

MARYLAND'S KINSHIP LAW



Maryland's Kinship Law is effective October 1, 2024, and COMAR regulations are effective December 12, 2024.



HOW THE LAW IMPACTS PRACTICE:



Please consider the recently implemented [Kinship law](#) and COMAR regulations when determining placements. This law empowers our Social Services Administration to assess and license more kin caregivers for children in out-of-home care than ever before. Maryland historically prioritized placement with kin, but this law enables more children and youth to maintain roots in their communities by:

- Establishing a preference for youth experiencing out-of-home care to live with relatives, including chosen family.
- Maintaining safety standards and removing kin-specific licensing barriers.
- Expanding who can step up as kinship caregivers, including changing the minimum age from 21 to 18.

We emphasize kin-first throughout our work and actively seek kinship homes for the children and youth we serve.

In addition, the [new chapter of regulations](#) enables kinship caregivers for children in out-of-home care to receive, upon licensure, the same benefits as resource parents licensed by the 24 local social services departments. The updated kinship care process connects kinship families with the kin-specific support they need.

Questions? Contact the Social Services Administration:

dlkinfirst_dhs@maryland.gov

KIN-FIRST... BECAUSE FAMILY MATTERS.

25 S Charles Street • Baltimore, MD 21201-3330