

HOUSE BILL NO. 5444

February 04, 2020, Introduced by Reps. Liberati, Crawford, Brixie, Ellison, Lasinski, Love, Sabo, Cynthia Johnson, Haadsma, Coleman, Sneller, Manoogian, Yancey, Stone, Hood, Sowerby, Kuppa, Anthony, Bolden, Wittenberg, Kennedy, Chirkun, Hope, O'Malley, Webber, Garrett, Garza, Clemente, Hammoud, Shannon, Pohutsky, Rendon, Vaupel, Wozniak, Calley and Kahle and referred to the Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors.

A bill to create the kinship caregiver navigator program; to provide for resources and services for kinship caregivers; to make appropriations for the kinship caregiver navigator program; and to prescribe the powers and duties for certain state departments and agencies.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

- 1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
- 2 "kinship caregiver navigator act".
- 3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:
- 4 (a) "Advisory council" means "council" as that term is defined



1 in the kinship caregiver advisory council act.

2 (b) "Department", "kinship caregiver", "kinship family", and
3 "relative" mean those terms as defined in the kinship caregiver
4 advisory council act.

5 (c) "Navigator" means an individual, knowledgeable about the
6 social and child welfare system, who is hired by the navigator
7 services provider to provide support services to kinship
8 caregivers.

9 (d) "Navigator program" means the kinship caregiver navigator
10 program established in section 3.

11 (e) "Navigator services provider" or "provider" means the
12 entity with whom the department contracts under section 3 to
13 provide navigator services to kinship caregivers.

14 Sec. 3. (1) The department shall establish and maintain the
15 kinship caregiver navigator program.

16 (2) Before participating in the navigator program, the
17 department must submit to the United States Department of Health
18 and Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families
19 an attachment to the state title IV-E plan. The attachment must
20 include, at a minimum, all of the following:

21 (a) The kinship navigator model the department shall utilize
22 to create the program. The department must provide an assurance
23 that this model meets the requirements of federal law.

24 (b) The date the navigator program began or will begin.

25 (c) Information describing the navigator program target
26 population and service area.

27 (d) Information on how the department will implement the
28 navigator program.

29 (3) The department shall enter into a contract with a third



1 party to provide navigator services to kinship caregivers.

2 (4) In addition to providing navigator services, the navigator
3 services provider shall establish a website regarding local support
4 groups, resources, and services for kinship caregivers. The website
5 must provide, at a minimum, information on the following:

6 (a) Outreach.

7 (b) Educational information.

8 (c) Training materials.

9 (d) Financial assistance.

10 (e) Legal services, including, but not limited to, pro bono
11 and low bono legal aid providers, forms needed to file a petition
12 in court, guides to kinship care legal issues, and any other
13 information the provider considers necessary.

14 (f) Health care, mental health, and substance use disorder
15 services.

16 (g) Child and respite care.

17 (h) Support groups.

18 (i) Parenting tips.

19 (j) Resources for caring for children with special needs.

20 (5) The navigator services provider shall establish and
21 maintain a single statewide toll-free telephone number for kinship
22 caregivers to call for information or services.

23 Sec. 4. The navigator services provider shall do all of the
24 following:

25 (a) Consult with the advisory council on the design and
26 continuation of the navigator program.

27 (b) Consult with the advisory council on developing outreach
28 and educational material to provide to kinship families.

29 (c) Promote partnerships between public and private agencies



1 to increase knowledge of the needs of kinship families and to
2 increase responsiveness to those needs. This includes working with
3 other navigation systems for foster care and adoption, as well as
4 for general information and referral systems.

5 (d) Develop training material for navigators that is based on
6 industry best practices.

7 (e) Share aggregate data with the advisory council regarding
8 who is being served under the navigator program and what services
9 are being provided. The provider shall not share information on
10 individual identification under this subdivision.

11 Sec. 5. The navigator program shall do all of the following:

12 (a) Assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and
13 using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they
14 are raising.

15 (b) Work with state, local, and nonprofit agencies that
16 promote service coordination or provide information and referral
17 services.

18 (c) Establish information and referral systems that link, by
19 toll-free access, kinship caregivers, kinship support group
20 facilitators, and kinship caregiver service providers to each
21 other. This information and referral systems shall include, but are
22 not limited to, the following:

23 (i) Eligibility and enrollment information.

24 (ii) Relevant training to assist kinship caregivers in
25 caregiving.

26 (iii) Connections to legal aid and assistance providers.

27 (d) Comply with all federal regulations and statutes,
28 including the provisions of 42 USC 627 and 671, to qualify for
29 reimbursement of 50% of the costs for the kinship caregiver



1 navigator program.

2 Sec. 6. The navigator services provider may do all of the
3 following:

4 (a) Identify and maintain relationships with the State Bar of
5 Michigan, law school clinics, and other nonprofit legal services
6 agencies. These relationships shall facilitate developing a county
7 or regional pro bono or low bono legal representation referral
8 program.

9 (b) Develop and maintain training materials and training
10 programs designed to educate pro bono, low bono, or both, attorneys
11 on how to provide legal advice, assistance, and representation
12 specific to kinship caregivers.

13 (c) Apply for and accept grants from other public or private
14 entities to develop legal services initiatives.

15 Sec. 7. (1) The kinship caregiver navigator fund is created
16 within the state treasury.

17 (2) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from
18 any source for deposit into the fund. The state treasurer shall
19 direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit
20 to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

21 (3) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall
22 remain in the fund and shall not lapse to the general fund.

23 (4) The department's children's services agency shall be the
24 administrator of the fund for auditing purposes.

25 (5) The department's children's services agency shall expend
26 money from the fund, upon appropriation, only for the purpose of
27 carrying out the provisions of this act.

28 Enacting section 1. This act takes effect October 1, 2020.

29 Enacting section 2. This act does not take effect unless



- 1 Senate Bill No. _____ or House Bill No. 5443 (request no. 03728'19 *)
- 2 of the 100th Legislature is enacted into law.

