

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Administrative Issuance: CFSA-19-3.2

TO: Staff
FROM: Ann Reilly, Deputy Director for Programs Operations
DATE: September 24, 2019 [Modified & Reissued April 8, 2020]
RE: Close Relative Caregiver Pilot Program

The Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) administers the Close Relative Caregiver Program (CRCP) which provides a monthly subsidy to eligible District of Columbia residents with low incomes who are raising their siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Relative caregivers use this monetary support to offset the costs of caring for relative children residing with them in the District who might otherwise end up in the foster care system. Please see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for further information.

Within this administrative issuance, the term “child” refers to anyone under age 18. The term “minor” refers to anyone under the age of 21. The term “caregiver” includes an adult (anyone 18 years or older) who is a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, or cousin of a child and related to the child by blood, marriage, domestic partnership, or adoption (as applicable).

Eligibility Requirements for Close Relative Caregiver Program (CRCP)

A caregiver may be eligible to receive the CRCP subsidy if all the following criteria have been met:

1. The caregiver is the adult brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, or cousin of a child and related by blood, marriage, domestic partnership, or adoption. Proof of relationship as evidenced by one of the following:
 - a. Birth certificate(s)
 - b. Adoption Decree
 - c. Court determination of paternity
 - d. [Acknowledgement of Paternity \(AOP\)](#)
 - e. Child Support Agreement or Court Order
 - f. Marriage certificate, proof of common law marriage, or domestic partnership
 - g. DNA Test
2. The caregiver is a resident of the District of Columbia.
3. The caregiver is the child’s sole or primary caregiver.
4. The child resides in the home with the caregiver.
5. The child’s parent does not reside in the home, unless:
 - a. The caregiver is the child’s standby guardian
 - b. The parent is a minor enrolled in school
 - c. The parent is a minor with a medically verifiable disability which prevents him or her from caring for the child



6. The household income is below 200 percent the federal poverty level.
7. The caregiver has applied for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for the child and an eligibility determination has been made.

Application Process

1. Persons meeting the requirements above who wish to be certified by CFSA to receive a CRCP subsidy must apply by completing the [Application for Close Relative Caregivers Program Subsidy](#) and provide proof of being the primary caregiver (see application for accepted documentation).
2. The caregiver and all adults residing in the home must submit to the clearance process which includes:
 - a. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) check
 - b. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) clearance
 - c. Child Protection Register (CPR) check

Program Limitations

The provision of a subsidy under the CRCP is subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Annual Review of CRCP Subsidies

1. The CRCP shall conduct a review once each calendar year, based upon the certification date for the initial CRCP subsidy ("annual review date"). Each review shall determine ongoing receipt of a subsidy based upon the following criteria:
 - a. Ongoing maintenance of eligibility
 - b. Any change of circumstances requiring possible modification or termination of a subsidy
 - c. Documentation of the child's well-being, including daycare/school enrollment and attendance forms.
2. The CRCP may also conduct a review prior to the annual review date in the event of:
 - a. Changes in subsidy rates
 - b. Request for review by the caregiver
 - c. Changes to the child's circumstances, including but not limited to possible changes in residence
 - d. The child reaches the age of 18
 - e. If the child(ren) has/have not resided with the caregiver continuously for at least the most recent 6 months prior to application approval, reviews shall be completed every 6 months.
3. The CRCP shall send the caregiver the *Recertification Package for Close Relative Caregiver Program Subsidy* 60-90 days prior to the annual review date for completion and submission to the CRCP.
4. If the caregiver does not submit the completed Recertification Package to the CRCP within 45 days of notification, the worker shall attempt to contact the caregiver by phone and/or by regular mail up until the annual review date.
5. If the caregiver does not submit the completed Recertification Package to the CRCP by the annual review date, the subsidy may be terminated.

Changes in Eligibility Criteria

The CRCP subsidy participant shall notify the CRCP within 2 weeks of the occurrence of any change in eligibility criteria and/or any change in address.

Termination of CRCP Subsidies

If any of the requirements outlined in this guidance or by law are not adhered to or maintained, CFSA shall have the right to terminate the subsidy.

Appeal Process

1. All caregivers receiving CRCP subsidies shall be notified of the right to appeal a change in subsidy.
2. A caregiver aggrieved by a decision of CFSA in connection with the denial, reduction, suspension, or termination of a subsidy, including a failure to act on a request for review, may appeal the decision through a written request for a fair hearing. *For more information, see the [Fair Hearings Policy](#).*