Background
In November 2020, the Children Services Transformation Advisory Council Final Report was released with thirty-seven recommendations to transform the children services system. One of the recommendations was to explore the option of moving administration of the Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) to the state level, with administration by the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator program (OhioKAN). With the passage of the Budget Bill (Amended Substitute House Bill 110) on June 30, 2021, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) was tasked with transitioning PASSS from the Public Children Services Agencies (PCSA) to the state agency. Rules to implement this transition are in Clearance and comments will be accepted through February 16, 2022.

Process
As of July 1, 2022, administration of the PASSS program will transition to ODJFS. Families will work with OhioKAN navigators to complete and submit PASSS applications and all required documentation to the Office of Families and Children (OFC). OFC will make all eligibility determinations and payment for approved invoices.

PCSAs should not approve any PASSS applications requesting services that will occur in SFY 2023 or later. All invoices for services approved for SFY 2022, are to be paid by the PCSA and entered into SACWIS for reimbursement by the PCSA by September 30, 2022.

OhioKAN will begin accepting applications for SFY 2023 on May 1, 2022, for PASSS services beginning on or after July 1, 2022. To submit a PASSS application, a family can contact a navigator at 844-OhioKAN (644-6526) or, prior to July 1, 2022, use the Email Us button on the OhioKAN website, ohiokan.jfs.ohio.gov. If a family submits their application to the PCSA, the PCSA can forward the application to OhioKAN at OhioKAN@kinnectohio.org.

Contact
If you have any questions related to the above guidance, please contact Veronica Burroughs, Office of Families and Children at e-mail veronica.burroughs@jfs.ohio.gov or JFS_PASSS@jfs.ohio.gov.
OFFICE OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

TO: Directors, Public Children Services Agencies

FROM: Jeffery Van Deusen, Deputy Director
       Office of Families and Children

DATE: February 9, 2022

SUBJECT: Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy Background

Background

In November 2019 the Children Services Transformation Advisory Council was created to take a comprehensive look at Ohio’s children services system. After extensive work, the Advisory Council provided 37 recommendations and strategies to strengthen all areas of the children services system. One of the recommendations was to explore the option of moving the administration of the Post Adoption Special Services Subsidy (PASSS) to the state level, with administration by the Ohio Kinship and Adoption Navigator program (OhioKAN). The recommendation to transition to a state administered program was to facilitate consistency and access to the program for all families who are eligible.

With the passage of the Budget Bill (House Bill 110) on June 30, 2021, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services was tasked with transitioning PASSS from the PCSA to the state agency. The Office of Families and Children (OFC) formed an internal workgroup which solicited stakeholder feedback from a diverse group, including PCSA staff, adoption professionals, and families. Based upon the program requirements and the stakeholder feedback, the process was final drafted through the amendment of rules 5101:2-44-13 and 5101:2-44-13.1. Currently these rules are in clearance.

Transition to the State

The program as currently drafted will move the PASSS application process to OhioKAN. Each adoptive family looking to receive PASSS funds will work with an OhioKAN navigator to complete the application and forward documentation to OFC. OhioKAN is available statewide, which will allow any family in Ohio to follow a consistent, accessible application process. Once OFC has received the application, it will be reviewed for eligibility and approved or denied based upon the information in the application. If information is incomplete or there are questions, OFC staff can work with the navigator to ensure that all information is accurate and complete before a decision is made. If an application is denied, the family can work with their navigator to complete the appeal process.
It is anticipated that by using the OhioKAN program, access to PASSS funding will increase. Families will have access to a navigator to assist them with their initial application and any future needs that they may have. The process will also ensure that PASSS funding decisions are made consistently. Data will be maintained in SACWIS which will allow ongoing review of PASSS approvals and denials to ensure it is consistent. With the assistance of OFC and OhioKAN, adoptive families will also gain knowledge of OhioRISE and Multi System Youth funding that they may be able to access. Overall, it is the hope that elevating this program to the state will allow families greater access to PASSS and to the other programs and services that will help meet their needs.