

APPENDIX D

PA KinConnector

Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee Charter

Background: Act 89 of 2018, known as the Kinship Caregiver Navigator Program Act, established Pennsylvania's Kinship Navigator program to be a resource for grandparents and other relative or non-relative caregivers who are raising children in the state of Pennsylvania. The Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), through a solicitation process entered a contract with the Bair Foundation in May of 2019 to operate Pennsylvania's Kinship Navigator Program, known as KinConnector.

KinConnector is an information and referral program for kinship caregivers that helps identify multiple sources of assistance, including local, state, federal, and private resources. KinConnector is to assist relatives and kin who are caring for a relative's child to learn about, locate, and obtain the services and supports needed to adequately care for the child, and to help meet their own needs as caregivers. Such services may include how to locate appropriate physical, dental, or behavioral health services; how to apply for benefits, including Social Security, Public Assistance and the Children's Health Insurance Program; how to enroll the child in school; support groups for caretakers; or other services designed to meet the needs of both the caregivers and the children they are raising.

KinConnector is required to develop and implement a Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee to participate in the planning and development of the program and to make recommendation to DHS/OCYF about how to implement and improve the program and service delivery. The Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee was established October 2019.

Purpose: The Kinship Navigator Advisory (KNAC) serves as a critical component to the KinConnector program. The purpose of the KNAC is to participate in planning and development of the program and to discuss and make recommendations to DHS/OCYF on how to implement and improve the program and service delivery within the existing scope of the contract. Recommendations should include the following:

1. Increase partnerships between public and private agencies including schools, community and faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies.
2. Increase the knowledge of the needs of kinship families with local, state and governing agencies and how families can better access the resources they need.
3. Support and increase access of resources and types of information that kinship families and youth being raised in kinship families find useful.
4. Provide updated information on the changes and accessibility of resources that are most important to kinship families.

5. Support and provide ways to improve KinConnector program initiatives.

Membership/Composition: The KNAC will have eight to twelve members and shall be in combination of professionals with experience working with kinship families such as DHS/OCYF, Pennsylvania Department of Aging, Pennsylvania Department of Health alongside informal and formal kinship families and kinship adults. KNAC members may be recommended by KinConnector staff, DHS/ OCYF, KNAC members or other kinship care professionals and kinship families. Members recommended will be voted in by the majority vote of the KNAC.

Member Roles/KNAC Expectations and Responsibilities:

1. All activities and discussions will be voted by simple majority and all members will be voting members.
2. Members are required to attend three out of the four quarterly meetings.
3. All KNAC members are required to participate in KNAC Orientation Training. The training will be conducted by the KinConnector Program Director.
4. The KNAC shall elect a chairperson. KNAC chairperson will be nominated and voted in by the KNAC. Pennsylvania's KinConnector Program Director shall serve as the co-chairperson. The chairperson and co-chairperson will be responsible for preparing the agenda and facilitating discussion of KNAC scheduled meetings as well as submitting KNAC recommendations to DHS/OCYF for final approval.
5. The KNAC is also responsible for creating and maintaining any sub-committees deemed necessary in the pursuit of carrying out KNAC recommendations and for ongoing KNAC goals. Each sub-committee will have an appointed chairperson who will be responsible for reporting progress and project status updates at each of the quarterly KNAC meetings.
6. The KNAC will review, modify if necessary and approve the charter on an annual basis.

Term: KNAC members will serve a minimum of 18 months but may serve longer. Members deciding to leave at the end of their 18-month term or before will provide the KNAC a 90-day notice of intent to vacate their KNAC member seat. This notice is required to begin the process to fill the vacant position and proceed with selecting new membership. New members will be nominated, voted on at the Winter and Summer quarter meetings. This process will also help to maintain a staggering roster.

Meetings: The KNAC meetings will be held on a quarterly basis and operating on the federal fiscal year of October-September. The Pennsylvania KinConnector

Administrative Assistant will serve as the KNAC Secretary and will take the minutes at each quarterly meeting and submit to DHS for approval within ten days following the meeting.

Written notice/reminders of upcoming meetings will be sent to KNAC members at least thirty days prior by the KNAC Secretary. This notice will also include any material, agenda, prior meeting minutes available and other information that will need to be reviewed in preparation of the upcoming meeting.