

Alternative Family Care Program Fact Sheet

About the program

The Alternative Family Care (AFC) program

- helps prevent the need for children to come into care by providing financial assistance to extended family members and other caregivers to look after children who are not in the Minister's care, while their parents are unable or unwilling to care for them.
- helps reduce the stress on a parent or guardian knowing their child is being supported in a familiar place and home, which allows them to focus on getting support to address the issues that led to their child having to leave their care

About the care arrangements

- The program offers a temporary, less intrusive option for children who are not in the Minister's care to support and maintain healthy relationships and connections for children and families in their community, where the goal is reunification with their family.
- This includes situations where there risk to the child has been confirmed, and a care arrangement with a close family / community member is most appropriate for the child and addresses the risk presented.
- The Social Worker reviews the proposed arrangement, reviews the child's family situation, and conducts required background checks to ensure the safety of the child and the appropriateness of this arrangement for the child and caregiver.
- Parental support of the care arrangement and involvement in the plan to address the safety needs of the child is expected.

About the financial support eligible caregivers receive

The program provides a formal and consistent approach for financially supporting eligible caregivers:

- A one-time start up payment is provided in the first month of enrollment.
\$500 for first child, \$250 for each additional child.
- Once approved, the program pays the caregiver a set amount of \$750 per month per child, regardless of age or needs of the child, for the duration of the temporary arrangement.
- Payments can be made for up to 18 months, or until the child is reunified with their parents, the child protection case closes, or the child moves into another care arrangement.
- Income through the AFC Program is not taxable by the CRA, does not affect their Guaranteed Income Supplement, and does not impact the child or caregiver's eligibility for other social programs such as Income Assistance, the Caregiver Benefit, and the Child Care Subsidy.
- Other expenses will be considered on a child / family specific basis.

For more information

Contact your local Department of Community Services Office or Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia.