



PROBATE MATTERS

News you can use from Connecticut's Probate Courts

We hope you'll share this helpful news with your constituents!

Probate Court Grants Available to Help Kinship Guardians

Rent, Eyeglasses, Camp, Clothing Among the Eligible Expenses



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With so many Connecticut families feeling the financial pain of inflation, Probate Court-appointed kinship guardians caring for children are reminded that they may be eligible for [thousands of dollars in grants](#) to help with housing, food and transportation, as well as summer camp and other enrichment activities.

A guardianship case typically comes before one of [Connecticut's Probate Courts](#) when parents are unable to care for their children due to addiction, mental illness, incarceration or other circumstances. In most cases, Probate Courts appoint a grandparent or other relative to care for the children. In some cases, courts will appoint a close family friend who has a long-standing relationship with the child, as children tend to experience the most benefits when they are placed with adults they already know and trust.

Appointing kinship guardians also saves Connecticut an estimated \$72 million a year by keeping thousands of children out of foster care. However, unlike foster parents, Probate Court-appointed guardians receive no financial support for taking on this incredibly important – and often unexpected – responsibility.

For more than a decade, local Probate Courts have annually awarded \$2 million in grants from the state Kinship Fund and Respite Fund to guardians of children who meet low-income guidelines.

The Kinship Fund awards grants of up to \$550 a child -- or \$2,200 a family – a year to help pay for necessities such as eyeglasses and clothing, or for enrichment activities such as summer camp, art supplies or creative books.

The Respite Fund helps guardians with the cost of child care, rent, transportation and food. These grants are capped at \$2,200 a year.

“Too many families are struggling and having to choose between rent and food,” said West Hartford-based Probate Court Administrator Beverly Streit-Kefalas. “These grants can help with that, as well as to help ensure that extras like summer camp aren’t impossible. We’re so pleased this money exists to help guardians and the children in their care.”

Guardians can apply for both funds, though a separate application for each is required. Amounts awarded to residents are determined by [their local Probate Court](#).

Residents can find [grant applications online](#) or by contacting their [local Probate Court](#).

Did you know?

The Probate Courts' Kinship Guardians program saves Connecticut an estimated \$72 million a year by keeping thousands of children out of the foster care system.