



Office of Children and Family Services

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Administrative Directive

Transmittal:	22-OCFS-ADM-10
To:	Local Departments of Social Services Commissioners Executive Directors of Voluntary Authorized Agencies
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Welfare and Community Services
Date:	May 18, 2022
Subject:	Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) Online System Requirements
Suggested Distribution:	Commissioners of Social Services Directors of Social Services Child Protective Services Supervisors Child Welfare Supervisors Foster Care Supervisors CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	See section V.
Attachments:	None

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	NYS Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
18-OCFS-ADM-06 18-OCFS-ADM-03 16-OCFS-ADM-10 11-OCFS-ADM-03			Ch. 58 of the Laws of 2010 SSL §458-b		

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Directive (ADM) is to inform local departments of social services (LDSSs) and voluntary authorized agencies (VAs) of the requirement to process all Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) cases, including applications, agreements, and amendments, electronically through the KinGAP Online System. This ADM introduces this new system and sets forth requirements that users must follow to gain access.

II. Background

New York State’s subsidized KinGAP was implemented on April 1, 2011, as a result of Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2010 (Chapter 58). KinGAP is designed for a child in foster care to achieve a permanent

placement with an adult who had been the child's kinship¹ foster parent for at least six months and meets other eligibility criteria.² The program provides financial support and, in most cases, medical coverage for the child once the child is discharged from foster care to permanency with the kinship guardian.

The kinship foster parent must apply for KinGAP and enter into an agreement with the LDSS. The KinGAP agreement includes details of the financial assistance and medical coverage to be provided, including the monthly amount of assistance, how payment will be made, how payments may be adjusted, and additional services and benefits for which the guardian and child may be eligible. The KinGAP agreement may be amended after it is in effect based on certain circumstances, such as a request for an upgrade in payment based on a change in the child's condition.

Internal procedures for processing KinGAP applications, agreements, and amendments vary across the state. In 2016, in response to requests for an electronic system to create a streamlined and consistent process, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) began the development of the KinGAP Online System. The KinGAP Online System, which interfaces with CONNECTIONS, is used to process online submissions of KinGAP applications, agreements, and amendments. In November 2019, six LDSSs, including New York City (NYC), and one VA participated in a pilot to test the new system.

III. Program Implications

All KinGAP applications, agreements, and any amendments must be processed electronically through the KinGAP Online System when the system is launched.

The KinGAP Online System is separate from, but interfaces with, CONNECTIONS. CONNECTIONS remains the system of record for KinGAP activities. Information flows from a Family Services Stage in CONNECTIONS to the KinGAP Online System where the application, agreement, and any amendments are completed. These activities involve the entering of information, uploading of required documentation, supervisory review, and approval or denial by the assigned LDSS supervisor.

User roles will be assigned based on the tasks they are required to complete in the KinGAP Online System. All users will not have access to the same files. The tasks the user will perform in the system and the files that they will have access to are based on the user role assigned. The KinGAP Online System does not require users to change their existing CONNECTIONS business functions.

Each user must be assigned one of the following KinGAP security roles to access the online system:

- VA Caseworker or LDSS Caseworker
 - Users in this role enter the required KinGAP information, review prefilled forms, and upload supporting documents.
- VA Supervisor (optional)
 - Users in this role review the work of the VA caseworker.
- Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Mail Recipient
 - Users in this role move the KinGAP file from VA staff to ACS staff.
- LDSS Reviewer (optional, except for NYC)
 - Users in this role review supporting documents and eligibility requirements.

¹ For purposes of KinGAP eligibility, a kinship foster parent is a relative to any degree of consanguinity, a relative of a half-sibling of the child when the relative is also the prospective or appointed relative guardian of the half-sibling, or a person with a positive relationship with the child, including but not limited to a stepparent, godparent, neighbor, or family friend.

² SSL §458-b.

- LDSS Supervisor
 - Users in this role provide final approvals/denials.
 - Note: If an LDSS doesn't use the LDSS Reviewer role, then the LDSS supervisor reviews supporting documents and eligibility requirements.

As described in section IV, all users are required to have completed the KinGAP Online System training course to be permitted access to the system. Unique trainings have been developed to meet the needs of NYC and the rest of the state. The initial training for NYC users will be an in-person classroom training, while the initial training for the rest of the state will occur through a series of online Webex courses. Attendees will receive a Participant Manual, which provides an overview of the KinGAP system. This manual is a job aid and can be used as a stand-alone manual or as a reference when working in the KinGAP system. Hands-on simulation activities have also been developed to allow trainees to practice processes presented in the training. Links to the Hands-On Activities will be available in the KinGAP Online System for easy reference.

IV. Required Action

All KinGAP applications, agreements, and amendments must be processed through the KinGAP Online System beginning on the date that the system goes live. KinGAP cases with signed applications on such date may be completed and finalized outside of the system.

All users are required to complete the KinGAP Online System training course(s) prior to requesting access to the system. A schedule of classes will be available on the New York State Human Services Learning Center (HSLC) site. Training will be offered on an ongoing basis to accommodate the training requirement for new staff involved in the processing of KinGAP cases.

Requesting Access to the KinGAP Online System

LDSSs and applicable VAs must identify staff for whom new user access must be requested (staff involved in the completion, processing and/or approval of KinGAP applications, agreements, and/or amendments).

Initial Phase Access to the KinGAP Online System

It is expected that there will be a bulk load of new users to the KinGAP Online System when it first launches. For this initial period, the LDSSs and VAs must provide the following information to the appropriate CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff (contact information can be found on the OCFS website [here](#)) for each new user:

- LDSS/VA name (as applicable)
- SVC ID (CONNECTIONS User ID/Password, or Token User ID)
- Full name
- Work email
- Work phone
- KinGAP role (VA caseworker, VA supervisor, LDSS caseworker, LDSS supervisor, LDSS document reviewer, or ACS mail recipient)
- HSLC training certificate of completion

Ongoing Access to the KinGAP Online System

After the initial round of staff have been granted access to the KinGAP Online System, access for new users is requested through Information Technology Services Management (ITSM).

- Each LDSS must identify an authorized requester (the LDSS commissioner or a designated person acting on their behalf (i.e., security coordinator) who will submit an ITSM request for

user account access to the KinGAP Online System with the following information for each new user:

- LDSS name
 - SVC ID (CONNECTIONS User ID/Password, or Token User ID)
 - Full name
 - Work email
 - Work phone
 - KinGAP role (LDSS caseworker, LDSS supervisor, LDSS document reviewer, or ACS mail recipient)
 - HSLC training certificate of completion
- Each VA seeking access must identify an authorized requestor (executive director or a designated person acting on their behalf (i.e., security coordinator) who will submit a request to their CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff with the following information for each new user:
 - VA name
 - SVC ID (CONNECTIONS User ID/Password, or Token User ID)
 - Full name
 - Work email
 - Work phone
 - KinGAP role (VA caseworker or VA supervisor)
 - HSLC training certificate of completion

The CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff will submit an ITSM request for user account access to the KinGAP Online System for VAs.

Staff may only have access to the KinGAP Online System if their job duties require them to work within the system. If access is no longer required for reasons such as a change in job functions, then the user's access must be revoked. The LDSS must request that a user's access be revoked through ITSM, and a VA must make such request to their CONNECTIONS Regional Implementation Staff.

Questions regarding the KinGAP Online System may be directed to KinGAPHelp@ocfs.ny.gov.

V. Contacts

Buffalo Regional Office - Amanda Darling (716) 847-3145
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Rochester Regional Office - Christopher Bruno (585) 238-8201
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New York City Regional Office - Ronni Fuchs (212) 383-1788
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Native American Services - Heather LaForme (716) 847-3123
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Close to Home Oversight – Donte Blackwell (212) 383-7261
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VI. Effective Date

This ADM is effective Immediately.

Lisa Gharthey Ogundimu, Esq. _____

Issued by:

Name: Lisa Gharthey Ogundimu, Esq.

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Child Welfare and Community Services