



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

# Ohio's Kinship Programs: An Overview

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Ohio's Kinship Supports Intervention (from ProtectOHIO)

This resource was developed for use by PCSAs and is based on PCSAO's understanding of the various kinship programs as of March 2022. We will update this as needed; a current copy will be maintained on the PCSAO Executive Membership Teams site.



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# Program Summary: Ohio Works First “Child-Only” Benefit (OWF)

## Description

Ohio Works First (OWF) is a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program that provides cash assistance to eligible families. The child-only benefit is a special case within OWF in which children who are living with caregivers other than their parents receive OWF cash assistance. These children are exempt from the OWF work requirements.

The monthly payment is determined by the size of the assistance group, with incremental increases for each additional member of an assistance group. As of January 2022, the monthly payments are:

Assistance group of 1:	\$324
Assistance group of 2:	\$442
Assistance group of 3:	\$542

And so on.....

## Target Population

Children living with specified relatives or legal guardians only. Fictive kin (non-relatives) must establish guardianship or custody to access this program.

## Child Custody Status

No child welfare involvement required. As stated above, non-relatives must establish

guardianship or custody of the child to receive this benefit.

## Duration

Unlike other TANF programs, there is no time limit on this benefit. Eligible children can receive this cash assistance until the age of 18.

## Funding Source

Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds.

## Who Administers the Program?

Eligibility is determined by county JFS agencies; payments are issued through ODJFS.

## Current Implementation Status

Active

## Additional Resources

For more information, visit:

<https://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/OWF.pdf>



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## Program Summary: Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI)

### Description

The Kinship Permanency Incentive Program (KPI) supports children being cared for by kin through direct payments to kinship families at the time of a child's placement and at six-month intervals thereafter. As of 2019, the initial payment is \$525 and additional payments are \$300.

### Target Population

Kinship caregivers who hold legal custody or guardianship of their kin children.

### Eligibility

Kinship caregivers must meet these requirements: reside in Ohio; obtained legal custody or guardianship on or after July 1, 2005; family gross income is no more than 300% of the federal poverty level; a PCSA has completed the Relative or Non-Relative Substitute Placement Approval Process, inclusive of a criminal background check and completion of an application form. Caregivers must apply through their local PCSA. A new application must be submitted and eligibility must be re-determined every six months.

### Child Custody Status

The child is in the legal and physical custody of a kinship caregiver. The PCSA does not need to have held custody of the child at any point. Temporary, Ex Parte and Emergency custody do not qualify.

### Duration

Beginning with an initial payment at the time of placement, additional incentive payments are available every six months, up to a maximum of eight payments.

### Funding Source

The predominant funding source is TANF, supplemented by state funds for those families with incomes between 201-300% of the federal poverty level.

### Program Administrator

PCSA process applications and payments in SACWIS; ODJFS sends the payments to caregivers.

### History

KPI was established through the biennial budget and initially implemented on January 1, 2006. It was modified in 2007 and 2015.

### Current Implementation Status

Ongoing program.

### Additional Resources

[ODJFS Kinship Page](#)



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## Program Summary: Kinship Caregiver Program (KCP)

### Description

The Kinship Caregiver Program (KCP) was established to assist kinship caregivers with providing and maintaining a home for a kin child. KCP is an earmark within Ohio's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) spending plan, currently at \$10M/year during SFY2022-2023. Because it is a TANF program, kinship caregivers must meet federal TANF requirements for eligibility and allowable services. Most notably, the assistance provided through KCP must be temporary in nature and kinship caregivers must meet the income guidelines (up to 200% FPL) when they are included in the assistance group.

KCP includes two types of assistance, family stabilization and caregiving services.

**Stabilization:** The assistance group is the minor child. Stabilization services are designed to transition the child into and maintain the child in the kinship home. Examples include but are not limited to: childcare services not to exceed four months, incidental expenses incurred when taking on the responsibility of caring for a child (i.e., beds, car seats, etc.).

**Caregiving services:** The assistance group is the minor child **and** the kinship caregiver. This service is limited to reimbursement to the kinship caregiver for, or direct payment to, a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party individual or entity to care for the child; the care can be provided in the kinship home and does not need to be provided by a licensed caregiver. The kinship caregiver must be participating in a TANF-related approved activity (work, training, work activities). This is for temporary relief of child caring functions, not long-term childcare assistance.

### Eligibility

Kinship caregivers ages 18 and older who are caring for a child in place of the child's parents. Fictive kin must be the legal guardian or custodian of the child. See description for additional eligibility requirements.

### Child Custody Status

The PCSA does not need to have held custody of the child at any point.

### Funding Source

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) earmark; \$10M/year for SFY2022-2023.

### Program Administrator

The Kinship Caregiver Program is part of a county JFS' prevention, retention and contingency (PRC) plan and designed by the county JFS and the PCSA.

Each county determines its own application process and program design, within federal and state guidelines.

### History

The Kinship Caregiver Program is the evolution of the original Kinship Caregiver Childcare Program (\$15M/year TANF earmark). The latter was established in the SFY2017-2018 state budget but only served a very limited number of kinship families. This led to a redesign into the Kinship Caregiver Program in 2019.

### Additional Resources

[FAL175-Kinship-Caregiver-Program--Additional-Guidance.stm \(ohio.gov\)](https://www.pcsao.org/FAL175-Kinship-Caregiver-Program--Additional-Guidance.stm)



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# Program Summary: Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator Program (OhioKAN)

## Description

OhioKAN is a flexible and responsive kinship and adoption navigator program designed to support children, youth and their families. Building on the premise that families are inherently capable of finding solutions to the circumstances and challenges they face, the OhioKAN program takes an inclusive, engaging, and genuine approach to strengthening families and their networks.

OhioKAN went live as a statewide navigator program in fall 2020.

Caregivers call 1-844-OhioKAN (1-844-644-6526) to request assistance, or visit [www.OhioKAN.jfs.ohio.gov](http://www.OhioKAN.jfs.ohio.gov)

## Target Population and Eligibility

OhioKAN is open to any kinship or adoptive family in Ohio. Kinship may be formal or informal; adoption may be private or public.

## Child Custody Status

There are no restrictions based on the child's custody status.

## Funding Source

The state budget has allocated \$8.5 million in general revenue funds annually through FY 2023 for the program. ODJFS is in the process of evaluating OhioKAN so that it can be reviewed by the Title IV-E Prevention

Services Clearinghouse. If/when OhioKAN receives a rating of well-supported, supported, or promising by the Clearinghouse, Ohio will be able to draw down Title IV-E funds to support the program.

## Program Administrator

ODJFS has overall responsibility for OhioKAN and contracts with Kinnect to manage and operate the program.

## History

In 2019, the Ohio General Assembly included funding in the state budget to create a statewide kinship and adoption navigator program.

## Current Implementation Status

OhioKAN operates statewide via ten regions. For evaluation purposes, the regions are assigned to one of two groups. One group provides the full range of navigator services (inform and refer, plus collaboration on higher level services and intensive case management for families at risk of dissolving), and the other group provides only the inform and refer service. This evaluation process is necessary for the national clearinghouse review process described above.

## Additional Resources

[OhioKAN website](#)



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# Program Summary: Kinship Support Program (KSP)

## Description

The Kinship Support Program (KSP) was established by ODJFS to provide financial payments to eligible kinship caregivers for the placement of children in their homes. The payments are meant to help support the kinship caregiver as they work towards certification as a foster parent if they choose.

## Eligibility

Kinship caregivers who are not certified as foster parents and are caring for a child that matches the custody status described below. Kinship caregivers do not apply to receive payments; payments are issued by ODJFS based on information entered into SACWIS by the PCSA.

## Child Custody Status

The child is in the temporary, permanent, or legal custody of a PCSA, or the child is under the care of a Title IV-E agency with legal responsibility for care and placement of the child and which has a Title IV-E subgrant agreement in effect.

## Duration

Payments continue for no more than nine months for children who were initially placed in kinship care between December 29, 2020 and September 29, 2021. They continue for no more than six months for children initially placed in kinship care on or after September 30, 2021.

After these payment periods end, kinship families who become certified as foster parents receive foster care payments from the PCSA. PCSAs are permitted to waive certain certification requirements for kinship caregivers, specific to the placement of their kin only.

## Program Administrator and Payment Distribution

ODJFS administers the program and directly pays eligible families \$10.80/day for each kin child placed in the home. Payments are based on kinship caregiver information entered into SACWIS by PCSAs.

## History

The Kinship Support Program was designed by ODJFS and added to SB310 during the December 2020 lame duck session. It is in response to the D. O. v. Glisson lawsuit and decision out of the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

## Current Implementation Status

Ongoing program.

## Additional Resources

[KinshipSupportProgramFAQ.stm \(ohio.gov\)](https://www.ohio.gov/KinshipSupportProgramFAQ.stm)



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# Program Summary: Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KGAP)

## Description

KGAP is an optional Title IV-E program for states that opt to provide guardianship assistance payments for the care of children by relatives who have assumed legal guardianship of eligible children for whom they previously cared as foster parents. The program is designed to promote permanency for children who cannot return to their parents and for whom adoption is not an option. As of June 2021, 40 states operate KGAP programs.

## Eligibility and Child Custody Status

The child must have been in PCSA custody and placed with the kinship caregiver who is certified as a foster caregiver for at least 6 consecutive months before the caregiver assumes legal guardianship or custody of the child.

## Duration

A monthly payment is provided to eligible kinship caregivers until the child turns age 18. Because Ohio extended foster care and adoption assistance to age 21 (through Bridges and Adoption Connections respectively), Ohio is required to provide extended KGAP to Title IV-E eligible youth through age 21.

In addition, kinship caregivers can be reimbursed for expenses incurred during the legal custody/guardianship process up to two thousand dollars prior to the court issuing an order granting legal custody/guardianship.

## Program Administrator

PCSA will administer the Federal and State programs. ODJFS will administer the Extended Federal program.

Monthly payments are to be negotiated between the PCSA and kinship caregiver(s) within these guidelines: payment is to be 80% of the child's current foster care per diem unless it would result in a payment of less than \$350; if payment would be less than \$350 a month, the child's per diem is to be the child's current foster care payment or \$350, whichever is lower.

## Funding Source

States can draw down Title IV-E reimbursement for children who are Title IV-E eligible. Ohio will use TANF and state funds for all costs not reimbursed through Title IV-E, including for children who are not Title IV-E eligible. No local funds will be used for KGAP.

## History and Implementation Status

Based on a recommendation from the Ohio Children Services Transformation report, amended HB 110 requires Ohio to create both a federal and state KGAP program effective January 1, 2023. to promote permanency for children who cannot return to their parents and adoption is not an option.

ODJFS is in the process of developing rules for the KGAP programs. We anticipate that the PCSAO Rules Committee will have an opportunity to review and provide input into the rules. At this time, we are not aware of any other opportunities for PCSA input.



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## Program Summary: Ohio's Kinship Supports Intervention/ProtectOHIO

### Description

Ohio's Kinship Supports Intervention was part of Ohio's IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project, ProtectOHIO. The program is designed to promote and support kinship placements. The goal of the intervention is to meet children's physical, emotional, financial, and basic needs by connecting kinship caregivers with federal, state, and local resources. A key component of the intervention is the kinship caregiver support plan. This plan focuses on case management activities and may address topics such as financial assistance, referral services, and training for kinship caregivers. This plan is intended to be individualized, incorporating information from tools such as the home assessment and needs assessment, and to be reviewed and updated regularly. Monthly home visit services with a kinship coordinator are also offered and are an opportunity to establish trust between the kinship caregiver and coordinator and to promote more effective communication, education, assessment, planning, and support for the family.

### Target Population and Child Custody Status

Kinship caregivers (relatives and fictive kin) of children involved in the child welfare system, regardless of custody status or supervision orders. Kinship caregivers may be relatives through blood, marriage, or adoption. Kinship caregivers may also be fictive kin, which includes non-relative adults with whom the family or child identifies as having a long-standing relationship.

### History and Current Implementation Status

The Kinship Supports Intervention was evaluated as part of the overall ProtectOHIO final evaluation report. Based on these evaluation findings, the Title IV-E

Prevention Services Clearinghouse reviewed the program and rated it as "promising" as a kinship navigator program.

ODJFS sought and received federal agreement to operate more than one kinship navigator program in Ohio (OhioKAN and Kinship Supports Intervention). Based on that, ODJFS has submitted a state plan amendment for the Kinship Supports Intervention and is awaiting federal approval.

### Funding Source

Assuming federal approval of Ohio's state plan amendment, our understanding is that PCSAs could implement the Kinship Supports Intervention/ProtectOHIO and draw down Title IV-E match at a 50:50 rate. It is important to note that this would be under the kinship navigator provisions of the Family First Prevention Services Act rather than the Act's prevention services provisions. The scope of services eligible for this reimbursement is unknown at this time.

### Program Administrator

It is our understanding that PCSAs will administer the Kinship Supports Intervention/ProtectOHIO.

### Additional Resources

You can read the Title IV-E Clearinghouse description of the program [here](#)