

STATE OF NEW YORK

478--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 4, 2023

Introduced by Sens. SALAZAR, HARCKHAM -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Judiciary -- recommitted to the Committee on Judiciary in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing the kinship legal network program

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

1 Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 501-i
2 to read as follows:

3 § 501-i. Kinship legal network program. 1. There is hereby created
4 within the office of children and family services a kinship legal
5 network program. Such program shall be comprised of not-for-profit legal
6 services organizations and not-for-profit agencies serving kinship care-
7 givers, as defined by subdivision twenty-two of section three hundred
8 seventy-one of the social services law.

9 2. The kinship legal network program shall:

10 (a) provide legal representation to kinship caregivers in matters
11 including, but not limited to:

12 (i) custody and guardianship;

13 (ii) child support;

14 (iii) abuse and neglect;

15 (iv) adoption;

16 (v) eligibility for public benefits, including, but not limited to,
17 public assistance and supplemental nutrition assistance program bene-
18 fits; and

19 (vi) foster care certification; and

20 (b) establish and coordinate a statewide kinship information and
21 referral network.

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

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1 3. (a) The office of children and family services shall provide grants
2 of not less than eight million dollars annually to eligible not-for-pro-
3 fit legal services organizations and not-for-profit agencies serving
4 kinship caregivers to provide kinship legal network services pursuant to
5 subdivision two of this section.

6 (b) Each not-for-profit legal organization shall be awarded no more
7 than fifteen percent of the funding provided pursuant to paragraph (a)
8 of this subdivision to coordinate and support the kinship legal network
9 program through the following activities:

10 (i) data collection;

11 (ii) assisting in preparing the report required pursuant to subdivi-
12 sion four of this section;

13 (iii) task force meetings; and

14 (iv) technical assistance.

15 4. The commissioner of children and family services, on or before
16 October first, two thousand twenty-five, and biannually thereafter,
17 shall submit a report to the chair of the senate finance committee and
18 the chair of the assembly ways and means committee. Such report shall
19 include, but not be limited to:

20 (a) a review of the basis for selection of entities participating in
21 the kinship legal network program;

22 (b) the administrative method used to carry out the kinship legal
23 network program;

24 (c) the number of kinship caregivers assisted through the kinship
25 legal network program and whether their legal matter was resolved by
26 counsel and advice or representation at an administrative or court
27 proceeding, and the outcomes of such proceedings; and

28 (d) whether such outcomes were reached by settlement or administrative
29 or judicial decision.

30 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.