



Series: 300: Child and Family Services

Policy Name: Kinship Caregiver Supports

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Regulation: 39.5085 F. S
65C-28.008 F.A.C.
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CFOP 170-10, Chapter 8

Policy: It is the policy of Communities Connected for Kids to actively pursue safety and permanency for children, advocating for children who have relatives who are committed to caring for them on a temporary or permanent basis. Kinship caregiver support was implemented to assist relatives and nonrelatives who assume court-approved placement and care responsibilities for a child. To ensure this policy is carried out, the following procedure is in effect.

Procedure: Communities Connected for Kids (CCKids) Caregiver Support Staff will follow the process detailed in the Florida Department of Children and Families CFOP 170-10, Chapter 8, to ensure identified support needs for our kinship caregivers are evaluated and addressed on a continuous basis.

Services to be provided to kinship caregivers

1. Services will be based on the case plan and the legal nature of the placement. Services to children and adults in kinship placements will be based on the premise that kin should be given as much self-determination and independence, consistent with appropriate safety and nurturing of the child.
2. Kinship caregivers will be provided access to the same support and treatment services available in the network to foster parents. In cases, in which the relatives become licensed foster or adoptive parents, the families will receive services according to the requirements of those services. Some services that are frequently requested by caregivers are:
 - a) "kinship" support groups open to all kinship caregivers regardless of age.
 - b) legal assistance in obtaining permission to enroll the child in school, to obtain medical attention or to obtain legal custody or guardianship.
 - c) assistance negotiating the social services system to get approved for food stamps, Medicaid or state supported insurance coverage for the child, child support, or day care services; and information and referral services to connect informal and formal service providers in the local community.



- d) referrals to kinship navigation services to assist with additional available community resources and services specific to a family's individual needs.
- e) referrals to evaluate if a kinship caregiver is eligible for subsidized childcare services through the Early Learning Coalition.

Procedures for Accessing Financial Benefits for the Relative Caregiver Program

1. The child welfare professional will inform the relative caregiver to complete an application for benefits via the MyACCESS Portal. The relative caregiver must be willing to comply with all processes and procedures established by MyACCESS, including but not limited to participating in a phone interview to determine eligibility, provide additional information as requested to determine eligibility, and agree to comply with child support services.
2. An information exchange will occur between MyACCESS and CCWIS for the Relative Caregiver Program to determine a match for eligibility of relative caregiver funds (RCF). Eligibility criteria includes:
 - a. Correct demographic information for the caregiver to be listed in CCWIS
 - b. Correct demographic information for the child to be listed in CCIS
 - c. The child must be placed in an out of home placement with Caregiver 1 matching the primary caregiver on the MyACCESS application.
 - d. The child must be identified as adjudicated in FSFN
 - e. An approved Unified Home Study (UHS) must be linked to the Provider ID in which the child's out of home placement is documented where the UHS outcome is 'Approved Meets Requirements,' 'Approved-Review Comments,' or 'Denied-Court Approved.' The UHS type of Emergency Placement is excluded from meeting eligibility criteria.
3. In instances identified by the Department, the Child Welfare Communication Form (form CF-FSP 5233) will need to be used for RCF. This form should be completed by the child welfare professional and submitted for review and processing to flbcccaregivers@cckids.net. Once the form is determined to be correct and accurate, the Kinship Navigator Supervisor will electronically submit it to DCF ESS staff at SER.CIC.Inbox@myflfamilies.com.
4. Eligibility will be reviewed by DCF ESS every 12 months and adjusted periodically, if appropriate, to reflect changed circumstances, which include the following:
 - a. The child begins receiving Supplemental Security Income
 - b. The child begins receiving unearned income. Examples are Social Security Benefits, child support, etc.
 - c. The child's age results in an increase in payment or the child turns 18 and is no longer eligible
 - d. The six month period of higher payment has been reached
 - e. The caregiver has become a licensed foster parent

Procedures for Accessing Financial Benefits for the Non-Relative Caregiver Program


1. Criteria for determining the eligibility to participate in the Non-Relative Caregiver Program for open cases:
 - a) Child(ren) who are placed in non-relative care
 - b) Child(ren) must be adjudicated dependent in the State of Florida.
 - c) Child(ren) must be placed in the temporary or long-term custody of a non-relative who resides in the State of Florida.



- d) Unified Home Study (UHS) must favorably address the nine (9) safety and permanency factors listed on the "Recommendation to Court" page.
- e) UHS must have been filed, accepted, and approved by the court.
- f) Contingent upon availability of funding non-relative caregiver financial assistance payments can continue until the child reaches age 18, is adopted, is no longer placed in the home of the non-relative caregiver, moves from the state of Florida, or the non-relative caregiver becomes licensed as a foster parent, whichever is sooner.
- g) Child(ren) who receive Social Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Survivor Benefits on behalf of the child will be denied non-relative caregiver financial assistance payments for the child.
- h) A signed statement by the non-relative caregiver expressing financial need to continue care for the child(ren) long term is required by DCF.

2. Application Process

- a) If the child meets criteria, case management will assist the caregiver with the Non-Relative Caregiver Financial Assistance Application.
 - b) Once the paper application is completed in its entirety, the case manager will forward the application to the Caregiver Support Department via email to: flcbccaregivers@cckids.net
 - c) The Kinship Navigator Supervisor will electronically submit the application to the Department of Children and Families Non-Relative Caregiver email address: hqw.nonrelative.caregiver@myflfamilies.com.
 - d) d) The Office of Child Welfare will process the application within five days and confirm approval or denial of the application. Upon approval, the Non-Relative Caregiver Payment Administrator will add the Department Approved Service in the Provider Record in FSFN.
- f) Annually, the Non-Relative Caregiver Payment Administrator will conduct a reassessment by contacting the case manager to determine whether the non-relative caregiver continues to meet eligibility requirements.

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