



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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State providing financial assistance to family foster caregivers

Email Correspondence is most efficient way to check eligibility

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 5, 2018) – The Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) is allocating additional resources to determine eligibility of financial assistance payments to certain relative and fictive kin caregivers with children placed in their home by CHFS.

An October 2017 federal court ruling by the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in the case *D.O. v. Glisson* requires that Kentucky must pay relatives who serve as foster parents in the same manner it pays adults who are licensed as foster parents if the CHFS Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) places the child with the relative, has conducted a home study and background checks, and if CHFS either retains custody of the child or has transferred the child from CHFS' custody to the temporary custody of the relative or fictive kin. The ruling also includes fictive kin – close family friends – who provide foster care for children removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. Payment amounts vary depending on a child's needs but average about \$750 a month per child.

Individuals are encouraged to email CHFS at: DCBSChildProtection@ky.gov if they think they might qualify. Please include your name, phone number, child(ren) name(s) and date of birth for each child. Email correspondence is the most efficient way to start the process of determining eligibility.

If email is not an option, families and caregivers who think they may be eligible for the relative or fictive kin payment can contact the CHFS Kinship Support Hotline at 877-565-5608.

In response to the high volume of inquiries, which total more than 3,000 calls since the hotline number was announced in mid-February, several steps have been implemented to streamline the process. CHFS has increased the number of staff assigned to field calls, hired temporary workers to process the calls received, and increased telephone and message capacity.

Specialists have been assigned to review cases. Often times, eligibility determination requires a search of the court's file for a DNA-9 Permanent Custody Order, which requires field personnel to travel to the local courthouse where the file is located. The Office of Legal Services within the Cabinet and the DCBS Commissioner's Office determined that eligibility should be resolved within 45 days. Once eligibility is determined, CHFS will make payments retroactive to the date it was contacted. If you are not eligible for payments, you may be referred to other supportive services.



CHFS began making payments to the original plaintiffs in the court ruling in early December. To date, payments have begun for 35 other relative and fictive kin caregivers who were determined to be eligible for the payments under the ruling.

DCBS estimates that in state fiscal year 2019 – July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019 – *D.O. v. Glisson* will affect approximately 1,590 children whose relative or fictive caregivers will receive about \$14.3 million in funding assistance. In state fiscal year 2020 – July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020 – the ruling will affect approximately 1,700 children, whose relative or fictive caregivers will receive about \$15.3 million.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.