



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**  
1500 Jefferson Street, SE • P.O. Box 40975 • Olympia WA 98504-0975

**Policy Memo**

March 12, 2026

**TO:** Child welfare (CW) employees

**FROM:** Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary of Child Welfare Division

**SUBJECT:** Changes to [Child Welfare Policy: Guardianship Assistance Program \(GAP\) and Extended Guardianship Assistance Program \(EGAP\)](#) policy and [chapter 110-85 WAC GAP and EGAP](#)

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 12, 2025

**REVIEW DATE:** March 12, 2027

**Purpose**

The purpose of this memo is extending the previous memo which provides guidance to CW employees on the revised policy, procedure, and rules in [chapter 110-85 WAC](#) related to the centralization of the subsidies for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) and Extended Guardianship Assistance Program (EGAP).

This memo will continue to be in place while the related policy, procedures, and related WACs are being updated.

**Policy**

The GAP and EGAP application process and negotiations are being centralized. As a result, the following includes a summary of the changes for subsidized guardianships:

- The position title for GAP gatekeepers has been changed to reflect the regional need, i.e., regional guardianship gatekeepers, permanency program manager, regional programs supervisor, guardianship gatekeeper, program consultant or designee.
- The title of the Application for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Subsidy and/or Reimbursement of Guardianship Finalization Costs DCYF 15-392 form has been changed to Initial Application for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Subsidy DCYF 15-392.

- The Guardianship Assistance Program Worksheet DCYF 15-390 form will be archived, as the necessary information has been added to the revised Initial Application for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Subsidy DCYF 15-392.
- Headquarters (HQ) GAP specialists are new positions created to assist with the increase in GAP and EGAP subsidies.
- HQ GAP specialists will now be assessing potential guardians for GAP and EGAP eligibility and completing the tasks previously completed by the GAP gatekeepers.
- The approvals for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Agreement DCYF 15-391 and Extended Guardianship Assistance Program (EGAP) Agreement DCYF 07-016 form have changed.
- There have been no changes made to the unsubsidized guardianship process.

## **New Requirements**

1. Caseworkers must initiate the GAP assessment process by:
  - a. Providing the Initial Application for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Subsidy DCYF 15-392 form to families to complete and sign.
  - b. Referring potentially eligible licensed caregivers to the regional guardianship gatekeeper or designee, by completing the [Guardianship Approval Checklist DCYF 15-324](#) form and supporting documents:
    - i. As part of the [concurrent planning](#) process.
    - ii. When guardianship has been determined to be in the child's or youth's best interest.
2. The regional guardianship gatekeeper or designee must:
  - a. Refer caregivers who may be eligible for GAP based on the criteria in [WAC 110-85-0050](#) by emailing the signed Initial Application for the GAP Subsidy DCYF 15-392 form to the [Headquarters \(HQ\) GAP Specialist](#).
  - b. Verify the [Guardianship Approval Checklist DCYF 15-324](#) form is complete and the required documents have been received.
3. HQ GAP specialists must:
  - a. Assess children or youth and potential guardians for GAP eligibility, based on the criteria outlined in [WAC 110-85-0050](#) as part of the concurrent planning process when guardianship has been determined to be in their best interest.
  - b. Verify eligibility and develop, negotiate, and renegotiate with eligible caregivers for GAP and EGAP subsidies.
  - c. Determine and document the GAP and EGAP funding source for each child or youth.
  - d. Obtain the approval signatures for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Agreement DCYF 15-391 form.
  - e. Manage and follow executed GAP and EGAP agreements to assist caregivers in caring for children and youth.
  - f. Manage the suspension or termination process of GAP and EGAP agreements, if applicable.

- g. End GAP service payments when youth are eighteen years old unless they qualify for EGAP.
  - h. Determine eligibility, negotiate, monitor, and renegotiate with caregivers for Tribal GAP and Tribal EGAP subsidies.
4. The HQ GAP supervisor or designee must approve or deny GAP, EGAP, Tribal GAP and Extended Tribal GAP agreements.

## **Forms**

### [Guardianship Approval Checklist DCYF 15-324](#)

Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Agreement DCYF 15-391 (located in the forms repository on the DCYF intranet)

Initial Application for the Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) Subsidy DCYF 15-392 (located in the forms repository on the DCYF intranet)

## **Resources**

### [Permanent and Concurrent Planning policy](#)

### [WAC 110-85-0050 Eligibility criteria for GAP](#)

## **Questions**

If you have any questions, contact Geene Delaplane, Ph.D., Kinship Care and Guardianship Program Manager, at 360-688-0391 or [geene.delaplane@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:geene.delaplane@dcyf.wa.gov).

Cc: [DCYF Policy Team](#)