contact for the reimbursement claim. That office is responsible for maintaining adequate stocks of DD Form 2675, assisting the member in assembling the proper supporting documentation, and providing the member necessary guidance to accurately complete the reimbursement application. When completed, the personnel activity will mail the application by certified mail to:

Defense Finance and Accounting Service
Cleveland Site (Code [JFLADA](#))
1240 East Ninth Street
Cleveland, OH 44199-2055

*A00503. DFAS-CL Responsibilities

The DFAS-CL site is the central site location for review, certification, and payment of adoption expense reimbursement payments. DFAS-CL is the primary source for guidance concerning the adoption expense reimbursement program. DFAS-CL will also maintain data on expenditures on a fiscal year basis. The contact information for DFAS-CL adoption expense reimbursement program is:

DFAS-CL
(Code [JFLADA](#))
Commercial phone: 216-522-5576/6701

DSN: 580-5576/6701

Email: CCL-ADOPTION-REIMBURSEMENT@dfas.mil

A00504. Military Services' Adoption Expense Reimbursement Funding Responsibilities

The Military Services provide funding authorization to DFAS-CL by memorandum each fiscal year. The DFAS-CL site charges the applicable Military service provided appropriations according to standard cross-disbursing operating procedures.

A006 ADOPTION REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

A00601. Authorized Reimbursable Expenses

The DFAS-CL site will pay documented, reasonable, and necessary adoption expenses, up to \$2,000 per adoptive child. Not more than \$5,000 shall be paid per calendar year to any Service member. In the case of two married Service members (including the Coast Guard when operating as a Military Service in the Navy), only one member may claim expenses for each adopted child and the couple is limited to the \$5,000 per calendar year maximum. The calendar year is determined by the date the claim is received by DFAS-CL for payment. Reasonable and necessary expenses include the following:

- A. Public and private agency fees, including adoptive fees charged by an agency in a foreign country;
- B. Placement fees, including fees charged adoptive parents for counseling;
- C. Legal fees, including court costs, for services that are unavailable to a member for the Military services under [10 U.S.C. 1044](#) or [1044a](#);
- D. Medical expenses, including hospital expenses, of the biological mother of the child to be adopted and of a newborn infant to be adopted; [and](#)
- E. Temporary foster care charges when payment of such charges is required to be made before the adoptive child's placement.

A00602. Unqualified Expenses

The term "reasonable and necessary expenses" does not include:

- A. Travel costs of the adopting parent; or
- B. Any costs associated with an adoption arranged in violation of federal, state, or local law.

A00603. Payment Processing Requirements

A. A separate DD Form 2675 must support each claim.

B. Eligibility for reimbursement is supported by the documentation submitted. If eligibility for reimbursement cannot be determined from the documents provided, or claimed expenses are not properly supported by receipts, then the DFAS-CL Director will retain the claim and request the necessary information or documentation.

C. The DFAS-CL site will issue the reimbursement by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the member's EFT account as designated on the DD Form 2675 within 30 days of receipt of a properly prepared and supported claim package. A Service member without access to an EFT [method of payment](#) must submit a request for EFT waiver to receive a check.

D. If the claim is denied, then DFAS-CL will send a letter to the member stating this fact. DFAS-CL will not return documents to Service members.

A00604. Appeals

If a member receives a claim denial, they can request reconsideration in writing and add additional explanation or documentation. If, upon reconsideration, the member receives a notice of final action regarding the denial of the claim, the member may appeal to the Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals via DFAS. The request for appeal should include copies of all relevant court documents and statements of the member or other persons in support of the claim.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A003 DoDI 1341.09

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10 U.S.C 1052(g)(3)(D), October 28, 2004
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A005 – RESPONSIBILITIES

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A006 – ADOPTION REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

A00601 DoDI 1341.09

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