

## Unlicensed Kinship Payment Process

### Next Steps for Counties Using the *Child Welfare Information System*

The 11 counties using the Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) for permanency planning are required to follow the steps below.

#### These are the steps counties can take after 8/25/24 release.

1. Review **updated** eligibility criteria for unlicensed kinship payment program outlined in the [Permanency Planning Manual](#). The following was updated in the eligibility criteria:
  - a. Child(ren) must be related to the kinship care provider through blood, marriage, or adoption, providing foster care as defined under G.S. 131D- 10.2(9); **and, if applicable, any half siblings of the child(ren) regardless of their relationship to the kinship care provider.**
2. If a kinship home meets the criteria, counties will be required to end the date of the previous placement in the CWIS and add a new placement, with the same provider, on the date the renewal occurs. As part of the new technology developed in the CWIS, counties will be able to indicate whether a paid kinship placement is occurring at the initial placement or the renewal. County staff will still be required to complete the eligibility checklist in the CWIS to confirm the placement meets the criteria to receive state reimbursement. These changes can be backdated to 7/8/24 (but no earlier) if the placement meets the updated eligibility criteria listed in step 1.
3. The following living arrangement types can be utilized for the Unlicensed Kinship Program if all other eligibility criteria is met.
  - a. Home of Unlicensed Relative
  - b. Home of Relative Seeking Licensure
  - c. Adoptive Home, Relative, Unlicensed
  - d. **Home of Unlicensed Nonrelative Kin\***
  - e. **Adoptive Home, Nonrelative Kin, Unlicensed\***

**\*These living arrangements are only to be used effective 7/8/24 when a kinship care provider meets eligibility by providing care for half sibling(s) of child(ren) placed with the kinship care provider who is related by blood, marriage, or adoption. The half sibling(s) do not have to be related to the kinship care provider by blood, marriage, or adoption as long as one child is related by blood, marriage, or adoption to the kinship care provider.**
4. There is a report in Client Services Data Warehouse that will assist counties in determining which children need the living arrangement updates. This report may be found within the Public Folders>DHHS Main Document>DSS>Child Welfare>State Sanctioned>NC FAST CS folder. The report name is CWIS Open Foster Care Cases and Living Arrangements.

This information will be reviewed at the County Champion Call on 8/22/24. Details regarding the steps required to complete the renewal process will also be updated through job aids.