

OPTIONS *for* RELATIVES



Importance of relatives

Oregon recognizes the importance of a child's relationships with parents, siblings, grandparents and other relatives. The Department of Human Services (DHS) Child Welfare program actively seeks to locate a child's relatives in order to engage safe, positive and supportive relatives and significant persons in a child's life during the time a child cannot live with his or her parents.

Options for relative involvement

Provide information and input. Relatives of a child in the custody of the state can provide information about the child's background and make recommendations for the child's future.

Assisting in managing a child's safety

Relatives may be asked to assist in managing a child's safety through participation in the ongoing safety plan.

Communication and visitation with a child

Relatives can communicate with or visit with a child in the custody of the state when contact benefits the child or by the direction of the court.

Notice of court hearings

A legal grandparent may be informed of court proceedings about his or her grandchild. The legal grandparent must provide a written request to the Department of Human Services if he or she wishes to receive notice of court proceedings and must provide a mailing address where the legal notice may be sent.

Any relative who is a placement resource for a child in the custody of the state receives notice of court proceedings and has the right to speak during the court proceeding.

Assessment as a temporary placement resource

The Department of Human Services is committed to diligent efforts to place a child with relatives and to place siblings together. A relative may request more information from DHS about how to be considered as a placement resource.

Assessment as a placement resource includes a review of the criminal history and child abuse records of any adult living in the household of a prospective placement resource, a review of the home's safety, and an assessment of the prospective placement resource's ability to meet safety, permanency and well-being needs of the child. DHS staff will make several home visits during the assessment process.

When a child cannot safely return home after a period of time specified in federal laws, other permanency options are examined, including adoption and guardianship.



Preference as a permanent placement resource

Adoption — The agency's preference is to place with relatives when the permanency plan for the child is adoption. Adoption assistance, which may include medical insurance and/or a cash payment, may be available if the child meets the eligibility requirements and there is an identified need.



Guardianship —The agency's preference is to place with relatives when the permanency plan for the child is guardianship. Guardianship assistance, which may include medical insurance and/or a cash payment, may be available if the child meets federal eligibility requirements and there is an identified need.

The assistance available through adoption or guardianship is provided through a written agreement with the state regarding the scope and amount of any payment or other assistance.

All placement resource options require an assessment of the prospective family's home.

Other opportunities for involvement

For more information about any of these opportunities for involvement, please contact:

For more information about a relative's involvement and the resources available to relatives who become caregivers, please visit: www.oregon.gov/DHS/children.

This document can be provided upon request in alternative formats for individuals with disabilities. Other formats may include (but are not limited to) large print, Braille, audio recordings, Web-based communications and other electronic formats.

