

# Eligibility Criteria for Adoption Assistance and KinGAP

## **Adoption Assistance**

For a child to be eligible, one or more of the following conditions must exist and be documented:

- a) The child is six years of age or older;
- b) The child is two years of age or older and a member of a minority race or ethnic group;
- c) The child is a member of a sibling group of three or more children to be placed in the same adoptive home;
- d) The child is a member of a sibling group of two children to be placed in the same adoptive home, in which one or more of the siblings meet at least one of the other criteria for special needs;
- e) The child has a medically diagnosed disability which substantially limits one or more major life activity, requires professional treatment, assistance in self-care, or the purchase of special equipment;
- f) The child is diagnosed by a qualified professional to have a psychiatric condition which impairs the child's mental, intellectual, or social functioning, and for which the child requires professional services;
- g) The child is diagnosed by a qualified professional to have a behavioral or emotional disorder characterized by inappropriate behavior which deviates substantially from behavior appropriate to the child's age or significantly interferes with child's intellectual, social and personal functioning;
- h) The child is diagnosed to be mentally retarded by a qualified professional;
- i) The child is at risk for a diagnosis described above in items e through h, due to prenatal exposure to toxins, a history of abuse or serious neglect, or genetic history;
- j) The child meets all of the medical and disability requirements for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

## **Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP)**

The following criteria must be met to receive Guardianship Assistance:

- a) A determination by the Court that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options for the child;
- b) The child was placed in the licensed home for a minimum of six months;
- c) The child is under the placement responsibility of a North Carolina county department of social services at the time of entry into the Guardianship Assistance Program;
- d) The child is at least age 14 but not older than age 18 and demonstrates a strong attachment to the prospective guardian and has been consulted regarding the guardianship arrangement (younger siblings of youth age 14+ are also eligible if placed in the same guardianship arrangement);
- e) The prospective legal guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child and has entered into a guardianship assistance agreement with the county department of social services who holds custody of the child prior to the order granting legal guardianship; and
- f) If the child was placed in a legal guardianship arrangement at the age of 16 years or 17 years, he or she remains eligible to receive Guardianship Assistance until 21 years of age if, upon turning 18 years of age, he or she meets any of the following conditions: (a) Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential; (b) Enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education; (c) Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment; (d) Employed for at least 80 hours per month; or (e) Is incapable of doing any of the previously described educational or employment activities due to a medical condition or disability.