

Basic Needs

Support children by funding kinship care

Children placed with relatives deserve more

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All children need love, support, and a safe, stable environment to learn and grow. Research shows that children who are placed with relatives generally do better than children who are placed in foster care. Our analysis shows that children who are placed with kin in Ohio receive far less public financial support compared to children placed in a licensed foster care setting.

Table 1				
Kids placed with kin get less state support than kids in foster care				
Number of Children	County	Monthly Support for Approved Kin Caregivers	Minimum Monthly Support for Licensed Foster Care Providers	Maximum Monthly Support for Licensed Foster Care Providers
1	Cuyahoga	\$302	\$624	\$2,619
2	Cuyahoga	\$412	\$1,248	\$5,238
1	Scioto	\$302	\$836	\$4,258
2	Scioto	\$412	\$1,672	\$8,516

Source: Monthly support for approved kinship caregivers is based on Ohio Works First (OWF) payment standards as of January 1, 2020, ODJFS, <https://bit.ly/2SSNWT3>. Minimum and maximum monthly support for licensed foster care providers are estimates based on SFY 2020 foster care per diem rates. For more details on per diem rates by county, see Appendix C in the full report.

The *D.O. v. Glisson* decision was supposed change that in Ohio, but it hasn't. The landmark court case confirmed that children placed with approved relative caregivers have a right to the same foster care maintenance payments that children placed with licensed foster parents receive. Nearly four years after the ruling, Ohio remains in violation of federal law. Ohio continues to provide \$302 a month or less for a child placed with kin in Scioto County. Under *Glisson*, that child has a right to at least \$836 a month, which is the minimum monthly payment for a child in a licensed foster care setting in Scioto County.

Ohio lawmakers must do more to provide security for children during an unstable and traumatic time in their life. Kinship caregivers change their lives to care for their grandchild, niece, or a close family friend. They are asked to nurture and support children in their care the same way non-relative foster parents do, with fewer resources, less training, more stress, and limited preparation.



Governor DeWine and state lawmakers must act in the next state budget to provide basic security and stability for these children and their approved relative caregivers. **State lawmakers should:**

- **Make sure Ohio complies with D.O. v. Glisson, which is federal law.** Children placed with approved kinship caregivers have a right to the same level of state support as children placed with foster parents.
- **Make sure kinship caregivers understand their options and the resources available to them.** State policymakers need to make sure relative caregivers understand the different resources available to approved kinship caregivers and licensed foster parents, including the right of approved kinship caregivers to receive foster care maintenance payments.

Congress also needs to enact reforms to base federal foster care funds on what children need, not the outdated standard that measures the income of parents who the children are separated from.

Long-term, state lawmakers and the governor must also prioritize the needs of over 100,000 children who live with kin and kinship families, who will not be directly impacted the Glisson decision. State leaders should provide more stability and security for children in kinship care, and help kinship caregivers pay for their basic needs by increasing the monthly OWF child-only payment.