

Resources

Neighborhood Legal Service Michigan (NLSM)

Elder Law & Advocacy Center

12121 Hemingway, Redford, MI 48239
313-937-8291

Children's Education Services & Housing Department

7310 Woodward Ave., Suite 301, Detroit, MI 48202
313-964-1975

Support Groups

Grandfamilies Raising Children Caregiver Café

Kinship Support Group Downriver Michigan Chapter

GrandarentsParenting2.0@gmail.com
The Guidance Center
734-785-7705

Grandparents Parenting Again & Kinship Care Support Group

313-531-2025
GrandparentsParentingagain221@gmail.com

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008
616-771-9913

State of Michigan Resources

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

333 S. Grand Ave, P.O. Box 30195
Lansing, MI 48909
michigan.gov/mdhhs
Assistance hotline: 855-275-6424
Benefits application: mibridges.michigan.gov/access

State Court Administrative Office Friend of the Court Bureau

309 N. Washington Sq., P.O. Box 30048
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-4835
courts.michigan.gov

Relative Licensing Coordinator

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

235 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, MI 48909
517-241-5535

Michigan Kinship Care Resource Center

Michigan State University
kinship.msu.edu
800-535-1218

Foster Care Navigator Program

855-MICKIDS (642-4543)
michigan.gov/mdhhs

Area Agencies on Aging

The Senior Alliance

5454 Venoy, Wayne, MI 48184
734-722-2830

Area Agency on Aging 1B

29100 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield, MI 48034
248-357-2255

Detroit Area Agency on Aging

1333 Brewery Park Blvd, Suite 200
Detroit, MI 48207
313-446-4444

Abuse

Child Protective Services (CPS)

Hotline 855-444-3911

Office of Children's Ombudsman

P.O. Box 30026, Lansing, MI 48909
800-642-4326

Education

Michigan Department of Education

517-373-3324
www.michigan.gov/mde

U.S. Department of Education

800-USA-LEARN (872-5327)
www.ed.gov/parents



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Free legal consultations for residents of Canton Township are sponsored by the Charter Township of Canton Community Development Block Grant program.

Tax deductible contributions are welcomed.

Kinship Caregiver Assistance Program



Elder Law & Advocacy Center

12121 Hemingway Center
Redford, MI 48239

313.937.8291



Neighborhood Legal Services Michigan (NLSM), established in 1966, is an organization that offers non-criminal legal advocacy, law related education and supportive services for individuals and families. NLSM offers programs in Elder Law, Housing, and Children's Services.

As a branch of NLSM, Elder Law & Advocacy Center (ELAC) is a non-profit law office that specializes in issues related to older adults and caregivers. ELAC provides free direct legal services to individuals age 60 years old or older who reside in Wayne County, Michigan. ELAC also offers education on elder abuse and prevention, caregiving, and general civil legal matters.

ELAC has been serving the community for over 20 years and is located in the Redford Community Center in Redford Township, MI.

ELAC offers advice on legal issues that specifically impact Kinship Caregivers, such as foster care, guardianship and public benefits. If you are over the age of 60 and live in Wayne County, MI call (313) 937-8291 for assistance.

This brochure is intended for informational purposes only. For legal guidance, please consult an attorney.



COURT INVOLVEMENT

Full guardianship does not sever the birth parents' rights and responsibilities. The guardian can determine where the child lives, activities the child is involved in and medical care or treatment. Parents retain the rights to visit the child, consent to adoption and/or name change. They also have the obligation to financially support the child. An annual report must be submitted to the court to maintain guardianship. Only available in certain circumstances.

Limited Guardianship is similar to full guardianship except that the custodial parent(s) must file for it and must willingly suspend their parental rights. A set of conditions are agreed to by the custodial parent(s) and the caregiver. The parent(s) must petition the court if they want to end the guardianship. A parent(s) may use limited guardianship if they are going to be separated from their child for a period of time such as for military service.

Juvenile Guardianship is a legal relationship between a guardian and a foster child(ren) created through family court. A court may create a juvenile guardianship pre- or post-termination of parental rights. Financial support may be available through DHHS through the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP). A GAP agreement must be signed by the prospective guardian and a representative from DHHS prior to the guardian's appointment by the court. A juvenile guardian has all the same responsibilities that a full guardian does in the probate court.

Adoption is permanent legal custody of a child. The birth parents have voluntarily surrendered their parental rights, or a court has severed parental rights. The court must determine that adoption is in the child's best interest. The adoptive parent has access to services on behalf of the child the same as any birth parent. Adoption is generally preferred if parental rights have been terminated.

Custody is when a caregiver has been given legal rights over a child by Family Court. A court order must be entered, and custody continues until the court enters a new order, or the child turns 18. Custody does not sever parental rights. Many times, a child entering the adoption process will be placed into custody first. In a relative custody situation, the child must be related within the 5th degree by marriage, blood or adoption.



NO COURT INVOLVEMENT

Informal - A child left in your custody without any court or agency involvement. The child's parent has left the child with you and no paperwork has been given to you to establish a legal relationship with the child. You will have no authority to do anything for the child.

Parental Power of Attorney is a document that parents can sign that gives you the ability to make decisions on behalf of the child. It can allow you to take the child to the doctor, or make a medical decision at the emergency room, or enroll the child in school. Must be renewed after 6 months. It can be revoked by parent(s).

AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Licensed Foster Care Providers are caregivers that are required to go through the licensing process put in place by the state. The process includes hours of training, housing inspections, and review of personal life. It may take between 3 to 6 months. Once licensed, a child can be placed in the home by DHHS. Providers are entitled to a stipend from the state to help with the care of the child and have responsibilities related to the care and supervision of the child.

In some circumstances, caregivers are not required to go through the licensing process and have a modified set of housing requirements. Those caregivers are considered **Unlicensed Relative Foster Care Providers** and they must have a waiver from DHHS in order provide to care to the child. An assessment of the home is necessary to receive a waiver. They may also be eligible for a stipend.