



## Guardianship Assistance Program Checklist

Yes	No	Pending (describe)	
<b>Guardianship Assistance Program Requirements in Fostering Connections</b> (*denotes an option under Fostering Connections)			
			State has submitted a state plan amendment for the federal Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP)
			State has developed a written and binding kinship guardianship assistance agreement to be negotiated with relative caregivers who want to assume guardianship of children in their care
			Guardianship assistance agreement includes information about the payment amount a guardian caregiver will receive on behalf of a child and the manner in which the payment may be adjusted in consultation with the relative caregiver and based on the circumstances of the caregiver and needs of the child
			Guardianship assistance agreement includes information about the additional services and assistance the child and relative guardian will be eligible for and the procedure by which the relative guardian may apply for additional services as needed
			Guardianship assistance agreement specifies that the state will pay the total cost of nonrecurring expenses associated with obtaining legal guardianship of the child, not to exceed \$2,000
			Guardianship assistance agreement specifies that the agreement remains in effect regardless of the state residence of the relative guardian
			Guardianship assistance payment does not exceed the foster care maintenance payment the child received or would have received if s/he had remained in a foster family home
			Children eligible for the Title IV-E GAP payments are categorically eligible for Medicaid
			Children eligible for federal GAP payments are those who: have been in state custody, are eligible for Title IV-E, have been living in the home of the prospective relative guardian for at least 6 consecutive months, and have demonstrated a strong attachment to their prospective guardian
			Siblings placed with a Title IV-E eligible child who is eligible for a GAP payment in the home of a relative guardian are also eligible for GAP payments even if they do not meet federal eligibility requirements for GAP
			Guardian must have a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child
			State must determine that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options for an otherwise eligible child before the child can be eligible for GAP payments, except in the case of siblings placed in the same home with the eligible child
			State consults with children 14 years and older about the guardianship arrangements

			State makes clear that a child who is eligible for Title IV-E adoption assistance when he or she receives GAP will be eligible for IV-E adoption assistance if the child is later adopted by the guardian as if he or she had never been in guardianship
			State has made provisions for all federally required criminal background checks and child abuse and neglect registry checks before making GAP payments to the relative guardian on behalf of the child
<b>Case Plan Requirements for Children to Be Placed with Relatives and Receive GAP Payments</b>			
			Description of steps taken to determine that it is not appropriate for a child to be returned home or adopted
			Description of the reasons why adoption is not being pursued after a discussion with the child's relative foster parent about adoption as a more legally permanent alternative to legal guardianship
			Description of the reasons for any separation of siblings during placement in the guardianship arrangement
			Description of why guardianship is in the child's best interests
			Description of the ways the child meets the eligibility requirements for GAP payments
			Description of efforts made to discuss with the child's parent(s) the guardianship arrangement or reasons why efforts were not made
<b>Tribal Considerations in GAP</b>			
			Definition of relative recognizes and values the importance of tribal relationships
			State Title IV-E agreements with tribes address the provision of guardianship assistance to American Indian/Alaskan Native families
			State Title IV-E agreements with tribes address the continuation of Medicaid coverage for American Indian/Alaskan Native children for whom GAP payments are made
			State Title IV-E agreements with tribes address the use of federal funds under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program to provide services and supports to American Indian/Alaskan Native youths who after reaching their 16 <sup>th</sup> birthdays leave foster care for adoption or guardianship
			State is working with a tribe to apply for direct access to Title IV-E and assisting the tribe to develop the capacity to implement the Title IV-E guardianship assistance program
<b>Additional Best Practice Considerations</b>			
			State has a process in place to allow for a successor guardian in the event that the relative guardian of the child dies or is no longer able to care for the child
			State is using an expansive definition of kin to include godparents, family friends, neighbors and others with a pre-existing relationship to the child in addition to blood relatives
			State will make Independent Living Services available to children who exit foster care to guardianship after age 16*
			State will make Education and Training Vouchers available to children who exit foster care to guardianship after age 16*
			State has developed a way to track the number of children benefitting from GAP and the impact it is having on permanence for children

For further information on the Guardianship Assistance Program, please contact Jennifer Miller from ChildFocus at [jennifer@childfocuspartners.com](mailto:jennifer@childfocuspartners.com) Stefanie Sprow from the Children's Defense Fund at [ssprow@childrensdefense.org](mailto:ssprow@childrensdefense.org)