

2021 Legislative Budget for New York State's Kinship Families

Local Kinship Programs

Restore the legislative addition for local kinship programs of \$1,900,000 to fully fund 14 local kinship care programs

Since 2016, the Governor has funded the local case management programs at \$338,750, 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, while the Assembly still added \$950,000. OCFS stepped in and found dollars to make up for the deficit but cannot commit to this yearly. Based upon the final funding, new awards were announced to fund 14 programs serving 25 counties. In his 2021-22 Executive Budget, the Governor provided \$322,000 for these programs. **As of January 2021, OCFS has not executed contracts with the programs.**

The 2021 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act approved states to draw down a 100% match for dollars spent by the States on kinship services. State funding programs is vital for federal matching dollar eligibility.

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.”

The local kinship programs offer case management services to non-foster kinship families and are vital toward helping children achieve stability and permanency. Services include counseling, support groups, parenting skills training, youth development information, respite, legal information, access to financial assistance, and information, referrals, and linkages to other needed services.

NYS Kinship Navigator

Continue adding \$100,000 for NYS Kinship Navigator funding to fully fund at \$310,000.

Since 2010, the Governor has funded the Kinship Navigator (KN) at \$220,500, and since 2016 the legislature has added \$100,000 (total funding: \$320,500). In his 2021-22 Executive Budget, the Governor provided \$210,000 for KN.

The statewide Kinship Navigator is the only available resource to all kinship families (not restricted by custodial arrangements as other programs are) in all 62 counties. KN helps over 3,000 callers each year by connecting them to kinship resources such as financial benefits, permanency information, and facilitating referrals to local support services. 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.

In addition to a 100% federal match on funds spent by the State on kinship services, the 2021 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act approved a fourth year of funding to continue to evaluate kinship services for evidence-based criteria. The funding will be used to continue to enhance and evaluate services provided by the Navigator and local programs.

2020 Governor's Budget for New York State's Kinship Families

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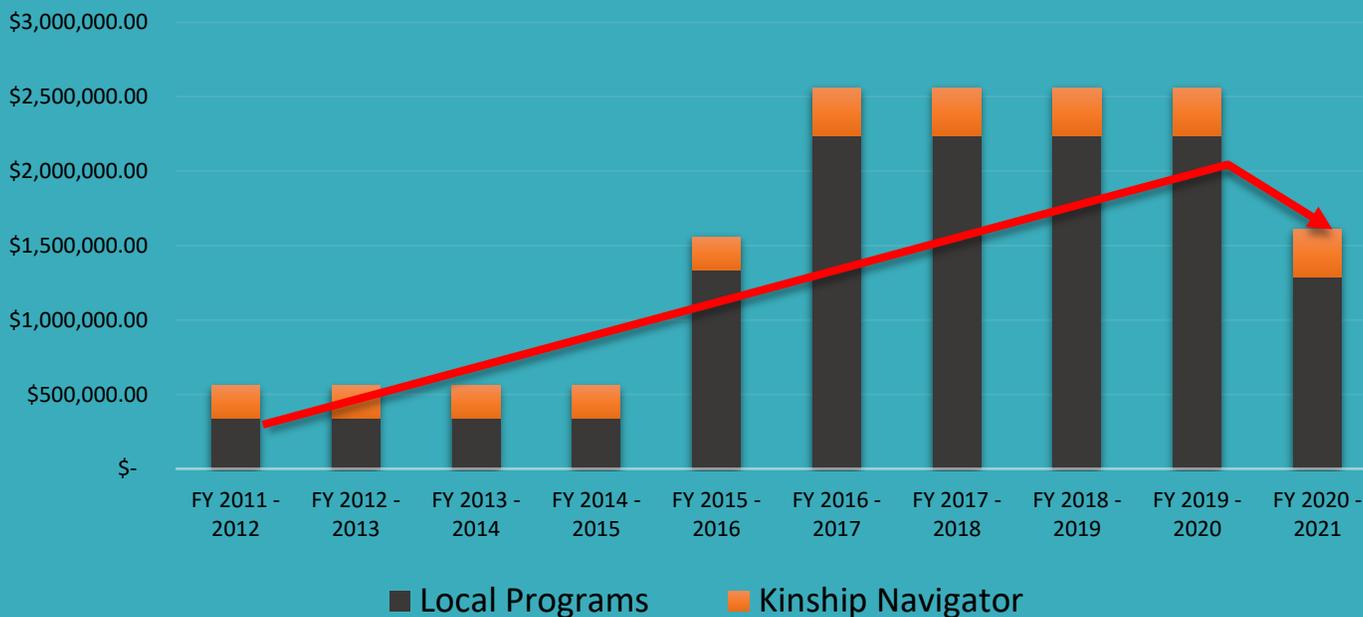
We request the Legislature restore their commitment to supporting kinship families by restoring \$1,900,000 to local kinship programs that assist families in maintaining safety, stability, and permanency for children in their homes.

NYS Kinship Navigator

Continue adding \$100,000 for NYS Kinship Navigator funding to fully fund at \$310,000.

We request that the Legislature maintain the statewide Kinship Navigator's funding addition of \$100,000 to maintain full funding.

Kinship Program Funding 2011-2021



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