



TEXAS
Department of Family
and Protective Services

**Relative and Other Designated Caregiver
Placement Program Report
Fiscal Year 2022**

September 2022

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Introduction

Pursuant to Family Code, Chapter 264, Section 762 added by House Bill (H.B.) 4, 85th Legislative, Regular Session, 2017, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) shall, not later than September 1 of each year, publish a report on the Relative and Other Designated Caregiver Program (RODC).

The report must include data on permanency outcomes for children placed with relative or other designated caregivers, including the:

- Number of disruptions in a relative or other designated caregiver placement;
- Reasons for any disruptions in a relative or other designated caregiver placement; and
- Length of time before a relative or other designated caregiver who receives monetary assistance from the department under this subchapter obtains permanent managing conservatorship of a child.

Background

Kinship care is the term used to describe care provided to a child in DFPS conservatorship by relatives or fictive kin who live outside of the child's home.

The RODC Program supports continuity and stability for children in DFPS conservatorship by providing financial assistance to eligible kinship caregivers. Prior to September 1, 2017, the RODC Program provided an initial, one-time cash payment, or integration payment, of \$1,000 for the first child and \$495 for each additional child in a sibling group to defray the costs incurred for essential child care items at the time of placement. Eligible caregivers were also able to receive an annual reimbursement of \$500 per year, per child to be paid on the anniversary date of placement.

H.B. 4 made changes to the RODC Program, including replacing the integration payment and annual reimbursement with a monthly reimbursement payment. From September 1, 2017, until August 31, 2022, the rate was \$11.55 per day, per eligible child paid to the kinship family monthly. This rate will increase to \$12.67 per day for each eligible child beginning September 1, 2022. Monthly reimbursement payments are time-limited and may be paid for up to 12 months. However, if DFPS determines there is good cause for an exception, payments may be made for up to an additional six months.

Good cause exceptions listed in the Texas Administrative Code, Section 700.1007 include:

- Identification, release, or location of a previously absent parent of the child;
- Awaiting the expiration of the timeline for an appeal of an order in a suit affecting the parent-child relationship;
- Allowing additional time for the caregiver to complete the approval process for adoption of the child;
- Waiting for approval of a child's placement from another state;
- Delayed determination of the child's Indian Child status, or awaiting the approval of the Indian Child's Tribe; and
- Any other circumstance surrounding the child or the caregiver DFPS deems to necessitate the extension.

An annual reimbursement of up to \$500 per year, per child for child-related expenses for up to 3 years or until the child turns 18, whichever occurs first may be provided if DFPS transfers conservatorship of the child to the kinship caregiver, and the caregiver does not receive Permanency Care Assistance.

Relative Placement Data Analysis

The data in this report represents state fiscal year 2022 (fiscal year to date 2022) year to date from September 2021 through May 2022 unless otherwise noted. As of fiscal year to date 2022, 44 percent¹ of children were placed with relatives or kin.² As of May 31, 2022, 8,786³ children were in a kinship placement. In fiscal year to date 2021, 44.5 percent of children were placed with relatives or kin. The most recently available national data (fiscal year 2020) indicates the national average for relative placement is 34 percent.⁴

Kinship Caregiver Benefits

In Summer 2022, qualitative feedback about kinship caregivers' experiences with financial support was solicited from caseworkers serving families receiving payments. Caseworkers and caregivers felt strongly that financial support enabled caregivers to provide not only for basic necessities, but also better care for youth.

"My niece and nephew were placed with me while I was living in a one-bedroom apartment. These funds have allowed me to move into a larger apartment so that the children have their own bedroom and room to play." – Kinship Caregiver

"I am a grandmother, caring for my granddaughter. I am very appreciative of the funds being offered to kinship families. I felt that taking on caring for my granddaughter long term could be a financial strain due to my limited funds. I am grateful that funds were available." – Kinship Caregiver

"Grandmother on fixed income needed assistance getting fingerprints and items to complete the licensing process in order to become a foster parent for her two grandchildren. RODC payment helped with this." – Kinship Caseworker

"Single mother of two needed assistance with getting a crib, fire extinguisher, fire ladder, medication lockbox in order to become licensed to care for two children who were placed in her home from two different counties. RODC allowed her to purchase these items." – Kinship Caseworker

"Regarding formula, I have two families right now that we have ordered formula for. The first family has a baby in her care who is nine months old. She is on a special formula due to having digestive issues. The second family has a toddler and an infant

¹ DFPS data warehouse report Executive Dashboard.

² This includes both those in kinship foster care and non-foster care kinship placements.

³ DFPS data warehouse report SA_09. Based on children in substitute care on May 31, 2022.

⁴ <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/afcarsreport28.pdf> (Newest available report as of October 2021)

in her care. The infant will be a year-old next month. She too has been on a special formula due to her digestive issues. For both families, the special formula is higher in price than the regular baby formulas and there have been recent price changes with the costs going up quite a bit. It has been reported that costs for formula have gone up by at least two to five dollars per can than what they paid six months ago. RODC payments have helped offset these costs.” — Kinship Caseworker

Kinship Home Disruptions

There were 15,896 non-foster kinship placements which ended in fiscal year to date 2022. Of these, 1,441 (9.07 percent) kinship placements disrupted, meaning the placement ended and the child’s next placement was in some type of non-kinship foster care.⁵ This compares to 21,700 non-foster kinship placements that ended in fiscal year to date 2021, with 1,843 (8.49 percent) of subsequent placements in a non-kinship foster care setting.⁶

Disruption Reasons

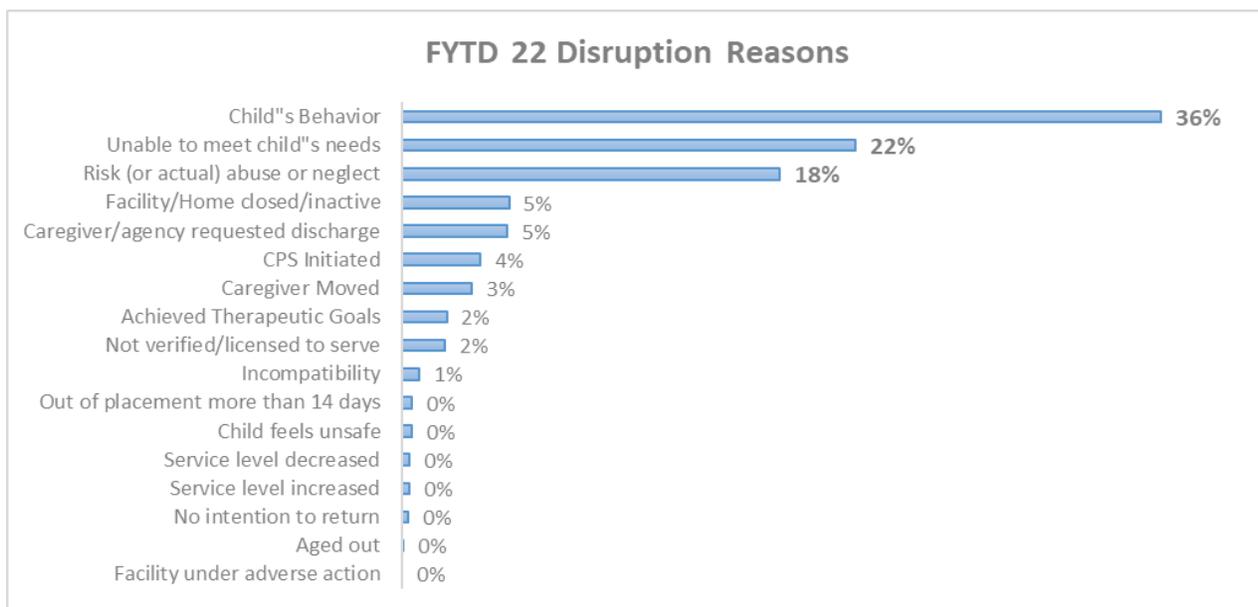
Disruptions reasons data was obtained for all children placed in a kinship home who had a subsequent move into a non-kinship paid foster care living arrangement. The most common reason caseworkers identified for a disruption in a kinship home was the child’s behavior.⁷ In fiscal year to date 2022 the top reasons for disruption following child’s behavior (36 percent) include the caregiver being unable to meet the child’s needs (22 percent) and risk or actual abuse/neglect (18 percent). See Table 1 below for the complete list of disruption reasons and the percentage of occurrences.

⁵ A move from one relative placement to another relative placement does not count as a disruption.

⁶ DFPS Management and Reporting Statistics report 106424

⁷ Ibid.

Table 1: Fiscal Year to Date 2022 Disruption Reasons



Permanent Managing Conservatorship Timelines

The average time it took for a relative to be awarded Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC)⁸ of a child in fiscal year to date 2022 for caregivers who received a payment under H.B. 4 at any point during their time as caregiver was 15.7 months, compared to 15.1 months in fiscal year 2021.⁹

For children in all placement types, the average time to achieve permanency is higher and has increased over the last three fiscal years from 17.9 in fiscal year 2020 to May to 18.8 months this same time last year to 19.4 months in fiscal year 2022 to May.¹⁰

⁸ Unless otherwise noted, relative PMC means a relative or kin obtained PMC but did not exit under the Permanency Care Assistance program.

⁹ DFPS Management and Reporting Statistics report 106425. Methodology for this metric was updated in fiscal year 2021 to reflect changes in available financial data. This metric calculates permanency for all caregivers who obtained PMC in fiscal year to date 2021 and 2022 and received H.B. 4 payments at any point in their time as caregiver.

¹⁰ DFPS data warehouse report Executive Dashboard.

Conclusion

The new payment program started September 1, 2017, and, as of September 1, 2022, will see an increase in the daily reimbursement rate paid to kinship caregivers. Analysis of the permanency outcomes highlights consistency of findings over the life of the program.

In terms of relative placements, Texas outperforms the most current national rate of children placed with a relative with 44 and 34 percent, respectively. This 10 percent difference includes both national and Texas improvements over the last three years of available data.

The state has also seen a 45 percent¹¹ decrease in children removed from their home in fiscal year 2022 to May when compared with this same time last year and has maintained consistency in relative placement at 44 percent.

¹¹ Ibid.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Name
DFPS	Department of Family and Protective Services
H.B.	House Bill
PMC	Permanent Managing Conservatorship
RODC	Relative and Other Designated Caregiver
