

Kin Caregiver Check-In Call Script

This is a ready-to-use phone call script for checking in on kin caregivers in the early weeks of a placement to better support the needs of caregivers and promote placement stability.

Name of Kin Caregiver: _____

Name of child(ren): _____

Date of Placement: _____

Name of Caller: _____ Date of call: _____

Any notes on the case to incorporate into the call:

Introduction:

“My name is _____ [name], I work as the _____ [title] with the Department of Children & Family Services. I’m calling as I know you have recently taken placement of _____ [name of child(ren)]. I want to hear how you feel they’re adjusting, but first and foremost, this call is to check in on you.

We realize that taking a child(ren) into your home can be really overwhelming. There is often a lot to do and lots of new information provided to new caregivers.

I wanted to make sure you have been getting access to the support you need and to check if there are any areas where you need additional support. I also want to make sure you know what’s going to happen next, and give you a heads up about other folks from the agency who might be reaching out to you soon.

I’m going to ask a few questions about the support you and the child have been provided and am also here to answer any questions you may have, the best I can.

To get us started.....

What to say:

Notes for the caller:

Introductory questions:

“How are things going so far?”

“How are you adjusting?”

“Is the placement going smoothly?”

For communication tips, please see the GPL publication: "[Sending the Right Message: How Service Providers Can Use Family-Centered Communication to Support Engagement](#)"

What to ask about following initial check-in question, in suggested order:

Payment/financial support:

“You should be receiving a short-term temporary stipend, while you get started with the licensing home approval process. This is a _____-month stipend where you receive \$_____. Are you receiving that yet?”

If no...

“It usually takes (____) to (____) days to begin receiving it. If you don’t or have a question about it, I can connect you to _____[insert contact].”

“Do you have any other questions about financial support?”

Explain the process for any payment they should receive and what the timeline for it is

Adapt the script to fit the specific stipend, licensing timeline, and any other financial supports kin families may qualify for.

What to say:**Notes for the caller:****Caregiver supports and resources:**

“Do you have your placement packet that you were given when _____ [name of child(ren)] was dropped off? Have you had a chance to read through it?”

If yes... “What questions do you have?”

If no... “Do you want to go over it together?”

Los Angeles County gives kin caregivers a one-page “getting started” document that compiles relevant resources and ways to seek support. Los Angeles County includes this as part of their call script. This is to help prevent kin from feeling overwhelmed by the many documents given to them when they become a new kin caregiver.

“Have there been any issues that you would like additional support with?”

“Would you like me to go over some other resources that might help?”

“How else can we support you?”

Key topics caregivers often have questions about:

- Agency Relative Placement Agreement
- School set-up
- Doctor visits & insurance — Children entering foster care must see a doctor within 30 days
- Court orders
- Visitation planning & background checks

Informal support network:

“We know it takes a village; do you have other family and friends helping you?”

“Are there others we can support you in reaching out to, maybe to provide you some relief as a caregiver, or just to make sure _____ [name of child(ren)] is staying connected to family and friends?”

Use this early checkpoint as an opportunity to identify others who may be able to provide respite, and jumpstart the process for approval (e.g., get full information and begin background checks). This can lead to more timely respite support and reduce caregiver stress/overwhelm later.

Use the [Family Finding Connections Log](#) to document these connections.

What to say:

Notes for the caller:

Timing of process:

“I know this is all new — and there’s a lot of steps and a lot of names.”

“I want to talk through some of the process pieces to help you feel more prepared for what’s coming. Feel free to interrupt me with questions or if anything is not clear.”

In developing their call script, the LA team prioritized highlighting key initial steps in the process they most often heard kin caregivers express confusion or stress around. Supplement the following bullets with what is most fitting for kin caregiver experience in your jurisdiction.

- What to expect around court proceedings
- Concurrent planning
- Caregiver licensing process

Immediate next steps:

“OK, that was a lot! You don’t have to remember everything, and of course we know more questions will likely come up in time.”

“Here’s what will happen next:

- I will send you a document of what we talked about, so you can have a record.
- I will share your concerns/questions with other case support staff so they can help identify resources for you.
- I will also include the names and titles of people who will be calling you next time.”

Most importantly, if this call is not conducted by the case manager, tell them who is their case manager and that they should contact them in the future when they have questions and needs.

Supportive closing:

“Thank you for all you are doing to help _____ [name of child(ren)]. We know this is not easy, but we know you are making a difference in their life.”

Affirm your team’s belief in the importance of kinship care, and how they are making a difference in the child(ren)’s life — now and in the future.

To access more kin-supportive tools, please click [HERE](#).