



Collaboratively supporting kinship caregivers and their families

# KINSHIP NAVIGATOR MASSACHUSETTS

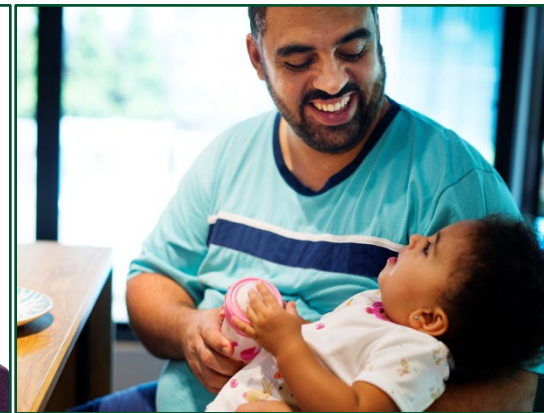


# WHO WE ARE

Kinship Navigator is a program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that helps all kinship caregivers (grandparents and other relatives) access services for themselves and the children they are raising.

# MISSION

To ensure all kinship caregivers in Massachusetts can easily find supportive services online and with help from Kinship Navigator staff to cultivate strong, stable, and successful families.



# WHO WE SERVE

- Kinship foster parents caring for children involved with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
- Kinship caregivers involved with probate and family court
- Families with informal caregiver arrangements



# HOW WE CAN HELP

**Kinship Navigator staff act as points of contact for kinship caregivers and their families statewide. We help caregivers navigate services such as the following:**

- Department of Transitional Assistance Temporary Assistance for Families with Dependent Children child-only grants
- Department of Children and Families supports
- Women, Infants and Children

**We connect kinship caregivers to the community resources including the following:**

- Family Resource Centers
- Massachusetts Grandparents Commission workshops
- Support groups
- Food and nutrition assistance
- Child care
- Legal services
- Mental health services and counseling
- Support for kinship caregivers who have a family member struggling with substance misuse



# QUICK REFERENCE SHEETS FOR KINSHIP CAREGIVERS



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## Kinship Caregiver DTA Quick Reference Sheet

### Cash Assistance:

The Department of Transitional Assistance offers a number of programs that can assist relative caregivers that differ from their typical program requirements. For example, work program requirements and income limitations that apply to parents raising a dependent child may not apply to grandparents raising their grandchildren. In some circumstances, time limitations on assistance and case review are reduced.



### Card to Culture:

DTA and the Mass Cultural Council have partnered to offer discounted admissions to many of the Commonwealth's museums and cultural institutions.

All you have to do is find a place you want to go, show your EBT card at the front desk, use the discount, and you're good to go!  
<https://www.mass.gov/ebt-card-to-culture.org>

**Do you have probate guardianship? You can apply for a CHILD ONLY cash benefit.**

Relative caregivers can apply for a special type of TAFDC benefit on behalf of their grandchildren. These applications are not subject to typical TAFDC income and asset limitations if the grandparent is not the adoptive parent of the child. Relative caregivers who apply under these circumstances and are working are eligible for a child care referral to access a no-fee child care voucher. Relative caregivers may choose to apply for TAFDC for themselves and their grandchild; however their income and assets are then countable.

Step 1: Prepare the documentation you may need for the application process

- Guardianship paperwork from Probate Court or documents showing daily care and control
- Proof of relationship (birth certificates and court documents can be used)
- School enrollment (for all school aged child)
- Proof of immunization record (60 days to verify)
- Living arrangement (can be self-declared)

Step 2: Find your local DTA office  
[https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departement-of-transitional-assistance/locations?\\_page=1](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departement-of-transitional-assistance/locations?_page=1)

Step 3: Go to your local DTA office to meet with a DTA case manager in person

- All applications must be completed at the DTA office
- Applicants will be served on a first come, first served basis
- Note: Applicants will need to work with the Department of Revenue in seeking child support from the absent parent(s)
- Please speak with your DTA case manager if there are safety concerns or special circumstances regarding child support cooperation

Step 4: Application decision within 30 days



### Food and Nutritional Assistance:



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps provides critical nutritional support to low-income households in the Commonwealth by helping families and individuals to buy healthy food.

Apply in person or online:  
[www.DTAconnect.com](http://www.DTAconnect.com)



- All family members must be entered on the application
- Verification of income is required

Note: Please speak with your DTA case manager if you have extended family living in your home that are not dependents

### Child Care Authorization:

DTA Eligibility: A relative caregiver receiving TAFDC for a child(ren) and who is working

- Proof of employment (paystub, letter from employer)
- Part time or full time employment (no hour requirement)
- Vouchers can be used for full time and after school care
- Voucher is good for 12 months
- Once a referral from DTA has been made you will contact the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) to set up an appointment
- You WILL NOT need to renew your child care voucher until it expires, even if your TAFDC case closes. However, you must notify your CCRR of any changes.
- When your childcare voucher is expiring, you may need to ask DTA for a new authorization. Schedule an appointment with CCRR to renew your voucher.



- Bring your DTA referral and a valid photo ID to the appointment
- The CCRR will help you find child care that can best meet your family's needs.

**IMPORTANT:** You must complete your child care authorization with the CCRR before subsidized child care will be paid for

### Types of Child Care:

**Family Child Care:** In family child care homes, providers care for small groups of children in their own or a friend's home. Often this type of care has one or two caregivers and may offer more nontraditional hours.

**Group Child Care:** Group child care programs are usually center-based programs that are larger and often group children by age and are generally in non-residential, commercial buildings. Centers have a dedicated director and numerous staff members.

**Preschool Programs:** Preschool programs are typically offered for children ages 3-5 years old. Preschool programs may be offered through a school, faith-based organization, or a child care center. Head Start is an example of a preschool program.

**School Age or After School Programs:** School age programs typically provide child care during before and after school hours. They may also offer care during school holidays and summer break.

Please go to <https://eclead.force.com/EEC-CCRRSearch> to find a CCRR near you or call Kinship Navigator Helpline @ 1-844-924-4546

To Find a Licensed Family, Group or School Age Child Care Program  
<https://eclead.force.com/EEC-ChildCareSearch>

### Important Numbers & Dates:

DTA Case Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

DTA Agency ID: \_\_\_\_\_

DTA Annual Reevaluation Date: \_\_\_\_\_



1(844) 924-4KIN (4546)    kinshipnavigator@mass.gov    mass.gov/kinship-navigator

# Q & A

## DISCUSSION

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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