

## Rule Issued by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families is an Opportunity to Streamline Approval and Provide Equal Federal Support for Kin and Draft Kinship Approval Standards

On 9/28/23, the U.S. Administration for Children and Families published a final rule that addresses a longstanding inequity faced by relatives and kin caregivers and the children they care for in foster care. The rule, for the first time, explicitly allows child welfare agencies to use kin-specific commonsense foster care licensing standards and to use a separate set of standards for approving kin.

The rule requires that states provide kinship caregivers with the same level of financial assistance that any other foster care provider receives, an important step forward to strengthen the financial security of kinship families. The rule makes it possible for kin to more readily become licensed or approved, and more quickly receive services and funding for children in kinship foster care, ensuring that during times of family crisis children and caregivers receive assistance sooner.

The National Association for Regulatory Administration ([NARA](#)) [Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards](#) were the original model standards, meant to cover both kin and non-kin foster family homes. Going forward, those standards now apply to non-kin foster family homes only.

NARA continues to be part of the team developing Kin-Specific Standards, Safety Assessment and a tool kit to assist agencies in implementing the standards as the regulatory process experts.

The same team behind the original model standards, along with some new faces, have developed a new set of model standards specific to kin: Kin-Specific Foster Home Approval Standards.

The organizations behind the Kin-Specific Foster Home Approval Standards are: A Second Chance, Inc., American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, Children's Rights, CWPpolicy, Generations United, National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA), New America's Resource Family Working Group, and Think of Us.

The plan is to pilot the Kin-Specific Foster Home Approval Standards with 6 agencies, and the team will provide regular updates throughout the pilot.

Please provide feedback on these draft standards, which you can submit [through this link](#).

View the rule here: [Federal Register: Separate Licensing or Approval Standards for Relative or Kinship Foster Family Homes](#)

The [webinar](#), titled "Kin-Specific Foster Home Licensure: Overview of New Federal Rule & Release of Recommended Standards," will take place one week from tomorrow, on **Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. ET**. Everyone who registers will receive a link to the recording after the event.