



**DC FAMILY SUCCESS CENTERS
LEGAL SERVICES PANEL**

January 14, 2020

www.dckincare.org

WHO WE HELP:



**RELATIVES WHO CARE
FOR DC CHILDREN**

**WHEN THE
CHILDREN'S
PARENTS CANNOT**



WHO ARE RELATIVE CAREGIVERS?



- Blood relatives
 - Ex: Grandparents, Aunts/Uncles, or Adult Siblings
- Fictive Kin
 - Ex: Godparents or Family Friends
- Our Clients → 65% Grandparents; 35% Other relatives or fictive Kin
 - We do not represent parents



HOW WE HELP CAREGIVERS:



- LEGAL REPRESENTATION
- BRIEF LEGAL ADVICE
- ASSISTANCE WITH BENEFITS
- RESOURCES AND EDUCATION
- ADVOCACY

LEGAL REPRESENTATION

- **We Represent:**

- Relative caregivers seeking a court order or Custodial Power of Attorney so they can care for the child
- Relative caregivers in other related court cases (e.g., domestic violence)
- Relative caregivers seeking benefits for themselves and the children they raise, such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, & SSI
- Relative caregivers who need help with other assistance programs (e.g., rent or utility assistance)



BRIEF LEGAL ADVICE

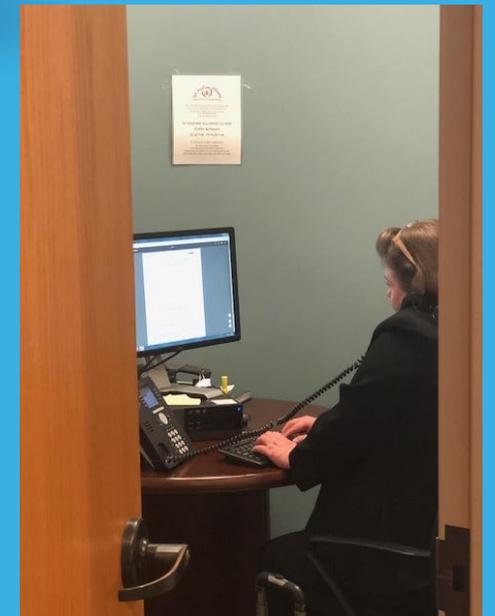
Call 202-505-5803

Legal Helpline



- Attorney-client relationship during phone call
- Relationship ends when call is over

(our weekly walk-in clinic at DC Superior Court will resume when safe to do so)



ASSISTANCE WITH BENEFITS FOR RELATIVE CAREGIVERS



TANF, SNAP, WIC

Medicaid

SSI for Children

Grandparent Caregiver Program Subsidy

Close Relative Caregiver Program Subsidy

Child Support

Child Care Subsidy

Foster Care Subsidy



SAMPLE CASE



- **CHILD** → A 13-year-old girl with dyslexia
 - **FATHER** → Incarcerated and never involved
 - **MOTHER** → Killed by gun violence
 - **CHILD'S MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER** → Takes custody of the child
- In order to obtain medical care, services, SSI for the child, and an IEP for school accommodations, the grandmother needs to get a court order that grants her legal custody, which includes the right to authorize medical care, obtain medical records, and sign forms for SSI and an IEP.
- The grandmother also needs to move to a larger apartment now that the child is living with her. The DC Housing authority typically requires a court order showing that the grandmother has physical custody of the child in order to be eligible for a larger subsidized housing unit.



ADVOCACY



- Assess the needs of DC relative caregivers
- Testify before DC City Council to enhance legal rights and financial benefits for relative caregivers
- Meet with DC government agencies and community organizations about kinship family issues
- Draft articles and papers to educate the community and decision-makers on the essential needs of relative caregivers



CAREGIVER RAISE ME UP GROUPS



- Conducted at our community partner sites (or virtually during the public health emergency)
- Provide education and information to relative caregivers raising DC children
 - ❖ Legal Rights
 - ❖ Financial Benefits
 - ❖ Other Resources
- Provide copies of our Relative Caregiver Resource Guide
- Provide Brief Legal Advice (after each group)



OUR RELATIVE CAREGIVER RESOURCE GUIDE



A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR RELATIVES RAISING D.C. CHILDREN:

Helping You Find the Best Path Forward



This Guide provides information about the legal options and financial resources to consider when it becomes necessary for a relative caregiver to care for a DC child



QUESTIONS?



If you are a relative caregiver who would benefit from legal advice, help with court proceedings or benefits, or help with locating resources and support...

Give us a call!

LEGAL HELPLINE

202-505-5803