



DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
SERVICES

**"We serve those who
serve Florida"**

JEB BUSH
Governor

Tom Lewis, Jr.
Secretary



Office of the Secretary
4050 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida
32399-0950

Telephone:
850-488-2786

Fax:
850-922-6149

Internet:
www.MyFlorida.com

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FOR MORE INFORMATION
TIFFANY KOENIGKRAMER (850) 921-5266

STATE EMPLOYEES ADOPTION GRANTS
Apply Now Through Wednesday, May 31, 2006

TALLAHASSEE – Florida government employees who have an adopted child may be eligible for \$5,000 in financial assistance or \$10,000 for a special needs child through a program coordinated by the Department of Management Services (DMS). Applications may be submitted now through Wednesday, May 31, 2006.

"More than 300 children have been adopted by state employee families since we created this program in 2000," said Governor Jeb Bush. "State employees are providing children in need with loving, stable homes."

Since 2000, \$3 million in adoption grants have been awarded to state employees. Governor Bush and Lt. Governor Jennings have recommended \$1.73 million for the State Employee Adoption Benefit Program in fiscal year 2006-07 – a 95 percent increase (\$847,334) over the current year.

John Starling, a DMS employee, was among the 179 state employees who received grants last year. In 2002, John and his wife, Patricia, adopted their four nieces – who range in age today from 6 to 14 – after they had been placed in foster care.

"There is nothing more important than family. Governor Bush has made adoptions a priority, and our state employees are leading by example," said DMS Secretary Tom Lewis, Jr.

To qualify, the child must have been adopted on or after October 1, 2000 from permanent custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or from a Florida-licensed child-placing agency. Employees who are paid from regular salary appropriations – including Executive, Legislative, Cabinet, Judicial, Water Management District and State University System employees – are eligible.

The grants are awarded based on legislative appropriation and adoption date. The number of applicants often exceeded available funds. Employees who have previously applied and did not receive a grant are encouraged to reapply. To apply, employees must submit an application and a certified copy of the adoption final order. For an application visit: www.dms.myflorida.com/adoptionbenefitsprogram.

"Few gifts are more precious than a loving, permanent home," said DCF Secretary Lucy Hadi. "These grants make it easier for prospective adoptive parents to open their hearts and homes to children in state care, and give them a fresh start in life."

These grants support the Governor's No Place Like Home initiative. Created in 2002, the initiative seeks to increase the number of child placements through a streamlined adoption process, specialized teams to assist in the adoption of hard-to-place children, special adoption events for children and prospective adoptive parents, and increased public awareness. Since 2002, more than 10,500 children have been placed with adoptive families through the No Place Like Home initiative.

DMS serves those who serve Florida. DMS provides administrative support for state agencies and state employees including human resource, insurance, retirement, office facility, purchasing, vehicle/aircraft, property surplus and information technology services. For more information, visit www.dms.myflorida.com.

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