

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

FAMILY ASSISTANCE DIVISION

KinShare Low Income Kinship Care Program

(TANF Funded)

Mission: To reduce the need for the placement of children in foster care by providing short term services and benefits to certain vulnerable families who are caring for a related child(ren) other than their own in order to facilitate, maintain or stabilize the child's placement or living arrangement.

I. TARGET POPULATION

The population to be served are those children, not in DHR custody, whose placement or living arrangement is at risk of deteriorating to the extent that foster care may be required unless addressed by the provision of services. Families with children who are and have been in a stable placement are not eligible unless there has been a crisis of such significance that the family living arrangement is no longer considered stable.

II. SUMMARIZED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In addition to the placement being at risk, there are other requirements that must be met before eligibility for services can be established. General conditions are summarized below. Detailed policies and procedures regarding these criteria are provided elsewhere in the manual.

- A. The child(ren) must be living with a caregiver, other than the parent, who is related by blood, marriage or adoption.
- B. The child(ren) must be under the age of 18.
- C. The family must be experiencing difficulty to the extent that the placement/living arrangement with the relative is threatening to or will break down if the difficulty is not addressed.
- D. The family must have income, excluding the FA payment, less than or equal to 200% of the federal poverty level.
- E. The caregiver must apply for and accept any other benefits for which the child(ren) appear to be eligible, such as, but not limited to RSDI, SSI Family Assistance, Food Assistance and Medicaid through the appropriate local agency.
- F. The child(ren) must be U.S. citizens or qualified alien.
- G. The caregiver and child(ren) must live in Alabama.
- H. The caregiver must furnish a social security number for the child(ren).

- SPECIFIED, ACCEPTABLE DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP

- Blood (half or whole)
- Marriage (ceremony or common-law)
- Adoption

FEMALE:

- Sister, adoptive sister, stepsister, sister-in-law
- Aunt, great-aunt, great-great aunt, aunt-in-law
- Grandmother, great grandmother, great-great grandmother, great-great-great grandmother, step grandmother (meaning the subsequent wife of the child's natural grandfather), adoptive grandmother (meaning the mother of a parent who was adopted)
- Niece
- First cousin, first cousin once removed (meaning the first cousin of the dependent child's parent or the child of the dependent child's first cousin)
- Spouse of any individual listed in "Male" below.

MALE:

- Brother, adoptive brother, stepbrother, brother-in-law.
- Uncle, great-uncle, great-great uncle, uncle-in-law
- Grandfather, great grandfather, great-great grandfather (meaning the subsequent husband of the child's natural grandmother), adoptive grandfather (meaning the father of a parent who was adopted)
- Nephew
- First cousin, first cousin once removed (meaning the first cousin of the dependent child's parent or the child of the dependent child's first cousin)
- Spouse of any individual listed in "Female" above.

III. REFERRAL PROCEDURES

Referrals to the Kinship Care (KC) Program may be made only from Public Assistance (PA) and Child Welfare (CW) staff following the procedures outlined below. All other agency programs (Child Support, Adult Services, etc.) must make referrals through Service Intake when KC services are indicated.

A. PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA) REFERRED CASES

For current or new FA cases, the PA worker will make referrals when requested to do so by the related caregiver or it becomes evident in the interview that the family needs KC services. The PA worker will indicate the family situation on the KC-06 form, including whether a referral has been sent to the domestic violence (DV) specialist.

B. CHILD WELFARE (CW) REFERRED CASES

A referral may be made by the service intake, foster care, protective services, or other CW staff, and should be processed as stated below. NOTE: Flex funds must be accessed first, if available, to cover the requested service if there is an existing Child Welfare case at the time of the KC referral or one will be opened.

NEED FOR SERVICES

The family must be experiencing circumstances which threaten the placement/living arrangement of the child with the related caregiver to the extent that foster care may be required. Such circumstances may include:

1. special needs such as emergency clothing at initial placement, household furniture to provide adequate accommodations, baby products, mandatory school related expenses, etc.,
2. emergencies such as overdue rent or utilities, lack of transportation, disrepair of vehicles, etc., must be connected to the child's presence and needs.
3. lack of resources to meet court costs for custody proceedings or
4. lack of resources to pay for counseling.

To meet the need for services requirement, the KC worker's evaluation must conclude that the placement/living arrangement is in danger of deterioration unless addressed by the provision of services. Completion of KC-02, Checklist for Foster Care Prevention is required on all cases as part of this evaluation. A score of at least 10 is required.

C. INCOME

The family's income must be less than or equal to 200% of the federal poverty level. Gross earned income of all adult (meaning individuals 18 and over) family members living in the home is considered in the determination. Unearned income of children who are the basis for the need for services is to be counted and includes social security benefits, SSI, Child Support and other contributions.

Payments through Welfare Reform Kinship Care Initiative Funds

Payments that cannot be made through FACETS for any Kinship Care supportive services must be made from the county Welfare Reform Kinship Care Initiative Funds following usual procedures. That usually includes filling out a Disbursement Request and Authorization Form and submitting to the county Finance Officer. There may be other forms required by the county. **Monies spent on Kinship Care services from the Initiative Funds must be accounted for separately from other expenditures.**

Payments from the WR/Kinship Care Program through Initiative Funds are usually made payable to the provider of the service and not to the client. Any monies paid from this fund as well as funds reimbursed to the client through FACETS are subject to the monetary limits provided in Kinship Care policy.

This TANF Funded, Family Assistance Division, KinShare Low Income Kinship Care Program is NOT the Kinship Guardianship Subsidy Program issued through the Alabama Department of Human Resources, Children and Family Services Division.