



2021 Governor's Budget for New York State's Kinship Families

Local Kinship Programs

Continue local kinship program funding at \$338,750 and increase to \$1,288,750, to reflect OCFS's one-time deficit addition.

Since 2016, the Governor has funded the local case management programs at \$338,750 (enough to fund 2 programs), and the legislature has added \$1,900,000 for a total of \$2,238,750 that funds 14 local kinship "case management" programs. In FY 2020, the legislative funding did not get the planned Senate contribution of \$950,000 in the final budget. OCFS stepped in and found dollars to make up for the deficit and the RFP was fully funded for this year, but OCFS cannot commit to continuing to fund this deficit. Based upon the final funding, new awards were announced this past summer to fund 14 programs serving 25 counties.

Letter dated June 12, 2020 OCFS Commissioner Poole:

"As you know, Governor Cuomo and OCFS are committed to our mission of promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of NYS's children, families and communities. OCFS recognizes the importance of the services local kinship programs provide to informal kinship families and the need to support the continuation of these programs. It is for this reason that OCFS has identified funds to support 14 kinship caregiver programs whose contract term will begin on September 1, 2020."

We request the Governor maintain his commitment to supporting kinship families by continuing to fund these programs that assist families in maintaining safety, stability, and permanency for children in their homes.

NYS Kinship Navigator

Continue NYS Kinship Navigator funding at \$220,500 and increase to \$320,500.

Since 2010, the Governor has funded the Kinship Navigator at \$220,500, and since 2016 the legislature has added \$100,000 (total funding: \$320,500). The statewide Kinship Navigator is the only available service serving all kinship families in 37 counties and its workload continues to grow as Families First incentivizes the use of kin to avoid foster care.

The Kinship Navigator helps over 3,000 callers each year by connecting them to kinship resources such as financial benefits, permanency information, and facilitating referrals to local resources. Its website serves as the central database for all NYS's kinship information on more than 50 topics ranging from obtaining a birth certificate and enrolling children in school to filling out applications for college student loan aid.

The Kinship Navigator is entering its third year of a federally funded initiative to evaluate the effectiveness of assisting caregivers virtually. Virtual assistance is especially relevant during the COVID pandemic. The Navigator has collaborated with the Center for Human Services Research to develop evidence-based services suitable to qualify for matching federal Title IV-E funds

We request that the Governor maintain the Navigator's funding and going into this year, consider full funding at \$320,500.

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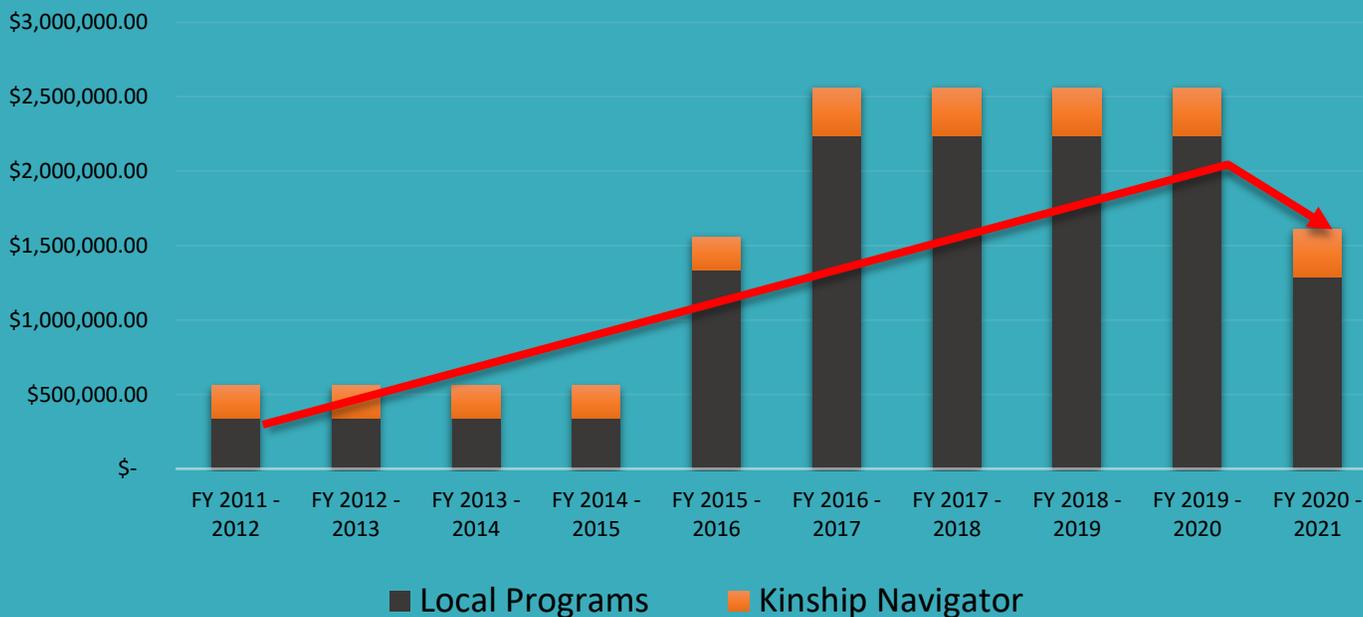
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Kinship Program Funding 2011-2021



NYS funds 14 local kinship programs (serving 25 counties) and one statewide Kinship Navigator