

# Take Action – Opioid Settlement Funds for Grandfamilies

More than 3,000 state and local governments have sued opioid corporations in hopes of recouping the money spent in dealing with the opioid crisis. In 2022, a nationwide agreement was reached to resolve all opioid settlement litigations made against major US pharmaceutical companies, resulting in a \$26 billion settlement to assist states with their opioid recovery efforts. Currently, decision-makers across the country are determining how the funds will be allocated; however, grandfamilies – families where children reside with, and are raised by their grandparents, relatives, or close family friends – risk being overlooked. Advocacy is essential to ensure that funds are allocated to helping affected grandfamilies. This guide provides specific action steps you can take to advocate for the inclusion of grandfamilies/kinship families in the allocation of opioid settlement funds.



## Research

Search the internet to learn about opioid settlement funds in your state. For example, search "opioid settlement funds Maryland." Seek out public meetings, names of agencies in charge of distributing funds, and advisory council members in charge of making decisions on the use of funds. For example, search "opioid settlement funds advisory council/board in Pennsylvania." The following links may be helpful:

- This [article](#) lists which state council and council members control opioid settlement funds in each state.
- This [tracker](#) describes how funds are being allocated in different states.

## Practice Making Your Pitch

Pull together essential statistics, a compelling story about an affected family, and relevant resources to leave behind after your meeting. The following reports from Generations United may be helpful:

- [Raising the Children of the Opioid Epidemic: Solutions and Supports for Grandfamilies](#)
- [Building Resilience: Supporting Grandfamilies' Mental Health and Wellness](#)
- This [infographic](#) from the 2023 State of Grandfamilies Report includes data related to grandfamilies' and parental substance use.
- The Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network also has a resource page on accessing grandfamilies data points, including [state-specific data](#).
- These [Grandfacts Fact Sheets](#) include state-specific data and progra.s

## Engage the Media

Reach out to a local newspaper or other local media source(s) and ask if they can cover a story about this topic. If you are comfortable and it is relevant, prepare and share your personal experience with this issue.



If you have questions or would like to learn more about how you can support grandfamilies, please contact Generations United: [gu@gu.org](mailto:gu@gu.org) or visit us at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)

## Send a Letter

Draft a letter to your governor, state attorney general, and/or other key decision makers in your state, making the case for including supports for children and grandfamily caregivers in the use of opioid settlement funds. As part of this letter, request a meeting with the governor's office, attorney general, or other key decision maker.

## Develop a Specific Ask

Decide which grandfamily supports and services you want the money to go toward. Examples include trauma training, support groups, emergency assistance, support for kinship navigators, or other local kinship support programs. Consider building on a successful model or program that was helpful to you or other grandfamilies you know and scaling it up or enhancing it.

## Connect with Allies

Contact allies in your state who are informed on this topic, such as state representatives, mayors, or other community leaders. Ask if they can advocate for including grandfamilies in opioid settlement funds or if they can connect you with key people to make the case on your behalf.

## Get Involved

If an opioid funds advisory council is established to decide how funds will be distributed, reach out to council members and make a case for grandfamilies. If there is an opportunity, ask to become a council member or recommend another member of a grandfamily and/or grandfamily champion to serve on the council.