

# Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

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**Series:** 200: Placement Services

**Policy Name:** Relative Caregiver Requirements & Program

**Policy Number:** 201

**Origination Date:** 03/09/09 **Revised:** Board Meeting of 12/13/2018

**Regulation:** 39.5085, F.S.  
65C-28.008, F.A.C.  
65C-24, F.A.C.  
CFOP 175-7

## Referenced Document:

200-201 x 1, Relative Caregiver Communication Form

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## Policy

It is the policy of Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. (BBCBC), to mandate the contracted CMOs implement a relative caregiver program to assist families who assume court order placement and care responsibilities for children. The Relative Caregiver Program offers financial assistance for a child placed with a relative who would be unable to serve as a caregiver without the relative caregiver payment because of financial burden, thus exposing the child to trauma of placement in foster care.

## Procedure

**A. General Information.** The state receives funding for the Relative Caregiver Program monthly payments and benefits from the Temporary Cash Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant. The relative caregiver payment is not related to Title IV-E; however, the child must meet criteria for TANF and/or Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) child only eligibility. Children who receive a relative caregiver payment are not eligible for to simultaneously receive TCA benefits.

1. When a child has been removed, preference will be given to placement with an adult relative.
2. The Dependency Case Manager (DCM) will assist in developing supports and resources needed to assist the Relative Caregivers in caring for the child.

## **B. Relative Caregiver Program Payments and Benefits.**

1. Criteria for determining the eligibility to participate in the Relative Caregiver Program for open cases:
  - a. Child/children must be adjudicated dependent in the State of Florida.

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- b. Child/children must be placed in the temporary or long-term custody of a specified relative who resides in the State of Florida.
  - i. Relatives must be within the fifth degree by blood or marriage to the parent or stepparent of the child and who are caring for full time.
- c. Relative Caregivers who receive assistance under the Relative Caregiver Program must be capable, as determined by a home study, of providing a physically safe environment and a stable, supportive home for the children under their care, and must assure that the children's well-being is met, including the provision of immunizations, education, and mental health services.
- d. The Unified Home Study must have been filed with, accepted, and approved or ordered by the Court.
- e. A parent may not live in the home with the child.

2. The DCM assigned to the case will:

- a. Complete the Relative Caregiver Communication Form.
- b. Submit the communication form to Department of Children and Families or designee.
- c. File a copy of the submitted form in the child's case file.
- d. The DCM will inform and assist the relative of the need to apply for benefits through ACCESS Florida.

**C. Half Sibling Eligibility.**

- 1. The eligibility of a half-sibling who is not related to the caregiver remains in effect only as long as the half-sibling who is related to the caregiver remains in the court-ordered custody of the caregiver.
- 2. When the half-sibling who is related to the caregiver becomes 18 years of age or for any reason leaves the legal custody of the caregiver, the half-sibling who is unrelated to the caregiver loses eligibility.

**D. Clients Residing Outside of the BBCBC Circuits.**

- 1. The DCM will request that the courtesy DCM assigned complete the Relative Caregiver Communication Form and submit the request for Relative Care Program benefits to the appropriate party.

**E. Clients from Other Circuits Residing in BBCBC Circuits.**

- 1. The DCM is responsible for completing the Relative Caregiver Communication Form and submitting it to the appropriate party.

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2. The DCM may need to obtain documentation to assess eligibility from the primary DCM.

## **F. Placement Supervision.**

1. The court-approved case plan will govern the type and extent of supervision in a Relative Caregiver Program placement, unless supervision is court-ordered under a separate court order.

## **G. Closed Cases.**

1. Criteria for determining the eligibility to participate in the Relative Caregiver Program for closed cases:
  - a. The case will be assigned to the CMO who previously worked the case or to the appropriate DCM based on the service site's established case assignment rotation.
  - b. The CMO will request the closed file and verify the Adjudication Order/placement of temporary or long-term custody with said relative who is requesting the Relative Care Program benefits.
  - c. A copy of the home study performed in conjunction with the placement of the child in the caregiver's home is required to verify that a home study was conducted; otherwise, a current home study shall be performed to establish eligibility.
  - d. The DCM will complete the Relative Caregiver Communication Form.
  - e. The form will be submitted to the ACCESS Florida. A copy of the form will be filed in the child's case file.
  - f. The DCM will inform the relative of the need to apply for benefits through ACCESS Florida.

## **H. Child Care.**

1. Subsidized childcare is available to Relative Caregiver Program recipients through the TANF. At-Risk category.

## **I. Child Support Collection.**

1. The Relative Caretaker will 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.