GUARDIANSHIP OPTIONS AND SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORTS CHART

SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORTS	FOSTER CARE (DCF Foster Parent)	SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP (DCF)	LEGAL GUARDIAN (Probate or Juvenile Court)	INFORMAL GUARDIANSHIP	ADOPTION
Foster Care Subsidy	Receive a monthly subsidy between $680-$790 per child. Along with DCF social work case management services.	Receive a monthly subsidy between $680-$790 per child until the child is 18 years old.	Not Eligible	Not Eligible	If the child is considered to be a "special needs" youth, a monthly subsidy is provided. If the child is not recognized as "special needs," the youth is not eligible.
Temporary Family Assistance (TANF) (DSS cash assistance, "child only" grant)	Not Eligible (foster child only)	Not Eligible.	Receive a monthly subsidy until the child is 18 years old.	Receive a monthly subsidy until the child is 18 years old.	The parent by adoption is considered as the child's parent. The parent must apply as a family. (not eligible for "child only" grant). If parent is considered as employable, her or she will be limited to 21 months of assistance.
Food Stamps	Not Eligible	Not Eligible	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.
WIC For children birth – 5 years	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.	Eligible to apply.
Health Insurance	DCF will apply for HUSKY for the child in care.	Guardian will need to renew HUSKY through DSS annually.	Must apply through DSS.	Must apply through DSS.	Child can be placed on your insurance or must apply for HUSKY through DSS.
Care for Kids 1-888-214-5437 (child care subsidy)	If working can apply. Must call for eligibility.	If working can apply. Must call for eligibility.	If working can apply. Must call for eligibility.	If working can apply. Must call for eligibility.	If working can apply. Must call for eligibility.
Respite	Can apply for DCF respite services.	Not eligible for DCF respite. Can apply for respite through other grandparent/caregiver support groups.	Not eligible for DCF respite. Can apply for respite through other grandparent/caregiver support groups.	Not eligible for DCF respite. Can apply for respite through other grandparent/caregiver support groups.	Contact Info Line
Tax Credits	Eligible.	Eligible.	Eligible.	Eligible.	Eligible.
Social Security •Survivors benefits (SSA) •Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Eligible (SSA and SSI) *DCF is the payee	Eligible (SSA and SSI) *with a reduced subsidy through DCF	Eligible (SSA and SSI)	Eligible (SSA and SSI) *Proof of relationship to bio parent/ child is required	Eligible (SSA and SSI) *Subsidy reduced for SSA
Educational Assistance	DCF will pay for college education.	Not Eligible	Not Eligible.	Not Eligible.	Eligible (Anyone adopted from DCF foster care after 1/1/2005)

Resource Information Phone Contacts

Department of Children and Families Area Offices
DCF Hotline – 1 800 842-2288
Bridgeport – (203) 384-5300
Danbury – (203) 207-5100
Hartford – (860) 418-8000
Manchester – (860) 533-3600
Meriden – (203) 238-8400
Middletown – (203) 638-2100
New Britain (860) 832-5200
New Haven – (203) 786-0500
Norwalk – (203) 899-1400
Norwich – (860) 886-1400
Stamford – (203) 348-4294
Torrington – (860) 496-5700
Waterbury – (203) 759-7000
Willimantic – (860) 450-2000

Department of Social Services Area Offices
Hartford – (860) 723-1000
New Britain – (860) 612-3400
Manchester – (860) 647-1441
Willimantic – (860) 465-3500
New Haven – (203) 974-8000
Middletown – (860) 704-3100
Norwich – (860) 823-5000
Bridgeport – (203) 551-2700
Stamford – (203) 251-9300
Waterbury - (203) 597-4000
Danbury - (203) 207-8900
Torrington – (860) 496-6900

WIC – Contact Info Line for local office locations
Husky Healthcare – 1 877 284-8759
Social Security – 1 800 772-1213
Care 4 Kids (child care services) – 1 888 214-5437
Food Stamps – 1 800 842-1508
Children's Law Center - 1 888 529-3667
INFO Line – 211

Housing – Contact your local DSS office regarding the Rental Assistance Program

Probate Court and Superior Court for Juvenile Matters: For local phone and address information, see the blue pages of your phone book or call 411 for information.

DCF Voluntary Services: If a youth under the age of 18 is placed in either a formal or informal living situation and mental health services are needed, DCF can be contacted for voluntary services @ 1 800 842-2288

Are You Raising a Relative Child?

In Conjunction with:
The Department of Children & Families
& The City of Hartford Grandparents Program

Today many grandparents and relatives are asked to care for a kin child. The Department of Children and Families understands that a child who is placed with a family member has a better experience than those children who are placed with non-relatives. This pamphlet was created to inform grandparents and relatives of their guardianship options.

Guardianship Definitions

Guardian – means the person who has legal responsibility for the care and custody of a minor child. Probate Court or Superior Court of Juvenile Matters can give this responsibility to a grandparent or relative if the child's parents are unable or unwilling to care for their child. The relationship will be recognized as a formal guardianship arrangement. The guardian has legal authority to make decisions concerning the child.

Informal guardianship – This is a verbal agreement between the parent(s) of a child and a relative or person identified by the parent to care for a minor child. The parent can write a notarized letter stating that he/she is giving guardianship to the grandparent or relative. The state does not recognize this agreement and the grandparent or relative do not have the legal authority to make decisions for the child. Parents have the authority to return at any time and take back their child.

Formal Guardianship Arrangements

DCF Commitment – this is when a child is removed from their home because the department found the child to have been abused and/or neglected. DCF has the authority to remove the child from their home through Superior Court for Juvenile Matters and become the guardian of the child. Juvenile Court and DCF share the responsibility for the care and protection of the minor child.

Guardianship – If a parent is unwilling or unable to care for his/her child an adult relative by blood or marriage can submit a petition to Probate Court and request that guardianship is given to a relative.

Depending upon the family situation a grandparent or relative can apply for immediate temporary custody (ITC) or temporary custody (TC) with the application for guardianship.

To apply for immediate temporary custody a grandparent or relative must have physical custody of the child. To apply for temporary custody a relative does not have to have physical custody of the child. When filing for immediate temporary custody or temporary custody a grandparent or relative must also file a Removal of Parent and Appointment of guardian petition as well.

Any petition that is submitted to Probate Court, by law DCF will be asked by the court to conduct an assessment of the proposed family and home. DCF occasionally but not always remains involved with your family after the court has made their decision if the family need's services.

Applications/petitions for guardianship are located at every Probate Court. Applications/petitions must be filed in the town the child is living in. A grandparent or relative may apply for a fee waiver. Fee waivers are based on income criteria of the person submitting the application.

For more information on the Probate Court Process contact your local Probate Court

Caregivers/Add'l Guardianship Types

Foster Parent: If a child is placed under the care of DCF a grandparent or relative can apply to become a licensed foster parent to a relative child. A background check of all the members in the household will be conducted. If anyone in the home has been convicted of a crime or test positive for drug use, the grandparent or relative will not be eligible to become a relative foster parent. As a foster parent grandparents and relatives are eligible for a monthly subsidy for each child, health care coverage and other various case management supports for the child.

Subsidized Guardianship – If a grandparent or relative becomes the licensed foster parent to a relative child for a minimum of six months and DCF determines that the relative is the best placement for the child without DCF supports, except the financial subsidy, a petition of transfer of guardianship can be made to the grandparent or relative. As noted, if the grandparent or relative is deemed eligible they continue to receive a monthly DCF subsidy until the relative child is 18 years old or 21, if the child remains in a full-time educational program.

Adoption – A grandparent or relative can choose to adopt a relative child. The parent's Parental Rights must first be terminated by either a Probate Court or Superior Court for Juvenile Matters. As an adopted parent the grandparent or relative agrees to take full responsibility for the child and become the legal parent of the child. If the parental rights have been terminated through DCF process the department will then be responsible for the adoption finalization. If a grandparent or relative initiates the adoption of a relative child, the grandparent or relative is responsible for processing the adoption through Probate Court. A family study will be required in order to finalize any adoption type. For more information on adoption contact your local DCF office.

Subsidized Adoption – If grandparent or relative is caring for a child that fits the DCF "special needs" criteria, the grandparent or relative may adopt the child and receive both a financial and medical subsidy until the child reaches the age of 18 and then only a medical subsidy until the child reaches the age of 21 provided they continue to reside in Connecticut. College assistance is available for those adopted from DCF foster care after 1/1/05.

A Special Needs Child is defined in CONN. GEN. STAT. §17a-116 as a child who is difficult to place in adoption because of one or more conditions including, but not limited to:

- physical or mental disability
- serious emotional maladjustment
- a recognized high risk of physical or mental disability
- age, ethnicity, or sibling group

Standby Guardian – When a parent is ill, unable to care for his/her child or incarcerated, the parent can write a letter stating that he and/or she has selected a relative to be the Standby Guardian. This agreement can last up to one year. This does not require a court order. The parent has the right to end the standby guardianship agreement at any time. In the event of the parent(s) death, the relative holding the Standby Guardian signed agreement will be given up to a 90-day grace period before the agreement will expire. The 90-days grace period will give the relative time to file an application in the Probate Court to make the guardianship permanent. For phone consultation services, contact the Children's Law Center @ 1 888 529- 3667.

Co-Guardian- If a child only has one legally identified parent or court appointed guardian, a grandparent or relative is eligible to share legal responsibility for the care of the child with the parent or court appointed guardian. The parent/guardian can file a Co-Guardian petition with Probate Court. Probate Court may grant the co-guardianship after the DCF has completed a written assessment/family study and recommendation. If the assessment is favorable, the court may award co-guardianship. The relative will then share equal responsibility for the care and concern of the minor child.

Temporary Guardianship – A parent or court appointed guardian could request through the Probate Court the appointment of a temporary guardian. Temporary guardianship lasts up to one year. A parent/guardian has the option of canceling the temporary guardianship arrangement at any time within that year. A parent/guardian can write a letter to the court requesting to end the temporary guardianship relationship. The court is required to cancel the guardianship upon receipt of the letter from the petitioning parent/guardian.

If you have any questions after you have read this pamphlet, please do not hesitate to call our Hotline at 1 800-842-2288