



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Rebecca Kapusta
Interim Secretary

DATE: January 11, 2019

TO: Regional Managing Directors
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
Sheriff's Offices Conducting Child Protective Investigations

THROUGH: Rebecca Kapusta, Interim Secretary *Rebecca Kapusta*

FROM: JoShonda Guerrier, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare *JS*

SUBJECT: CFOP 170-10, Chapter 8 – Relative / Kinship Caregiver Support
Effective: January 15, 2019

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notification that CFOP 170-10, Providing Services and Support for Children in Care and for Caregivers, has been updated with the addition of Chapter 8, Relative / Kinship Caregiver Support, which has been finalized and is effective January 15, 2019 and replaces CFOP 175-79, Relative Caregiver Program.

BACKGROUND: The new CFOP 170-10, Chapter 8 – Relative / Kinship Caregiver Support, has been developed to align with s. 39.5085, Florida Statute. This new chapter includes the following:

- Relative Caregiver program eligibility for a minor parent and the minor parent's child
- Termination of Relative Caregiver Payments
- Updates to Terms and Definitions
- Kinship Navigation Services and Supports (upon availability)

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum and the new CFOP 170-10, Chapter 8, with all appropriate staff in the regions, circuits, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies, case management organizations, and sheriff offices conducting child protective investigations.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have questions or need clarification regarding this memorandum or the new CFOP chapter, please contact Jessica Johnson, Out-of-Home Care Specialist, at Jessica.Johnson@myflfamilies.com or 850-717-4491.

cc: Jennifer Lange, Assistant Secretary for Economic Self-Sufficiency
Regional Family and Community Services Directors
Center for Child Welfare
Grainne O'Sullivan, Children's Legal Services

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

CF OPERATING PROCEDURE
NO. 170-10

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
TALLAHASSEE, January 15, 2019

Child Welfare

PROVIDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND FOR CAREGIVERS

This operating procedure describes policy issues related to the provision of services and support needed for children and their caregivers to promote safety, permanency and well-being. This includes physical health, behavioral health, early learning, education, life skills, and caregiver supports. The integration of services includes proper assessment, referral, and coordination of services to promote child stability.

This operating procedure is applicable to all Department child welfare staff, child welfare community-based providers, child welfare subcontracted case management organizations, and all circuit/regional child protective and sheriff's office child protective investigations staff.

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY:



JOSHONDA GUERRIER
Assistant Secretary for
Child Welfare

SUMMARY OF REVISED, DELETED, OR ADDED MATERIAL

Adds. Chapter 8, entitled "Relative / Kinship Caregiver Support."

This operating procedure supersedes CCOP 170-10 dated December 15, 2018.

OPR: Office of Child Welfare

DISTRIBUTION: X: OSGC; ASGO; Region/Circuit Child Welfare staff.

Chapter 8

RELATIVE / KINSHIP CAREGIVER SUPPORT

8-1. Purpose. This chapter describes the department's policies and procedures for supporting relatives caring for children placed by the child welfare system. The goal of supporting relatives is to help children achieve stability and well-being with caregiver(s) they know. This operating procedure applies to any child welfare professional responsible for placement of children with relative caregivers, ongoing case management, and kinship navigation. This chapter also applies to staff in the Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency (ESS) responsible for processing Relative Caregiver Program applications and payments.

8-2. Legal Authority.

a. Federal statutes, regulations, and policy statements:

(1) Social Security Act, 42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 471(a), 606, 607, 672, 673, 674, 675, 2131, 2132.

(2) 45 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 233.110, and Parts 1355 through 1356.

b. State statutes, administrative rules and plans:

(1) Section [39.5085](#), Florida Statute (F.S.).

(2) Section [414.095](#), F.S.

(3) [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\) State Plan](#).

(4) [Title IV-E State Plan](#).

(5) Rule [65C-28.008](#), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

(6) [ACCESS Florida Program Policy Manual](#).

8-3. Unified Home Study Requirements.

a. An Emergency Placement or Planned Placement home study of a relative caregiver must be completed and approved per CFOP 170-1, [Chapter 5](#). This includes the responsibility of the child welfare professional to:

(1) Determine whether the relative caregiver is able to provide a physically safe environment and a stable, supportive home.

(2) Determine the relative caregiver's financial security, resources, and child care arrangements.

(3) Determine and assist relative caregivers in accessing services and supports.

b. The home study must be completed and filed with the court prior to or at the time the relative placement is being considered as a placement for the child.

c. The department or Community-Based Care (CBC) Lead Agency shall not place a child or continue the placement of a child in a home with a relative caregiver if the results of the home study are unfavorable unless the court overrides the home study recommendation and orders the placement.

8-4. Relative Caregiver Support Options. The child welfare professional responsible for completing the relative caregiver home study or the Kinship Navigator (if applicable) must discuss with the caregiver kinship navigation services (if available) and supports that are available. Kinship navigation services offer supports and linkages to each relative and non-relative (fictive kin) to ensure timely access to essential supports including those noted below. The child welfare professional must explain that each program will determine whether or not the relative caregiver meets any eligibility criteria.

NOTE: If the relative caregiver is unable to access service supports contained in this operating procedure or any additional supports beneficial to the wellbeing of the child, the CBC Lead Agency or case management agency will make efforts to assist the caregiver in initiating services. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Referrals to kinship navigation services
- Assisting with linkages to community resources and completion of program applications
- Scheduling appointments
- Initiating contact with community service providers

a. Kinship Navigator Program. A kinship navigator program is a social service delivery program intended to inform relatives who are raising the child of a relative about available resources and services, provide information specific to their individual needs, and help families navigate service systems.

b. Medical Insurance (Medicaid). There is a process in place for automatic, temporary Medicaid enrollment of a child placed in out-of-home care with a relative. The child will be enrolled in a Medicaid plan. If a child is already enrolled in a Medicaid plan, he/she may remain in his/her Medicaid plan at the time of placement or may be moved to another Medicaid plan. The responsibilities of revenue maximization staff for Medicaid eligibility are described in CFOP 170-15, [Chapter 2](#), Medicaid.

c. "At-Risk" Child Care Subsidy. A child care subsidy may be available to eligible relative caregivers through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) At-Risk category. Applications for an "at-risk" child care subsidy are processed by the Office of Early Learning, local Early Learning Coalition (ELC).

(1) When a child is placed with a relative during a child protective investigation and assistance with child care is needed, the investigator is responsible for completing the At-Risk Child Care Application and Authorization, CF-FSP [5002](#), Sections A and B, and submitting the form to the local ELC.

(a) The local ELC will schedule an interview with the relative caregiver to discuss and review program requirements. The ELC staff will determine the parent fee which the relative will be responsible for providing.

(b) The ELC will process the application and notify the relative caregiver of their decision. At-risk subsidies approved during an investigation are approved for 12 months.

(2) A relative may be eligible for continued at-risk subsidy during on-going services regardless of whether or not they receive any monthly financial assistance payment. Based on the relative's request for child care assistance, the case manager is responsible for completing the At-Risk Child Care Application and Authorization, CF-FSP [5002](#), Sections A and B, and submitting the form to the local ELC.

(3) At-risk child care is still available after a relative caregiver is granted long term custody or legal guardianship of a child.

d. Local Flexible Funds. Depending upon the local CBC Lead Agency service array and funding availability, flexible funds in accordance with s. [409.165\(2\)](#), F.S., may be an option to support the child's safety, growth, and healthy development.

e. "Child-Only" Temporary Cash Assistance. "Child-only" monthly cash assistance under Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) may be available subject to the relative caregiver meeting the eligibility criteria. Payment amounts, benefits, eligibility criteria, and application procedures are separate from the Relative Caregiver Program.

(1) During an emergency placement, financial assistance may be available through a child-only grant.

NOTE: The relative has the option to include their needs in a regular Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) benefit. Once converted to a Relative Caregiver Program payment, only the child's needs may be included.

(2) Once a child placed with a relative has been adjudicated dependent and an approved home study has been filed with the court, the child-only payment can be transitioned to a Relative Caregiver Program payment.

f. Relative Caregiver Program (RCP). Monthly payments for the Relative Caregiver Program are established per s. [39.5085](#), F.S. Payments may be made to the relative caregiver for each eligible child placed with them to cover the cost of providing for the child's basic needs. The definitions for all major terms used in this chapter pertaining to the RCP can be found in Attachment 1 to this chapter.

(1) "Child-only" and monthly payments for the Relative Caregiver Program are subject to the eligibility criteria outlined in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) State Plan.

(2) In order for a child who is placed with a relative caregiver to receive a monthly Relative Caregiver Program payment, the child must:

(a) Live in the home of a specified relative based on an approved home study. A "specified relative" must meet the degree of relationship described in ss [39.5085\(2\)\(a\)1 and 2](#), F.S.

(b) Be adjudicated dependent and be in:

1. Court-ordered temporary legal custody of the relative under protective supervision of the department pursuant to s. [39.521\(1\)\(c\)3](#), F.S.; OR,

2. Court-ordered placement in the home of a relative as a permanency option listed in ss. [39.6221](#) or [39.6231](#), F.S.; or former s. [39.622](#), F.S., if the placement was made before July 1, 2006.

(3) If a child is placed in the custody of a relative pursuant to an order of the court against the recommendation of the department or contracted service provider, the relative shall be allowed to participate in the RCP.

(4) Contingent upon availability of funds and continuing eligibility, RCP benefits shall continue until the child reaches age 18, is no longer living in the home of the relative caregiver, or the child is adopted. NOTE: Half-siblings deriving their eligibility from a related sibling will also lose eligibility when the related child becomes ineligible for one of the reasons listed above.

(5) If the relative caregiver is receiving an RCP payment, the payment must be terminated no later than the first day of the following month after a parent or stepparent moves into the home, allowing for a 10-day notice of adverse action.

(6) A relative caregiver may receive the RCP payment for a minor parent who is in his/her care, as well as for the minor parent's child, if both children have been adjudicated dependent and meet all other eligibility requirements.

g. Supports for Non-Florida Residents. A child placed with a relative in Florida by another state or a Florida child placed out of state is not eligible for "child-only" TCA or Relative Caregiver Program payments from the State of Florida. Based on the state where the Florida child is placed, financial assistance may be available. The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) will facilitate access to resources for relatives in other states when a child has been placed based on an approved home study conducted through the ICPC.

h. Licensed Foster Care. Relative caregivers who provide care for children placed with them are not required to meet foster care licensing requirements. If a relative decides to become licensed in order to receive higher monthly board and care payments, all requirements in s. [409.175](#), F.S., and Chapter [65C-13](#), F.A.C., for licensure must be met.

i. Permanency Achievement. When a relative caregiver provides permanency for a child who has been placed in their care, the following subsidies are available:

(1) In the case of adoption by the relative caregiver, an adoption subsidy may be paid. When the child has specific physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral needs which require care, supervision, and structure beyond what is ordinarily provided in a family setting, a maintenance subsidy may be negotiated up to 100% of the statewide foster care board rate. The subsidy must be approved prior to adoption finalization. Refer to Rule [65C-16.012](#), F.A.C., for types of adoption assistance and Rule [65C-16.013](#), F.A.C., for determination of maintenance subsidy payments.

(2) In the case of other permanency options, the relative caregiver may continue to be eligible for the Relative Caregiver Program benefits. Other permanency options include the following:

(a) Permanent guardianship under s. [39.6221](#), F.S.

(b) Permanent placement with a fit and willing relative under s. [39.6231](#), F.S.

(c) Guardianship under s. [744.3021](#), F.S.

(3) DCF Tuition and Fee Exemption. Children placed by the department per s. [39.5085](#), F.S., in out-of-home care may be eligible for a tuition and fee exemption at any public Florida University or Florida College System institution or Florida workforce education programs. Each university or college shall waive eligible youth and young adults from payment of tuition and fees until they reach 28 years of age. The young adult must meet the eligibility criteria listed in s. [1009.25](#), F.S.

(4) Other Available Supports for Relatives. The child welfare professional responsible for completing the relative caregiver home study must discuss with caregiver the following additional supports and services that are available within the community. The child welfare professional must explain that each program will determine whether or not the relative caregiver meets eligibility criteria. Below are examples of services and resources that could potentially be available within the community:

(a) Adult and Youth Counseling;

(b) Legal Services;

- (c) Tutoring;
- (d) Mentoring;
- (e) Family Team Conferencing; and,
- (f) Support Groups for Youth and Adults.

8-5. Informing Relative Caregivers of Responsibilities and Rights. The child welfare professional responsible for completing the relative caregiver home study will provide the following information to the relative caregiver(s).:

a. A description of basic relative caregiver responsibilities:

(1) Protect the child through relative caregiver actions described in the safety plan.

(2) Provide for child's medical, psychological, and dental care which includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Providing transportation and attending appointments;

(b) Communication with treatment providers;

(c) Providing for the child's cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional functioning; and,

(d) Providing support for the child's physical health and development.

(3) Support the child's need for family time/visitation including sibling contact (if not placed together) and other family and community connections.

(4) Support the child's academic achievement. This may include the need to transport the child to their school of origin.

(5) Use a reasonable and prudent parenting standard, pursuant to s. [39.4091](#), F.S., to make decisions regarding the child's participation in childhood activities, and adhere to all normalcy activities listed in CFOP 170-11, [Chapter 6](#).

b. Expectations of the relative caregiver as a team member:

(1) When necessary, assist with identifying any potential relatives who will care for the child on a permanent basis if reunification is not achieved.

(2) Assist with maintaining medical records, school records, photographs, and records of special events and achievements.

(3) Advocate for the child's best interest when needed.

(4) Advocate for services that the child needs.

(5) Advocate for services and supports that the caregiver needs.

(6) Assist the child's parent(s) in improving their ability to care for and protect their children. This also includes providing continuity for the child after reunification.

(7) Handle special challenges in caring for a child. This includes the child's culture and religion. This also includes any child behaviors, sexual orientation, and family relationships.

(8) Provide ongoing communication with agency staff, including:

(a) Share concerns about the current safety plan.

(b) Provide information learned about the child's needs.

(c) Provide information about changes in the household composition or family dynamics that impact the care of the child.

(d) Provide information if there is an address change.

c. A description of the home study process:

(1) Information that will be gathered including background screening.

(2) Potential outcomes of the home study.

(3) If a home study is unfavorable the relative caregiver will:

(a) Receive written notice within five business days of the final agency decision. The written notice must include the reason for the unfavorable home study.

(b) A party or participant in the case has the option to request an override of the unapproved home study decision through the dependency court.

(4) When a home study will need to be updated.

d. A description of the case planning process including the following permanency planning activities:

(1) A permanency goal for the child must be established. If reunification with the parent(s) does not occur, permanency with the relative caregiver is desired.

(2) The case plan will include any outcomes necessary to address specific child needs. The relative caregiver will be involved with identifying and addressing the child's needs.

(3) There will be on-going dependency court hearings to review progress in achieving the child's permanency goal. The hearings will also review the child's well-being.

e. Information about relative caregiver rights which include the following:

(1) To receive assistance from the case manager and/or the kinship navigator to obtain education and supports needed to care for the child.

(2) To apply to become a licensed foster parent in order to receive additional training and support. All requirements in s. [409.175](#), F.S., and Chapter [65C-13](#), F.A.C., for licensure must be met. Applying to become a foster parent is optional.

(3) To have access to the case manager's supervisor if the relative caregiver feels that the case manager is not responsive to concerns that have been shared.

(4) To participate in the on-going safety planning process.

- (5) To participate in the case planning process.
- (6) To participate in all hearings. This includes:
 - (a) Notification of all hearings.
 - (b) Attending hearings.
 - (c) Submitting written reports to the court.
 - (d) Speaking to the court at a hearing regarding the child.

8-6. Relative Caregiver Program Payments.

a. Section [39.5085\(2\)\(d\)](#), F.S., provides that the amount of the Relative Caregiver Program benefit payment may not exceed 82 percent of the statewide licensed foster care board rate. It also states that the cost of providing Relative Caregiver Program assistance may not exceed the cost of providing out-of-home care in emergency shelter or licensed foster care.

b. The basic monthly benefit payment schedule (not including Medicaid, family support and preservation services, flexible funds utilized in accordance with s. [409.165](#), F.S., subsidized child care, and other services which may be available through the department or other local, state, or federal programs) is uniform and is based on the age of the child. The following chart shows the payment standards by age of the child.

<u>AGE OF CHILD</u>	<u>MONTHLY PAYMENT STANDARD</u>
0 through 5	\$ 242
6 through 12	\$ 249
13 to 18	\$ 298

c. If a child turns age 6 or 13 during a month other than the initial month of eligibility or a review month, ESS must set a partial review for the month prior to the birth month.

8-7. Eligibility Process for Relative Caregiver Financial Assistance.

a. The local CBC Lead Agency and Economic Self-Sufficiency Program Office are jointly responsible in determining eligibility. The eligibility determination process is described in Rule [65C-28.008](#), F.A.C._

(1) Each CBC Lead Agency will establish procedures to identify the child welfare professional responsible for assisting relative caregivers with the eligibility application process. The case manager responsible for the child placed with a relative caregiver will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that the local procedures are followed.

(2) The staff of both programs will utilize form CF-FSP [5233](#), Relative Caregiver Communication (available in DCF Forms), or communicate by electronic means to notify one another of a relative caregiver's desire to apply for financial assistance and to communicate changes in circumstances that may affect the amount of the payment or eligibility for the payment. The communication form is a requirement of communication for both programs per Rules [65C-28.008\(2\)\(j\)5](#) and [65C-28.008\(2\)\(k\)6](#), F.A.C.

b. CBC Lead Agency or Subcontracted Agency Staff. In addition to on-going case management services and required judicial reviews, CBC Lead Agency or subcontracted staff are responsible for:

(1) Completing face-to-face contacts with the child and relative caregiver per requirements in Rule [65C-30.007](#), F.A.C. During each contact with a relative caregiver, the child welfare professional will determine whether the relative caregiver has any needs for support including services or training that might be critical to placement stability.

(2) Assisting the relative caregiver with obtaining the monthly financial assistance benefits, as necessary.

(3) Notifying ESS within five business days when a child in the home of a relative caregiver becomes potentially eligible for the Relative Caregiver Program benefits and the relative caregiver has indicated a desire to be considered for these benefits.

(4) Notifying ESS within ten business days when there are changes that may impact the Relative Caregiver Program benefits, such as the child has been adopted, turned age 18, or left the home. The Relative Caregiver Communication (form CF-FSP [5233](#), available in DCF Forms) is used for this purpose.

c. Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency (ESS). ESS staff are responsible for:

(1) At the interview, informing all persons caring for children who are relatives about the Relative Caregiver Program. A notation in the running record comments will serve as verification that the client was informed of this program.

(2) Explaining the options associated with the Relative Caregiver Program to the applicant.

(3) Asking the relative caregiver to complete the Relative Caregiver Program Request for Eligibility Consideration (form CF-ES [2305](#), available in DCF Forms) if a paper application is submitted. The Relative Caregiver Program Request for Eligibility Consideration notice is provided as part of the online application when the relative caregiver applies for cash assistance through the [Self-Service Portal](#) (SSP).

(4) When completing the paper CF-ES [2305](#), providing the relative caregiver with a copy of the form and maintain a copy in the document imaging system.

(5) Determining the child's initial and ongoing eligibility for the Relative Caregiver Program payment and Medicaid as well as providing notification of such action to the client and case manager.

(6) Determining continued eligibility for the child's monthly Relative Caregiver Program benefits, including Medicaid, through scheduled eligibility reviews, and acting on changes (expected and unexpected).

(7) Maintaining an electronic case file for the relative caregiver payee which contains a separate assistance group and payment for each relative caregiver eligible child.

(8) Communicating with the case manager and kinship navigator as necessary to provide updates on the eligibility status of the child.

(9) When the request for Relative Caregiver Program payment originates at the ESS office, providing written notification to the case manager via the Relative Caregiver Communication (form CF-FSP [5233](#), available in DCF Forms) or communicate by electronic means, within ten business days.

d. Initial Application.

(1) The case manager will follow local CBC Lead Agency procedures to complete form CF-FSP [5233](#) (available in DCF Forms), Relative Caregiver Communication, for each child placed with the relative caregiver.

(2) The case manager will submit the completed form(s) to the local ESS office. The case manager will retain a copy in the relative caregiver's provider record in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN).

(3) The ESS worker will review the family composition and determine if the family will be subject to the work requirements and time limits under the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) program, or, alternately, if the child is eligible for a "child-only" payment. Assistance under the TCA "child-only" category is not time-limited, nor is the relative caregiver subject to work requirements.

(4) The FLORIDA system will process the child's eligibility for the Relative Caregiver Program payment.

(5) If all eligibility factors are met, the case will be approved by ESS for payment.

e. Conversion to Relative Caregiver Program Payment.

(1) Once the child placed with a relative caregiver is adjudicated dependent and a home study has been completed, the case manager will update form CF-FSP [5233](#), Relative Caregiver Communication, with the date of adjudication and completed home study. The case manager will submit the form to the local ESS office within five business days following the placement determination.

(2) ESS will take action to convert the TCA payment to the Relative Caregiver Program payment for each eligible child. This includes the following steps:

(a) Select the Relative Caregiver payment option on the Application Entry Pick-a-Benefit (AIPB) in FLORIDA.

(b) Change the child's living arrangement status from "01" to "32" on the FLORIDA AIIC screen.

(c) Complete the Application Entry Relative Caregiver (AIRL) screen for each Relative Caregiver Program eligible child. The AIRL screen captures the child's placement eligibility information (court adjudication and home study) from the form CF-FSP [5233](#) needed to determine eligibility for the Relative Caregiver Program benefit.

NOTE: The Relative Caregiver Program eligibility driver creates a separate assistance group for each Relative Caregiver Program eligible child and determines their eligibility separately based on their age and any countable income.

(d) Remove the Relative Caregiver Program eligible child from the existing TCA assistance group or terminate an existing TCA assistance group (AG) if all children are eligible for the Relative Caregiver Program payment.

(e) Convert the TCA payment to the Relative Caregiver Program payment for the next recurring month.

NOTE: Payments cannot be received for a child from both TCA and Relative Caregiver Program in the same month.

(f) Notify the relative caregiver and the case manager of the payment conversion to the Relative Caregiver Program.

(3) Eligibility will be reviewed by ESS every 12 months and adjusted periodically, if appropriate, to reflect changed circumstances. If the review determines that the payment should be lowered, the relative caregiver shall be notified of his or her right to a fair hearing. For purposes of this paragraph, examples of "changed circumstances" shall include the following:

(a) The child begins receiving Supplemental Security Income.

(b) The child begins receiving unearned income. Examples are Social Security benefits, child support, etc.

(4) ESS also evaluates eligibility for other public assistance programs if the child's circumstances change and he or she is no longer eligible for the Relative Caregiver Program payment.

8-8. Child Support Collections (42 U.S.C. 654 and 671(a)(17)). States are required to take all appropriate steps to secure an assignment of support rights on behalf of a child receiving maintenance payments assistance under TANF, Title IV-E, or medical assistance. Also, sections 454 and 458 of the Social Security Act require states to collect and distribute child support for foster care cases. Relative caregivers are required to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement Program in establishing, modifying, or enforcing support orders with respect to children in their care who are receiving TANF, Title IV-E, or medical assistance benefits.

8-9. Case Planning.

a. The case manager will work with the relative caregiver and child as appropriate to develop and implement outcomes in the case plan that is co-constructed with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

(1) When the case plan goal is reunification, the relative caregiver will be an excellent resource for contributing suggestions for the family change strategies. The case manager should refer to CFOP 170-9, [Chapter 4](#), Family Engagement Standards for Exploration.

(2) The relative caregiver's relationship with the child will be a benefit in identifying educational, medical, and other needs that must be addressed in the case plan.

(3) Unless it is clear the relative placement will result in permanency for the child, a concurrent permanency goal and concurrent plan should be established.

(4) In order to ensure the relative caregiver is actively involved in reunification efforts, the relative caregiver must be assigned tasks in the case plan to facilitate visitation and communication between the parent(s) and child. When siblings are separated, the relative caregiver must be assigned case plan tasks to facilitate visitation and communication between the child(ren) and the siblings.

b. When the case plan goal is permanent guardianship of a dependent child per s.[39.6221](#), F.S., or permanent placement with a fit and willing relative per s. [39.6231](#), F.S., the relative caregiver, child, if age appropriate, and other involved parties will assist with identification of the measurable objectives, tasks, and services needed to maintain the placement. The case planning discussions must

address the need for a permanency goal and a realistic timetable for achieving one of these permanency options.

c. The Children's Legal Services (CLS) attorney shall notify the relative caregiver of all hearings either in writing or orally. The court may release CLS from this obligation if the relative's involvement is impeding the dependency process or is determined to be detrimental to the child's well-being.

d. The case manager shall inform each relative caregiver that he/she has the right to:

- (1) Attend all hearings.
- (2) Submit written reports to the court.
- (3) Speak to the court regarding the child.

8-10. FSFN Documentation.

a. In FSFN Case Notes, the child welfare professional must document:

- (1) His/her discussion with the relative caregiver about support options available.
- (2) His/her actions to assist the relative caregiver with obtaining any supports needed, including documentation of referrals completed.
- (3) The case plan tasks that the relative caregiver has agreed to assist with until formally incorporated into the child's court-approved case plan.

b. The relative caregiver home study must be completed and approved using the functionality available in FSFN.

Terms and Definitions used in Chapter 8

<u>TERM</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)	Temporary cash assistance is the state's program which provides cash assistance to needy families with dependent children. The TANF Act passed in 1996 enacting the time-limited cash assistance program. Certain groups of temporary cash assistance participants are exempt from the time limit, including child-only cases.
Date of Eligibility	<p>For eligibility to begin, a home study must be completed, a child must be adjudicated dependent, and a court order must be in effect that orders temporary custody of the child to the relative or relative placement as a permanency option. Once these activities are completed and the relative caregiver payment requested, the TCA technical and financial policy must be met by the child. For children unknown to TCA at the time of the request for the relative caregiver payment, the relative caregiver payment will begin the earlier of 30 days from the date of application or the date of approval.</p> <p>NOTE: In most situations, the relative caregiver case will be initially approved as a TCA child-only case. When the relative caregiver payment is approved, benefits will begin the first month that the child may be removed from the TCA case. These situations are treated as changes. Payment cannot be received from TCA and the Relative Caregiver Program in the same month.</p>
Ongoing Determination of Eligibility	Determination of the continuing eligibility of a child for Relative Caregiver Program payment must be done according to the regular review cycle established in the TCA program. Generally, this requires the relative to participate in <u>12</u> -month eligibility reviews.
Need	Refers to the financial need of the child. Neither income nor assets of the child can exceed the Relative Caregiver Program payment standards or the asset limit prescribed by the TANF State Plan.
Relative Caregiver Program Payments	Payments to cover the cost of caring for the child, (and the cost of providing) food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, and personal incidentals (e.g., transportation, non-prescription medication, etc.).
Removal Home	The family setting from which the child was first legally removed, including a relative's or non-relative's home if such person had assumed and continued to exercise day to day responsibility for care and control of the child, prior to court involvement.
Medicaid	Medical assistance funded under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, which provides basic health care to various coverage groups. Children who are eligible for relative caregiver payment are eligible for Medicaid coverage.