



Special Revenue Account Annual Report: Kinship Navigator Program

Report to the Legislature

September 2025

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 3.197, requires the disclosure of the cost to prepare this report. The estimated cost of preparing this report is \$500.

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Contents

Special Revenue Account Annual Report: Kinship Navigator Program1

 Contents3

I. Legislation.....4

II. Report.....4

I. Legislation

This report is provided pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 2024, Section 142A.451, Subdivision 3, which is reproduced below. This section of statute had previously been section 256.4794 before this program was transferred from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). This overall section of statute establishes a grant program for Kinship Navigator programs as outlined by the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). Grant funding is to be used to assess kinship caregiver needs, provide connections to local and statewide resources, provide case management to assist with complex cases, and provide support to meet caregiver needs. As shown below, funding for this effort is held in a special revenue account and an annual report on the uses of the funding is required to be submitted to the legislature.

Subd. 3. **Special revenue account established.**

(a) Funds appropriated under this section shall be transferred to a special revenue account. The commissioner shall retain federal reimbursement generated under this section. Federal reimbursement shall be transferred to the special revenue account and is appropriated to the commissioner for the purposes of this section.

(b) The commissioner must provide an annual report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over health and human services policy and finance that identifies the amount of funds appropriated and transferred to this account under paragraph (a) and how the funds were used.

II. Report

Grant funding for the Kinship Navigator Program is being distributed to implement Foster Kinship, a Kinship Navigator model under the FFPSA. The Foster Kinship model is a Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse-approved, evidence-based program designed to increase kinship caregivers' capacity to provide safe, stable and nurturing homes to support children's and youths' well-being. Program services focus on connecting kinship families to networks of social support, providing tangible resources and increasing baseline resources by ensuring understanding of and access to available resources.

DCYF has executed contracts with four private organizations to provide these navigation services for relative caregivers. Agencies began implementing the model with fidelity monitoring on March 1, 2025. Agencies are required to submit monthly monitoring reports and attend a monthly meeting with the department and Foster Kinship staff to consult on cases and share resources.

DCYF prioritized grants with federal Families First Transition Act (FFTA) funding in the initial three-year contract period. However, one of the four organizations mentioned above did use approximately \$90,000 in state funding in FY 2025. FFTA funds expire on Sept. 30, 2025. Once those funds expire, the remaining three organizations will begin using state dollars in state fiscal year 2026. During the 2023 legislative session (Chapter 70, Article 20, Section 2, subdivision 22, paragraph h) state funding was appropriated for this program. This funding included \$764,000 each year in FY 2024 and FY 2025, \$506,000 in FY 2026, and a continuing base of \$507,000 starting in

FY 2027. Because this funding is transferred to a special revenue account, it remains available beyond the biennium for which it was originally appropriated.

The department is currently working to revise the required federal cost allocation report to begin claiming Title IV-E reimbursement at a 50% Federal Financial Participation (FFP) rate on all Kinship Navigator Program costs. All reimbursed dollars will be transitioned into the special revenue account to be redirected towards additional kinship navigator programming.