

Extended Family Support Program Overview



The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Extended Family Support Program (EFSP) provides short term services to relative caregiver families that are not involved in the formal child welfare system. The goal of EFSP is to assist relative caregivers with:

- Obtaining private guardianship of the child.
- Securing the child-only grant and/or other services.
- Applying for a day care subsidy.
- Enrolling school-aged children in the relative caregiver's school district.
- Obtaining basic goods and services needed to maintain a stable home for the child.
- Community resources and evidenced-based services as needed.

Obtain Assistance



To inquire about receiving EFSP services, call the DCFS Hotline at **1-800-25ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)**.

We encourage you to say:

"I am caring for my relative's child. I have been caring for them for more than 14 days. The child is not being abused or neglected but I need help. I would like to be referred to the Extended Family Support Program."

The EFSP also serves caregivers who are not relatives but have a strong relationship with the child.

For more information on the EFSP, please call **312-328-2212**.



Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services

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Extended Family Support Program (EFSP)



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DCFS
Children & Family Services

Services to Obtain Guardianship

Services Provided by EFSP

Important Information



The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Extended Family Support Program (EFSP) can assist a relative caregiver who wants to obtain guardianship through probate court of a relative's child living in the home of the caregiver. This may include:

- Education and assistance to negotiate the probate court system.
- Assisting relative caregivers with obtaining required documents, such as birth certificates.
- Arranging for legal counsel in counties as needed.



The EFSP caseworker will meet with the relative caregiver until guardianship has been obtained or until other services have been provided. During this time, the EFSP caseworker may provide other services to stabilize the relative family, such as:

- Crisis intervention and short term interventions to address issues in the family.
- Assisting eligible families to obtain TANF benefits, subsidized daycare and other benefits that may be available to the caregiver.
- Advocating with local schools to enroll the child in the caregiver's school district.
- Coordinating family meetings and mediation.
- Referring to and advocating for needed services such as: financial employment and/or housing counseling, legal services, medical and mental health services, parenting counseling and training, special education and vocational training.
- Recommending cash assistance and in-kind assistance to help meet the basic needs of the family.

Ask your caseworker if other programs are available.

Cash Assistance

EFSP has a limited cash assistance program to assist relative caregivers to meet the basic needs of their relative's child. Cash assistance may be used to:

- Obtain legal counsel for probate court in counties where legal counsel is necessary.
- Pay for court fees and court-required documents by the court.
- Obtain basic goods (bed, dresser, clothing, etc.) and services needed to ensure that the family is stable.



When deciding whether to obtain services offered by EFSP, it is important to know what services the program does not provide.

While the EFSP caseworker may be able to assist the relative caregiver obtain a child only grant through the Illinois Department of Human Services, DCFS will not provide a monthly stipend to the relative.

In Addition, EFSP Does Not:

- Assist with guardianship when a biological parent objects.
- Assist caregivers when either the caregiver or the child has an open DCFS case.
- Assist caregivers living outside of Illinois.
- Assist caregivers when a biological parent lives with the relative caregiver and is able to care for the child themselves.

