

<b>ACF</b>  <b>Administration</b>  <b>for Children</b>  <b>and Families</b>	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  Administration on Children, Youth and Families	
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	<b>3. Originating Office:</b> Children's Bureau	
	<b>4. Key Words:</b> MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program; Family First Prevention Services Act; Kinship Navigator Programs	

### PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

**TO:** State, Tribal and Territorial Agencies Administering or Supervising the Administration of Title IV-E of the Social Security Act

**SUBJECT:** Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Funding Available to Develop and Enhance or to Evaluate Kinship Navigator Programs

**LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES:** Public Law 119-4, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025

**PURPOSE:** This Program Instruction (PI) provides guidance to state, territorial and tribal title IV-E agencies on the actions required to apply for title IV-B, subpart 2 funding to support the development, enhancement or evaluation of kinship navigator programs. These are federal fiscal year (FY) 2025 funds, provided in P.L. 119-4, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025.

**BACKGROUND:** The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), enacted as part of P.L.115-123, amended the Social Security Act (the Act) to allow title IV-E agencies to receive funding for evidence-based kinship navigator programs that meet certain criteria. The amendment at section 474(a)(7) of the Act authorized title IV-E agencies to claim 50 percent Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for allowable kinship navigator program costs beginning no earlier than October 1, 2018. On November 30, 2018, the Children's Bureau (CB) issued [ACYF-CB-PI-18-11](#) providing guidance on the requirements for participating in the title IV-E Kinship Navigator Program.

As enacted in FFPSA, the law requires that programs funded under the title IV-E Kinship Navigator program must meet practice criteria of promising, supported, or well-supported in accordance with HHS criteria and be approved by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse (section 471(e)(4)(C) of the Act). The [Prevention Services Clearinghouse website](#) includes information on the kinship navigator program models that have been reviewed and rated. To date, the Clearinghouse has rated seven kinship navigator programs as meeting promising, supported or well-supported practices, making them available for use under the title IV-E Kinship Navigator Program: Ohio's Kinship Supports

Intervention/ProtectOhio; Arizona Kinship Support Services; Colorado Kinconnected Kinship Navigator Program; Foster Kinship Navigator Program; 30 Days to Family, Kinship Interdisciplinary Navigation Technologically Advanced-Model (KIN-TECH) and the Washington State Kinship Navigator program. The Prevention Services Clearinghouse continues to review additional models. The Children's Bureau encourages title IV-E agencies to review these programs and consider applying to participate in the title IV-E Kinship Navigator program, following the guidance in [ACYF-CB-PI-18-11](#).

To help title IV-E agencies prepare to participate in the title IV-E Kinship Navigator Program while additional kinship navigator program models eligible for title IV-E reimbursement are being developed and identified, Congress, through annual appropriations bills, has set aside discretionary funding appropriated under title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Social Security Act in each of FYs 2018 - 2025. While \$20 million was set aside for this purpose in FYs 2018 - 2023, in FY 2024 and 2025, the Congress appropriated \$10 million<sup>1</sup> in title IV-B, subpart 2 funding for kinship navigator programs.

The funds are available to all states, as well as to territories and Tribes directly operating the title IV-E Foster Care, Adoption Assistance and, if applicable, optional Guardianship Assistance and Prevention Services programs. The funds are to be used to develop, enhance or evaluate kinship navigator programs. This PI provides guidance on how to apply for FY 2025 title IV-B, subpart 2 Kinship Navigator funding.

## **INFORMATION ON FY 2025 TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2 KINSHIP NAVIGATOR FUNDING:**

*Eligible Applicants:* States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and 14 Tribes, directly operating a title IV-E program are eligible to apply for the FY 2025 title IV-B, subpart 2 annual appropriation to develop, enhance or evaluate kinship navigator programs. Eligible Tribal IV-E agencies are listed in Attachment A. Please direct any questions regarding eligibility to Federal Project Officer Liliana Chakrabarti in the Children's Bureau Central Office at [liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov).

*Estimated allotments:* Grants will be distributed as explained below to all title IV-E agencies that apply for funding. If any eligible applicants choose not to apply, funds will be reallocated to all other eligible applicants approved for funding.

States and Territorial Title IV-E Agencies: The statutory formula is based on the average monthly number of children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, with a minimum award of \$200,000. However, based on the total funds available in FY 2025, there will not be sufficient funds to provide all recipients this minimum grant award if all eligible jurisdictions apply. Therefore, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) anticipates awarding all agencies that apply an equal amount that would bring all recipients as close to the minimum award as

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<sup>1</sup> A portion of the appropriation is reserved for federal research, evaluation, technical assistance, leaving approximately \$9.5 million available for kinship navigator grants.

possible, given the total funds available. ACF estimates that each state and territory will receive an allotment of approximately \$173,868. Actual awards may be higher if some agencies decide not to apply for FY 2025 funds.

Tribal Title IV-E Agencies: The statutory formula is based on the Tribal population count of children and youth under age 21, with a minimum award of \$25,000 per Tribe. However, based on the total funds available in FY 2025, there will not be sufficient funds to provide all recipients this minimum grant award if all eligible Tribes apply. Therefore, ACF anticipates awarding eligible Tribes that apply an equal amount that would bring all recipients as close to the minimum award as possible, given the funds available. ACF estimates that each Tribe will receive an allotment of approximately \$20,357. Actual awards may be higher if some Tribes decide not to apply for FY 2025 funds.

*Approved Activities:* Title IV-E agencies may use these funds to develop, enhance or evaluate kinship navigator programs, as described in section 427(a)(1) of the Social Security Act, as follows:

(1) a kinship navigator program to assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs, and to promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served, which program—

(A) shall be coordinated with other State or local agencies that promote service coordination or provide information and referral services, including the entities that provide 2–1–1 or 3–1–1 information systems where available, to avoid duplication or fragmentation of services to kinship care families;

(B) shall be planned and operated in consultation with kinship caregivers and organizations representing them, youth raised by kinship caregivers, relevant government agencies, and relevant community-based or faith-based organizations;

(C) shall establish information and referral systems that link (via toll-free access) kinship caregivers, kinship support group facilitators, and kinship service providers to—

(i) each other;

(ii) eligibility and enrollment information for Federal, State, and local benefits;

(iii) relevant training to assist kinship caregivers in caregiving and in obtaining benefits and services; and

(iv) relevant legal assistance and help in obtaining legal services;

(D) shall provide outreach to kinship care families, including by establishing, distributing, and updating a kinship care website, or other relevant guides or outreach materials;

(E) shall promote partnerships between public and private agencies, including schools, community based or faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies, to increase their knowledge of the needs of kinship care families and other individuals who are willing and able to be foster parents for children in foster care under the responsibility of the State who are themselves parents to promote better services for those families;

(F) may establish and support a kinship care ombudsman with authority to intervene and help kinship caregivers access services; and

(G) may support any other activities designed to assist kinship caregivers in obtaining benefits and services to improve their caregiving.

*Project Period:* The FY 2025 Title IV-B, subpart 2 Kinship Navigator Grant must be spent on activities conducted between October 1, 2024 and September 30, 2026. The title IV-E agency must obligate the funds by September 30, 2026 and liquidate the funds within 120 days by January 28, 2027.

*Match:* There is no match requirement.

*Financial Reporting Requirements:* Title IV-E agencies are required to submit an electronic SF-425 for the Kinship Navigator grant through the Payment Management System (PMS). For more information on gaining access to and using the PMS system, please contact the PMS Help Desk at 1- 877-614-5533 or for more information see <https://pms.psc.gov>.

Title IV-E agencies must submit the SF-425 for expenditures under the title IV-B, subpart 2 Kinship Navigator grant at the end of each 12-month period (October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025, and October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026) of the two-year expenditure period. The SF-425 covering the first 12-month budget period is the interim report and the report covering the entire grant period is the final report.

The interim report is due 90 days after the end of the first 12-month period; the final report is due 120 days after the obligation period ends. Note that while the Kinship Navigator grant funding was provided through the appropriation for title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Act, these reports must be submitted separately from reports filed for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. A negative grant award will recoup any unobligated and/or unliquidated funds reported on the final SF-425 for the Kinship Navigator grant.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Each title IV-E agency applying for funds must submit the following information to CB by **no later June 6, 2025**.

- *FY 2025 Kinship Navigator Funding Request Form:* Complete the FY 2025 Kinship Navigator Program Funding Request Form (Attachment B), signed by an authorized official from the state or Tribe. Please also include information on an agency representative to contact for any programmatic questions on the submission.

- *Kinship Navigator Program Narrative.* Provide a brief narrative outlining the activities that will be carried out using the FY2025 title IV-B, subpart 2 Kinship Navigator grant funds. The funds may be used to develop, enhance and/or evaluate kinship navigator programs, consistent with the specifications described in section 427(a)(1) of the Act.

In the narrative, please describe:

- How the agency has collaborated with agencies experienced in serving kinship families caring for children in foster care and outside the foster care system.
- Evaluation or other activities the agency is taking to meet the evidence-based standards required for its kinship navigator program to qualify for funding under the title IV-E Kinship Navigator program.

CB encourages title IV-E agencies using funds for evaluation to ensure that the evaluation is appropriate for consideration in the review of kinship navigator programs by the Prevention Services Clearinghouse. Title IV-E agencies are encouraged to document the [evaluation plan methodology](#), study design and findings of its kinship navigator program. The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse has various [resources](#) to learn more about the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse standards and procedures.

- *Submissions:* Submit the FY 2025 title IV-B, subpart 2 Kinship Navigator Grant Funding Request Form (Attachment B) and the narrative on the planned use of funding to Federal Project Officer Liliana Chakrabarti in the Children's Bureau Central Office at [liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov).
- *Progress Reporting:* Title IV-E agencies are required to provide an update on their use of these funds and accomplishments in the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) submission that will be due June 30, 2026.

**Paperwork Reduction Act:**

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. The Control Number for this OMB approved information collection is 0970-0426, approved through July 31, 2026.

**Inquiries To:** Liliana Chakrabarti, Children's Bureau, [liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:liliana.chakrabarti@acf.hhs.gov).

Joseph Bock  
Acting Commissioner  
Administration on Children, Youth  
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**Disclaimer Language**

*The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way, unless specifically incorporated into a contract. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law.*

Attachment A: Eligible Tribal Title IV-E Agencies

Attachment B: FY 2025 Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Kinship Navigator Funding Request Form