



Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act

Summary

The Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act was signed into law on July 7, 2018 after unanimously passing the U.S. House and Senate. It was first introduced in the Senate on May 10th, 2017 by Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) and Senator Bob Casey (D-PA). A companion bill was introduced in the House by Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Representative Peter King (R-NY) on June 29, 2017.

The law establishes a **Federal Advisory Council to Support Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children**. The advisory council will exist for three years.

Membership of the Advisory Council: The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will be the lead agency for the advisory council. The advisory council will consist of the following members or their designee:

- The Secretary of Health and Human Services
- The Secretary of Education
- The Administrator of the Administration for Community Living
- The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use
- The Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families
- The head of each federal agency, department or other government entity identified by the secretary of HHS as having responsibilities or administering programs related to issues affecting grandparents and other relatives raising children in their care.
- A grandparent raising a grandchild
- An older relative raising a relative child

Duties of the Advisory Council: The advisory council is charged with providing the following:

- *Information on Federal Resources:* The advisory council will identify, promote, coordinate and disseminate information publicly about information, resources and best practices available to help grandparents and other relatives raising children in their care meet the health, educational, nutritional and other needs of the children in their care as well as maintain their own physical and mental health and emotional well-being. They must also consider the unique needs of grandparents and other relatives raising children in their care affected by the opioid crisis.
- *Reports to Congress:* The advisory council will submit a report to Congress 180 days after enactment of the legislation on best practices, resources and other information for the families as well as gaps in services to meet the families' needs. They will also submit a follow up report to Congress two years after the initial report. The advisory council will also submit these reports to state agencies responsible for running family caregiver programs and post the reports online for the public.

For more information contact Jaia Lent at jlent@gu.org or visits www.gu.org.

- *Addressing Needs of Native Americans:* In carrying out their duties, the advisory council must ensure that the needs of Native Americans are addressed.

Process for Public Input: The advisory council will develop a process for the public to submit recommendations and an opportunity for public comment. The process will include outreach to national, state, and local entities and organizations that provide information or support to grandparents or other relatives raising children and outreach to the caregivers themselves. The advisory council will ask for input on information, resources and best practices available to these families, any gaps in those services, and recommendations on what would help these families better meet the health, educational, nutritional and other needs of the children in their care as well as maintain their own physical and mental health and emotional well-being.