



1. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Child, Family and Community Service Act, Section 93

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarification regarding the criteria used to determine eligibility for the Associate Family Program.

3. POLICY

The Associate Family Program does not accept new admissions.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development will continue to provide Associate Family Program services to eligible children who were admitted to the program prior to October 31, 2009.

4. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Associate Family Program secures community-based, quality family living for children with multiple disabilities who were previously living in institutions, or had a probability of becoming permanently institutionalized. The program matches associate care-giving families (who are trained, supported and paid to provide full- or part-time care) with children with multiple disabilities and complex needs, whose natural families are unable to provide their ongoing day-to-day care.

The trained family works in partnership with the natural parents to provide care in the associate family home. Parents retain full guardianship rights and are considered team members in their child's care.

The Associate Family Program seeks to:

- provide each child with individualized supports and services, in an environment best suited to his/her particular needs;
- ensure that each child experiences optimal development and enjoys as rewarding a life as possible, and;
- facilitate the involvement of the child's natural family in the ongoing care and future planning for their child.



5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 “Eligible children” means those children who were admitted to the Associate Family Program prior to October 31, 2009, and meet the following eligibility criteria:

- age 18 or younger;
- resident of British Columbia;
- has multiple disabilities;
- was living in an extended care facility or institutional setting when he/she was admitted to the Associate Family Program, and;
- has health care needs that can be safely and effectively met in the community.

Or

- age 18 or younger;
- resident of British Columbia;
- has multiple disabilities;
- parents increasingly relied on an extended care facility or other form of institutional-based respite when the child was admitted to the Associate Family Program, and;
- there was a probability that the child may become permanently institutionalized when he/she was admitted to the Associate Family Program.

5.2 “Resident of British Columbia” is defined in accordance with the *Medicare Protection Act*, and means a person who:

- is a citizen of Canada or is lawfully admitted to Canada for permanent residence;
- makes his or her home in British Columbia, and;
- is physically present in British Columbia at least six months in a calendar year,

and includes a person who is deemed under the regulations to be a resident but does not include a tourist or visitor to British Columbia.

5.3 “Multiple disabilities” means severe physical disabilities and other related conditions, including complex health needs and developmental disabilities.

5.4 “Complex health needs” means the existence of a condition or conditions that cause the child to require specialized medical equipment and professional care to sustain life (e.g., gastrostomy feeding, tracheostomy care).



6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Families are not income-tested for the Associate Family Program

The Associate Family Program is provided via the Associate Family Program Guardian(s) Agreement (CF2446) and the Children's Support Program Guardian(s) Agreement (CF2447). Refer to the "Guidelines for the Associate Family Program and other Residential Alternatives for Institutionalized Children in British Columbia" binder for other Associate Family Program policies.

6.2 Contracting Procedures

Sample contract language can be found in the "Guidelines for the Associate Family Program and other Residential Alternatives for Institutionalized Children in British Columbia" binder, Part V Section D.

6.3 Payment Procedures

Medical equipment, medical supplies, emergency respite and caregiver travel and training expenses may be purchased using an Expenditure Authorization Form (HLTH2210). Purchases should be coded to regional budget and/or appropriate service lines.

6.4 Forms for the Associate Family Program

CF2446	Associate Family Program Guardian(s) Agreement, or;
CF2447	Children's Support Program Guardian(s) Agreement (for Associate Family Program-eligible children in staffed residential care)
HLTH2210	Expenditure Authorization Form