


Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Fitzroy Lee
Acting Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Fitzroy Lee
Acting Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: January 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement - Grandparent and Close Relative Caregivers
Program Amendment Act of 2022

REFERENCE: Bill 24-462, Committee Print as provided to the Office of Revenue
Analysis on January 10, 2022

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2025 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

The bill amends eligibility requirements¹ for the Grandparent Caregivers Program and the Close Relative Caregivers Program administered by the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA). The programs provide monthly financial assistance to low-income grandparents and close relatives taking care of and living with related children who meet eligibility requirements. The programs provide assistance on a first come, first served basis.

Under the bill:

- Caregivers will no longer be disqualified from the programs if the child's adult parent, who has a medically verifiable disability, is residing with the caregiver;

¹ By amending Section 103 of the Grandparent Caregivers Pilot Program Establishment Act of 2005, effective March 8, 2006 (D.C. Law 16-69; D.C. Official Code § 4-251.03) and Section 103 of the Close Relative Caregiver Subsidy Pilot Program Establishment Act of 2019, effective November 26, 2019 (D.C. Law 23-32; D.C. Official Code § 4-251.23).

- The requirement that a child must have resided with the caregiver for six months will be repealed;
- The requirement that the caregiver must have been the child's primary caregiver for the prior six months will be repealed;
- Residency requirements are amended so that caregivers may reside outside of the District at the time of application and for up to one year after receiving subsidy payments (provided the child resided in the District in the six months preceding the application for the subsidy and the parent was either a District resident or disabled (and if the parent is disabled and a non-resident, that the child attended school in the District));
- The definition of a Close Relative will be expanded to include non-relatives who are "Godparents," defined as individuals with close personal or emotional ties with the child or the child's family.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2025 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. Expanding the pool of eligible caregivers for the Grandparent Caregivers Program and Close Relative Caregivers Program could increase applications to the program, but there is no data to indicate by how much. Program participation is constrained by the programs' annual budgets. The Grandparent program budget expanded in fiscal year 2021 after previously having a waiting list; the Close Relatives program has additional capacity to accept approximately 27 additional caregivers. The bill's changes could result in a waiting list for one or both programs. CFSA will not require additional staffing or administrative resources to implement the changes to program eligibility required by the bill, including reviewing any additional applications that may be received.