

STATE OF NEW YORK

10210

IN ASSEMBLY

May 6, 2022

Introduced by COMMITTEE ON RULES -- (at request of M. of A. Hevesi) --
read once and referred to the Committee on Children and Families

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing a
statewide kinship navigator program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The title heading of title 10 of article 6 of the social
2 services law, as added by section 4 of part F of chapter 58 of the laws
3 of 2010, is amended to read as follows:

4 KINSHIP GUARDIANSHIP ASSISTANCE AND STATEWIDE
5 KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

6 § 2. The social services law is amended by adding a new section 458-g
7 to read as follows:

8 § 458-g. Statewide kinship navigator program. 1. The statewide kinship
9 navigator program (hereinafter the "program"), is hereby established
10 within the office of children and family services.

11 2. Such program shall assist kinship caregivers who are seeking infor-
12 mation or assistance related to services and benefits that may be avail-
13 able to the caregiver or child. Within appropriations available, such
14 information and assistance shall include but not be limited to:

15 (a) referral services;

16 (b) access to a free legal consultation for kinship caregivers in need
17 of legal assistance or assistance understanding their legal rights;

18 (c) assistance applying for publicly funded benefits including but
19 not limited to public assistance, Medicaid, child health plus, child
20 care subsidies, and the supplemental nutrition assistance program
21 (SNAP); and

22 (d) information related to services available pursuant to section
23 three hundred ninety-two of this chapter.

24 3. For purposes of this section, "kinship caregiver" shall have the
25 same meaning as defined by subdivision twenty-two of section three
26 hundred seventy-one of this chapter, who is currently caring for a child
27 or is a prospective kinship caregiver. It shall also include relative

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD14311-04-2

1 guardians and prospective relative guardians, as defined in section four
2 hundred fifty-eight-a of this title.

3 4. (a) The commissioner shall administer the statewide kinship naviga-
4 tor program, either directly or through contract. In addition to provid-
5 ing information and assistance, as required by subdivision two of this
6 section, the program shall also have the following responsibilities,
7 within appropriations available, which shall include but not be limited
8 to:

9 (i) statewide coordination of services, including coordination of
10 efforts among the office of children and family services, the department
11 of health, the office for the aging, the education department, the
12 office of temporary and disability assistance, the office of addiction
13 services and supports, the office of mental health, the office for
14 people with developmental disabilities, local social services districts
15 and relevant community-based organizations;

16 (ii) the provision of information as to the availability of, eligibil-
17 ity criteria for, and application procedure for available benefits and
18 services;

19 (iii) compilation of statistical data from state and local agencies
20 and dissemination to the public;

21 (iv) operation of a toll-free telephone number that may be called
22 to obtain basic information about the rights of, and services available
23 to kinship caregivers;

24 (v) operation of local respite services;

25 (vi) training related to caring for children; and

26 (vii) the consolidation of existing programs with existing contractors
27 that are satisfactorily performing as determined by the office of chil-
28 dren and family services and the expansion of service provision to
29 comply with federally approved standards; such consolidation plan shall
30 provide for submission of information regarding outcome-based measures
31 that demonstrate quality of services provided and program effectiveness
32 to the office of children and family services in a form and manner
33 and at such times as required by such office.

34 (b) The commissioner shall divide the state into not less than seven
35 and not greater than twelve regions in order for the kinship care navi-
36 gator program to develop regional expertise in carrying out the
37 provisions of this section.

38 5. The commissioner shall make grants, within amounts appropriated
39 therefor, to a community-based organization or consortia of community-
40 based organizations to operate the statewide kinship navigator program.

41 6. The commissioner shall promulgate any rules and regulations neces-
42 sary for the implementation of this section.

43 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.