

Assembly Bill No. 1193

CHAPTER 794

An act to add Section 16605 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to human services, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 1997. Filed
with Secretary of State October 9, 1997.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1193, Shelley. Kinship support services.

Existing law requires the State Department of Social Services to implement a program of family preservation and support services that meets federal requirements, and establishes specified procedures for the allocation of funding for family preservation and support programs. Existing law authorizes counties to participate in the program.

This bill would require the department to conduct a Kinship Support Services Program that is a grants-in-aid program providing start-up and expansion funds for local kinship support services programs that provide community-based family support services to kinship (relative) caregivers and the children placed in their homes by the juvenile court or who are at risk of dependency or delinquency. This bill would appropriate specified sums from the General Fund to the department to fund this program, specified technical assistance provisions of the bill, and the costs of state administration of the program.

Appropriation: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature hereby declares its intent to promote family stability for abused and neglected children and to create a Kinship Support Services Program by doing all of the following:

(a) Establishing a family support program that provides support services to relatives who provide homes for abused and neglected children who would otherwise enter foster homes or who are at risk of dependency or delinquency.

(b) Recognizing that relative caregivers, often referred to as kinship caregivers, are a resource that help to ensure that family ties are maintained when children cannot reside with their own parents.

(c) Recognizing that a relative caregiver's capacity to obtain and maintain employment will be increased by the provision of supportive services.

(d) Improving outcomes for children in the homes of their relatives when supportive services are provided in their community.

(e) Recognizing that children in the homes of relatives who receive supportive services will achieve:

- (1) Increased stability and safety.
- (2) A reduction in recidivism.
- (3) Increased likelihood for family members and relatives to assume and maintain responsibility and care of abused and neglected children.
- (4) A reduction in court dependency hearings.
- (5) A reduction in the utilization of more restrictive placements.
- (6) A reduction in out of county placements.

SEC. 2. It is the intent of the Legislature to implement a statewide Kinship Support Services Program by establishing a grants-in-aid program to assist in the development of new local kinship support services programs and to assist in the expansion of existing community-based family support services programs to include local kinship support services programs.

SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature to create incentives for blending funding and increasing collaboration and to test the feasibility of new financing and reimbursement mechanisms that result in all of the following:

- (a) Reduced child welfare caseloads.
- (b) Comprehensive services and case management for foster children.
- (c) Reduced public spending.

SEC. 4. Section 16605 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

16605. (a) The department shall, subject to the availability of funds appropriated therefor, conduct a Kinship Support Services Program that is a grants-in-aid program providing start-up and expansion funds for local kinship support services programs that provide community-based family support services to relative caregivers and the children placed in their homes by the juvenile court or who are at risk of dependency or delinquency. Relatives with children in voluntary placements may access services, at the discretion of the county.

(b) The Kinship Support Services Program shall create a public-private partnership. A combination of federal, state, county, and private sector resources shall finance the establishment and ongoing operation of the program.

(c) The counties participating in the program shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Have 40 percent or more of dependent children in relative care placements.
- (2) Have a demonstrated capacity for collaboration and interagency coordination.



(3) Have a viable plan for ongoing financial support of the local kinship support services program.

(4) Utilize relative caregivers as employees of the program.

(5) Have strong and viable public or private agencies to operate the program.

(d) The Kinship Support Services Program shall demonstrate the use of supportive services provided to relative caregivers and children placed in their homes using a community-based kinship support services model. This model shall provide services to relative caregivers that are aimed at helping to ensure permanent family kinship placements for children who have been placed with them by the juvenile court, and to provide family support services that will eliminate the need for juvenile court jurisdiction and the provision of services by the county welfare department.

(e) The program shall provide family support services appropriate for the target populations. These services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Assessment and case management.

(2) Social services referral and intervention aimed at maintaining the kinship family unit, for example, housing, homemaker services, respite care, legal services, and day care.

(3) Transportation for medical care and educational and recreational activities.

(4) Information and referral services.

(5) Individual and group counseling in the area of parent-child relationships and group conflict.

(6) Counseling and referral services aimed at promoting permanency, including kinship adoption and guardianship.

(7) Tutoring and mentoring.

(f) The Edgewood Center for Children and Families in San Francisco shall provide technical assistance to the Kinship Support Services Program and shall facilitate the sharing of information and resources among the local programs.

(g) (1) The sum of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State Department of Social Services for the purpose of funding this grants-in-aid program.

(2) The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State Department of Social Services for funding of the technical assistance to be provided by the Edgewood Center for Children and Families.

(3) The sum of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the State Department of Social Services to fund the costs of state administration of the program.

(4) It is the intent of the Legislature that this program result in cost efficiencies and that any cost savings realized by participating



counties as a result of this program be utilized to supplement, not supplant, other children's services programs, including children's health and mental health initiatives and child welfare.

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