

# Alternative Family Care Program Fact Sheet

## About the new program

The new 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, but whose 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 help and remedying the problems that necessitate their child to leave their care

## About the care arrangements

- The program offers a temporary, less intrusive option to support children who are not in the Minister's care to maintain their existing family relationships while there is Child Protection involvement and where the goal is reunification with their family.
- This includes cases where there is substantiated risk to the child, but a care arrangement with a close family member or member of the community 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 case plan is expected.

## About the financial support eligible caregivers receive

The program provides a formal and consistent approach for financially supporting eligible caregivers, while also contributing to positive outcomes for a child:

- A one-time start up allowance of \$500 is provided for each child in the first month of enrollment. A maximum start-up allowance of \$1,000 per household applies (\$500 for first child, \$250 for each additional child, up to \$1,000 per household).
- Once approved, the program pays the caregiver a set amount of \$250 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 is transitioned 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 case-by-case basis.

## For more information

Contact your local Child Welfare Office.