

# Illinois DCFS Startup Fund Program

**NOW**  
AVAILABLE!



Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services

# Foster Parent and Relative/Kinship Caregiver Startup Fund Program

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) recognizes that it is important that the youth in your care have the necessary clothing, school supplies and household goods, such as bedding, to ensure their transition into your home is comfortable and as seamless as possible. To enhance support for foster parents and relative/kinship caregivers, beginning May 1, 2024, DCFS will provide preloaded VISA cards to caregivers when a youth is introduced to their initial placement or within a few days of initial placement.

The preloaded cards will contain \$500 and are intended to support a seamless transition for youth entering DCFS care by providing simple and immediate funds to be used by the caregivers to purchase essential items such as clothing and personal hygiene items.

Additional funding may be approved for special needs or circumstances. Items should remain with the youth if the youth transitions to another placement.



# Card Benefits

## **Immediate availability of funds.**

Cards will be provided to caregivers at the time the youth is introduced to their first placement or within a few days.

## **Convenience.**

Preloaded cards can be used at brick and mortar stores and online retailers to purchase items the youth needs.

## **Updated process reduces barriers.**

Preloaded cards replace the current paper based initial placement clothing/ personal hygiene voucher and reimbursement process.



# Contact Us

Please contact your caseworker or the DCFS Advocacy Office  
at 800-232-3798 with questions.



[DCFS.Illinois.gov](https://www.dcf.illinois.gov)