INDIVIUAL PLANNING FUNDS

The individual funds are designed to provide flexible short term; time limited support to fill gaps in services that **cannot be addressed through any other funding source**. The funds may be a one time purchase or may help the child/youth transition to a more stable service or funding source. These services are part of the child's service or treatment plan due to evidence of a demonstrated need.

Requests are to be completely filled out, **legible**, with a **current ISP attached**. We need as much information about the request as possible, so it is clear to the reader exactly how this request relates to the child's diagnosis/disability and what other funding sources have been attempted. The goals on the ISP should reflect the identified needs. Other funding sources to consider are Adoption Subsidies, SSI income, Maine Care, General Assistance, fuel assistance programs, etc. Parents are expected to contribute except in cases of serious hardship.

Requests need to be 2 weeks before the money is needed for **Prior Approval. Please do not submit bills or requests for payment for any expenditure that has not gone through the prior approval process.**

When **applying for the Individual Planning funds** provide the following information:

1. Specify the nature of the service and its purpose
2. Specify the cost of the service or items.
3. Provide parameters for service which may include the date the service ends or the number of sessions. For example :specify hourly rate, the number of hours per week, i.e., 6 hours per week for 3 months a $9.00 an hour.
4. If the request is for specialty equipment/service, safety equipment, etc; we expect to see **written documentation from the child's physician, psychologist, therapist,** etc of recommendations, as well as, written proof that Maine Care has denied the request. In order to speed up the process include a completed order form.
5. Since individual planning funding is "short term" families and the team working with the child need to consider how this funding, if approved, will be sustained over time. What other resources are being sought, such as, natural supports, and what changes or adjustments is the family willing/able to do to ensure the child's needs will be met in the future. Activities funded should fit for the family, with its lifestyle, its community etc. It is not fair to get families and children "hooked" on activities that will be difficult-to-impossible to sustain over the long term..

When **determining criteria** to access the individual planning funds, it might be helpful to review the following questions:

- What are the immediate goals in accessing these services/funds and how does the proposed service fit with the long-term picture for the child and family?
- What is the long-term plan and how will a more stable service or funding source be obtained?
- Will the effects of the service be consistent with the family's interests and needs? What will happen when use of the flex funds end?

When **completing the individual planning fund form**:

- Case Manager should ask if family is able to share in the cost of the request.
- Complete all ***Provider Information including Social sec. # or Tax ID and all Child Information*** otherwise the form may be returned to you for completion.
- The form should be reviewed and signed by your supervisor before sending it to DHHS District Office.