

Kinship Care Program

The Oneida Tribe, through the State of Wisconsin, provides a cash benefit called a Kinship Care payment to caretaker relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) of minor children. This is a child only payment. Caretaker relatives are providing a service that allows displaced children to remain in the care of their extended family. The Kinship Care program preserves the ability to place children with caretaker relatives while providing appropriate oversight of placements to ensure children's safety and well-being. Relatives caring for children who are not their legal responsibility are providing a service to the child and the community and have no work requirements. The State of Wisconsin's Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) administers the Kinship Care program.

How to Apply for Kinship Care Benefits

Caretaker relatives who wish to apply for Kinship Care benefits should contact the county or tribal human/social services agency. The agency will complete the following activities:

1. **An assessment** to determine that there is a need for the child to be placed with the relative and that the placement is in the best interest of the child.
2. **A criminal background check** of the relative, any other adult living in the home, and any employees or prospective employees who have or would have contact with the child. The primary purpose of the background check is to determine if these individuals have any arrests or convictions that could adversely affect the child or the relative's ability to care for the child.
3. **Refers the Kinship Care case to the local Child Support agency.** The caretaker relative must cooperate with the Child Support agency in establishing and enforcing child support orders.

Once eligibility is approved, a monthly Kinship Care payment of \$215 per child is issued to the caretaker relative. Any changes in a child's circumstances must be reported to the county or tribal human/social services agency within 10 days. A Kinship Care eligibility review will be completed by the county or tribal human/social services agency at least every 12 months.

Other Program Eligibility

Caretaker relatives may also wish to apply for other programs, such as Medicaid or food stamps. The county or tribal social/human services agency continues to determine eligibility for these programs. Caretaker relatives who are working or participating in other allowable activities may also receive help with child care costs. The Kinship Care payment is not considered in determining the child's Medicaid or child care eligibility.

If you would like to contact a staff person regarding the Kinship Care Program, please call the Assistant Director of the Children and Family Services Department at 490-3701