

To: Area Administrators/Assistant Area Administrators  
Bureau Directors  
County Departments of Community Program Directors  
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities  
Services Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
Direct Services Supervisors  
Licensing Chiefs/Section Chiefs  
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators

From: Susan N. Dreyfus  
Administrator  
Division of Children and Family Services

1997 Wisconsin Act 105 creates a "Long-Term Kinship Care Program" which is essentially an extension of the Kinship Care Program created under s.48.57(3m), Stats. The statutory authority for the new program is found at s.48.57(3n) [attached].

The essentials of this new program are that an agency (county department, tribe or the Department in Milwaukee County) may make a Long-Term Kinship Care payment to a relative if the following criteria are met:

1. The relative is a guardian of the child under s.48.977(2), Stats.
2. The agency inspects the relative's home, interviews the relative and finds that a long-term placement with the relative would be in the child's best interests.
3. A criminal background check of the relative, other adult residents of the home or employees or prospective employees indicates no convictions for offenses that would adversely affect the child. (Note: This is a reduced standard from the current Kinship Care Program.)
4. The relative indicates that he or she has no arrests or convictions which would adversely affect the child and the relative indicates that, to the best of his or her knowledge, none of the other individuals identified in #3 have any such arrests or convictions.
5. The relative cooperates with the agency in the application process.
6. The relative is not receiving a Kinship Care or foster care payment for the child (this simply means that the relative cannot receive a "regular" Kinship Care payment or foster care payment and a Long-Term Kinship Care payment at the same time for the same child).

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#### DOCUMENT SUMMARY

This memo describes the eligibility requirements for the new Long-Term Kinship Care Program and is accompanied by the new law.

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7. The child is not receiving SSI.
8. The relative and the agency enter into a written agreement indicating that the relative will provide long-term care for the child and that the agency will make Kinship Care payments until the earliest of the following:
  - a. The child turns 18.
  - b. The child dies.
  - c. The child is placed outside the relative's home by court order or voluntary placement agreement under s.48.63, Stats.
  - d. The child no longer resides with the relative.
  - e. The guardianship under s.48.977 is terminated.
  - f. The child moves out of state.

The agency must enter into a written agreement with the relative if items #1 - #7 are met and the relative expresses a willingness to enter into the agreement.

Essentially all of the other requirements of the "regular" Kinship Care Program (e.g., referral of parent to child support, application for the child for Medical Assistance) also apply to Long-Term Kinship Care.

The payment under the Long-Term Kinship Care Program is the same as Kinship Care (i.e., \$215 per month).

While no additional funding has been appropriated for this program, there should not be a fiscal impact because most individuals eligible for a Long-Term Kinship Care payment would already be eligible for Kinship Care.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Kinship Care Specialist  
Division of Safety and Permanence  
608-422-6921