Kinship Navigator Program

Chapter 17c describes Kinship Navigator Program available to kinship caregivers. Information collected from caregivers is stored in the GetCare data management system.

Ask the Expert

If you have questions or need clarification about the content in this chapter, please contact:

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BACKGROUND

Kinship caregivers are resource families that have a prior relationship with a child or youth, either as relatives or suitable persons. Relatives have a relationship through blood, marriage, or custom. Suitable persons, sometimes called "fictive kin" have a preexisting relationship with the child. They can be neighbors, godparents, schoolteachers, coaches, family friends, or non-relative "aunties."

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

Caregiver Eligibility

Persons eligible to receive services from KNP may include a kinship caregiver as defined in the Background Section above, raising a child(ren) aged 18 or younger, not theirs by birth, unless the youth who is older than 18 attends high school.

Role of the Kinship Navigator

The role of the Kinship Navigator is to connect kinship caregivers with community resources, such as health, financial, legal services, support groups, training, and emergency funds, federal and state benefits.

HISTORY OF WASHINGTON STATE'S KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

The Kinship Navigator Program began in Washington State in July of 2004 when Casey Family Programs (a member of the Washington State Kinship Oversight Committee/KCOC) funded and piloted two programs. As a result of the pilot, the Legislature funded the program in 2005 and as of 2023 has expanded to all Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) in WA state covering each county.

In 2016 the Legislature appropriated funding for the Tribal Kinship Navigator Program. As of 2023 there are seven participating Tribes (Lummi, Samish, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Colville, Yakama Nation, Makah, Quileute).

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE KINSHIP NAVIGATOR

- The Kinship Navigator will provide information and assistance along with supportive listening to kinship caregivers of all ages who are raising children or

planning to do so. Navigators need to be knowledgeable about relevant federal and state benefits, as well as local resources.

- The Kinship Navigator will provide outreach focusing on serving relatives from geographically isolated and historically marginalized communities.
- The Kinship Navigator will provide follow-up with kinship caregivers as needed.
- The Kinship Navigator must develop strong collaborative working relationships with groups and agencies that work with kinship caregivers.
- The Kinship Navigator will help educate the community about the needs of kinship families and available resources.
- The Kinship Navigator will support the caregivers while mediating with state agency staff and/or service providers to ensure the caregivers receive services for which they are eligible.
- The Kinship Navigator will participate in available training and statewide Kinship Navigator meetings. Attendance in Kinship Care Oversight Committee (KCOC) meetings is encouraged.
- The Kinship Navigator must record and report information as outlined below.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE KNP

Data Collection/Program Reporting

All client data is entered into the GetCare database. (Tribal Navigator Programs will either use GetCare or excel spreadsheet).

Data collection steps include:

1: Demographic data service report (GetCare)

2: Kinship Program Intake Assessment (annually-GetCare)

3: Time spent on client support (Case Coordination units in GetCare)

Program reporting includes:

- Case examples (semi-annually to HCLA Kinship Program Manager)
- Client satisfaction (conducted annually at the program level)

If Kinship Care Support Program (KCSP) disbursement is applicable, please consult chapter 17b of the Long Term Care Manual (LCM) for required support documentation.

BUDGET/ALLOWABLE COSTS

Funds are available starting in FY 2024 to support at least one Kinship Navigator FTE at each Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Allowable costs include staff, travel, translation and interpreter services, data collection support, supplies and administration (not to exceed 10%) and equipment only when directly necessary to provide Kinship Navigator services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please see find the website under related links or contact Rosalyn Alber.

RESOURCES

Related Administrative Policies

- Kinship Navigator Program MB

Related Links and Websites

- https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/home-and-community-services-kinship-care/kinship-care

CONTACTS

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ACRONYMS

- HCLA-Home and Community Living Administration
- KNP-Kinship Navigator Program
- KCOC-Kinship Caregiver Oversight Committee
- KCSP- Kinship Caregiver Support Program
- AAA- Area Agencies on Aging
- RCW- Revised Code of Washington

REVISION HISTORY

DATE	MADE BY	CHANGE(S)	MB #