

Contents

Northstar Kinship Assistance in the Social Service Information System (SSIS)	2
Northstar Kinship	2
Northstar Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA)	4
Change Placement Setting	5
Kinship Folder and Kinship Verifications	6
Kinship Folder	6
Parent Verifications	7
Sibling Verifications	8
Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV Initial	8
Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV Update	10
Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV-Close	11
Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination.....	11
Kinship Assistance Setup Tab.....	12
Document Tab	14
Required Documents.....	21
Eligibility Determination Action Menu	21
Northstar Care Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Documentation:	22
Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement.....	22

Northstar Kinship Assistance in the Social Service Information System (SSIS)



Northstar Kinship

For children and families in which a Transfer of Permanent Legal and Physical Custody (TPLPC) for a child or youth is the identified permanency outcome, SSIS will provide additional tools to record information about this process. These changes are due to Northstar Care for Children and include: screens for identifying the kinship child, the current legal parents, all siblings, the prospective relative custodians, and for completing the Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination. Additional information about Northstar Kinship Assistance can be found in the Northstar Care for Children Practice Guide.

Typically, a child will reside with the prospective relative custodians as they move towards completing a TPLPC to relatives. In some circumstances the child or youth may not be in a pre-kinship placement setting with the prospective relative custodians at the time the North Star Kinship Placement Agreement is signed; i.e., the child is in a treatment facility, but the prospective relative custodian intends to accept a TPLPC. The Department of Human Services (DHS) must still be notified of the prospective relative custodian's intention to accept a TPLPC. However, North Star Kinship Assistance requires that prospective relative custodian(s) be licensed foster parent(s) for at least six consecutive months while a child or youth has been in their care. The Kinship Eligibility must be approved by DHS and the Kinship Benefit Agreement signed and approved by DHS before the TPLPC is finalized in court to ensure North Star Kinship Assistance.

In preparation for creating the Kinship folder, make sure you have entered the following:

- Citizenship for the child and the relative custodians
- Race
- Relationships (add the birth father detail, if known)
- All child clients, known legal parents (either biological or adoptive), prospective relative custodians and all siblings must be cleared to SWNDX to begin the Kinship verifications.
- Completed Continuous Placement

- Completed Pre-kinship Placement (when appropriate), with Foster Parent relationships defined
- The Business Organization record with the prospective relative custodians identified as the individual providers

In preparation for creating the Kinship Eligibility Determination, make sure you have entered the following:

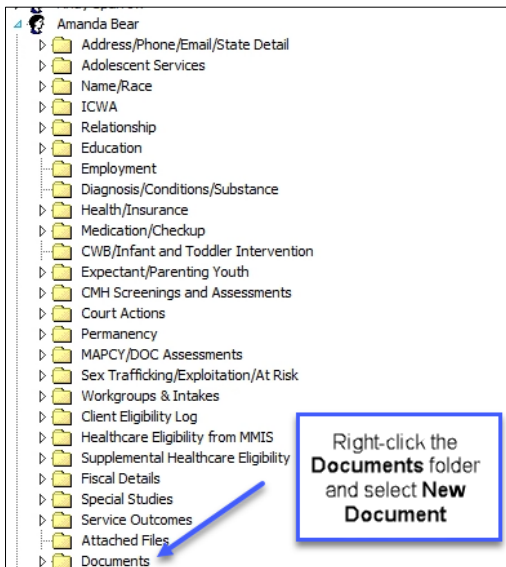
- Completed Court Action with Best Interests recorded (only required for initially Court Ordered Placements)
- A MAPCY Assessment.

Security Functions:

- Create kinship (allows user to create, view, edit, and delete kinship records)
- View kinship (allows users to view kinship records only)
- Access kinship reports (this is not tied to any reports currently)

Northstar Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA)

The KPA is an agreement between the Prospective Relative Custodian(s) and the county/tribal social service agency that has legal authority for the placement of the child or youth in foster care. The KPA must be attached to the TPLPC petition and submitted to the court with jurisdiction in this matter.



To Access the Northstar Kinship Placement Agreement:

1. Expand the Participants folder and double-click on the child's participant's node.
2. Right-click on the Documents folder and select New Document.
3. Click the search icon in the Document template field.
4. Highlight Northstar Kinship Placement Agreement and click Select.

It is important to add information to the database first in order to have the option of selecting it from the Setup tab to merger into the document. No data typed directly into the document will backfill into the application. In order to edit the document, you must click the blue E from the document tab. It is very important to proof your document. Make sure the names and spelling in the KPA match the names and spelling in SSIS, court orders, and all licensing documentation.

Note for children 14 or older: The child must be consulted about the proposed TPLPC if the child will be age 14 or older when the TPLPC is expected to finalize. This is a federal eligibility requirement. Typically, the child will have signed the KPA to indicate that they have been consulted; however, the agency's signature on the KPA shows this requirement has been fulfilled. The child does not have to consent to the proposed TPLPC. Best practice is that the child is in agreement with the proposed TPLPC.

Note: If a trial home visit occurred, the date of the KPA must be on or after the end date of the trial home visit. The legally responsible agency must determine that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options for a child. This is a federal and state requirement. When a KPA is signed, the agency is indicating it has made that determination as of that date. A KPA date that is prior to a trial home visit ending means that the agency's determination is no longer valid, since the purpose of a trial home visit is to move towards reunification.

Kinship Placement Agreement

This agreement is between _____ the Prospective
(Prospective Relative Custodian)

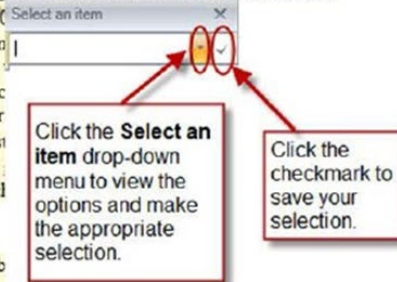
Relative Custodian, and _____, the county/tribal
(Legally Responsible Agency)

social service agency that has legal authority for the placement of Lijan Jane Walk, born
03/09/1996, a child in foster care.

By signing this agreement, the legally responsible agency assures and has documented the following determinations:

- To the extent practical, consulted with the child's legal parent(s), custodian(s), or guardian(s) regarding permanency options for the child.
- Explained to _____ the legal and financial differences and physical custody.
- Determined _____ in the child's best interest because _____
- Determined that a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody to the prospective relative custodian(s) is in the child's best interest.
- Made an individualized determination of the child's needs based on 10 best interest factors, according to Minn. Stat., section 260C.007, including sibling relationships and placement relative's capacities, the agency determined _____ willing. If the child is American Indian, placement consistent with placement preferences under _____
- Determined that the prospective relative custodian is eligible to care for the child according to Minn. Stat., section 260C.007, custom, if the child is an American Indian child Relationship 1 [Select an item](#) Relationship 2 [Select an item](#)
- Determined that a strong attachment exists between the prospective relative custodian and the child and there is a strong commitment to care for the child.
- Has provided the prospective relative custodian with the Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Status Report and commits to working with the prospective relative custodian on eligibility for Northstar Kinship Assistance, to the extent the Custodian wants to pursue it.
- Consulted with the child, age 14 or older, regarding permanency options for the child.

Click on the **Select an item** fields to access the drop-down menu for each of these fields in the document.



To Complete the Northstar Kinship Placement Agreement:

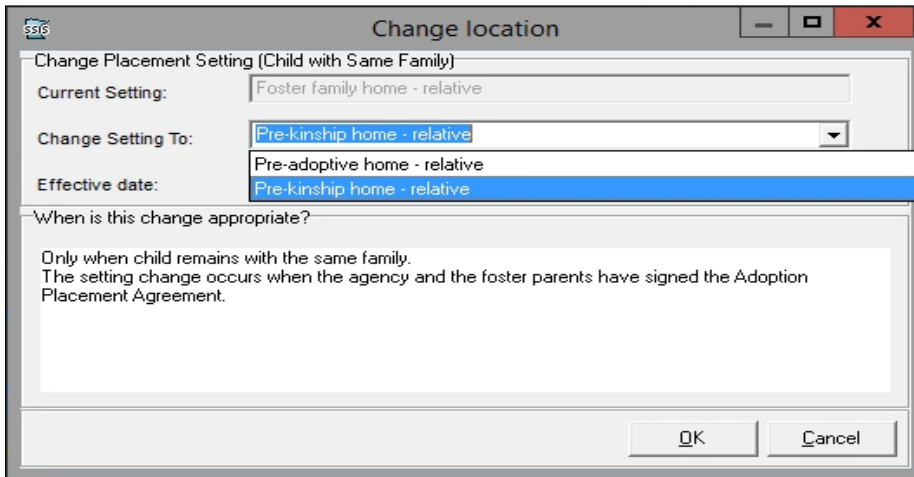
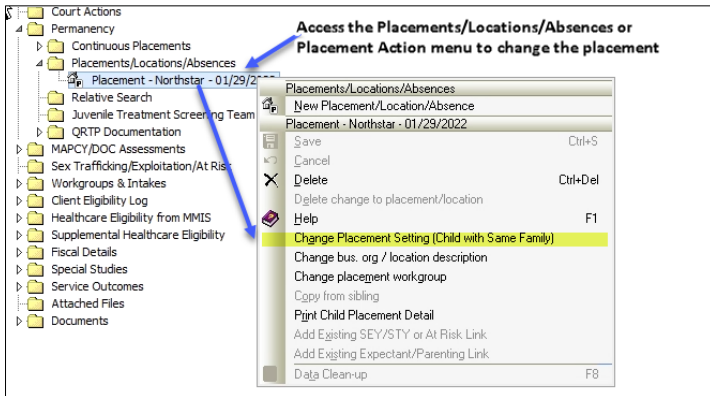
1. From the Document Setup tab, complete all applicable fields.
2. Click the Document tab and click the Blue E, editor button.
3. Complete the document, as appropriate.

Note: Click the Select an item field to choose the appropriate response from the drop-down menu and click the checkmark to save your selection.

4. Click Save.

Change Placement Setting

Placements/Locations/Absences screen - Setting must be Pre-kinship home- relative if the child is in a pre-kinship placement and the prospective relative custodians have signed a Kinship Placement Agreement.



To Change Placement Setting to Pre-kinship home- relative:

1. Access the Placements/Locations/Absences or Placement **Action** menu and select **ChangePlacement Setting (Child with Same family)**.
2. Select **Pre-kinship home-relative** from the **Change Setting To** field.
3. Select the effective date.

Kinship Folder and Kinship Verifications

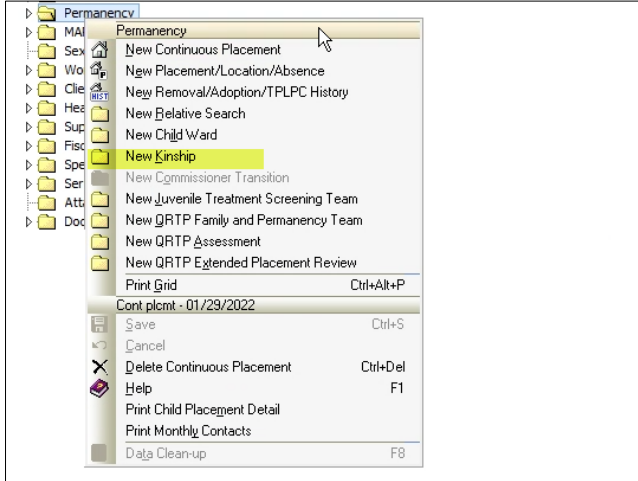
The Kinship folder is created for a child in an open continuous placement who has a signed Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA). The verifications under the Kinship folder are needed so the worker can submit information about the Kinship occurrence to DHS. The Kinship folder must be created first in order to create the Parent Verifications and Sibling Verifications (in any order) folders. Once those verifications are completed the Relative Custodian Verification – Initial can be created. All of these screens are required before sending data to DHS.

Kinship eligibility determination cannot be completed without first setting up the kinship folder and completing all of the verifications.

Kinship Folder

The Kinship folder is used to establish a kinship child or youth in both the agency and DHS SSIS database. It displays the child’s status at DHS and is created under the child’s Permanency Folder. If the Kinship Node is

created in error, but never had a verified Relative Custodian Verification – Initial record, then the user can delete the Kinship Node. Once the Relative Custodian Verification – Initial is verified by DHS, the only option for a Kinship folder created in error is to create a New RCV – Close with a closed reason of Kinship Folder created in Error



The Status at DHS field updates automatically based on the current status of the verification.

 A screenshot of a data entry form for a Kinship record. The form contains the following fields:

- Creation Date: 04/12/2022
- Status at DHS: Agency initial set up
- Workgroup: Thirteen Apollo CP Case Management 4/12/2022
- Primary Contact: Kraft, Eric
- Continuous Placement: 04/01/2022 - Present (202647455)
- Legally Responsible Agency: Aitkin
- Person Kinship ID: 202641456
- DHS Number: (empty field)

To Create a New Kinship:

1. From the Permanency folder, access the **Action** menu and select **New Kinship**.
2. Select the workgroup from the **Workgroup** field.
3. Select the worker from the **Primary Contact** drop-down menu.
4. The open Continuous Placement defaults into the **Continuous Placement** field.
5. Select the **Legally Responsible Agency** from the **Legally Responsible Agency** drop-down menu.
6. Click **Save**

Parent Verifications

All current legal parental relationships for the Kinship child, including clients with adoptive or birth parent(s) must be verified. Stepparents should not be included because they have no legal parental relationship.

The Parent Verification cannot be deleted once it has been saved, verified with a date, and the

Kinship Status at DHS is no longer 'Agency Initial set up.'

Parent Verification

All known parental relationships have been entered in SSIS and are listed in the grid below. All current legal parents are selected in the grid below.

Verified date: 04/12/2022 Verified by: Kratt, Eric

Parents		SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thirteen, Discovery		39490652 Birth father
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thirteen, Atlantis		39490654 Birth mother

Click here to select or de-select parents

To Verify Legal Parents:

1. From the Kinship folder, access the **Action** menu and select **New Parent Verifications**.
2. Check or uncheck the box next to the parent's name to select or de-select that person.
3. Select the date verified from the **Verification date** field.
4. Click **Save**.

Sibling Verifications

All known sibling relationships for the Kinship child, including half-siblings, step-siblings, and former step-siblings must be verified. All siblings must be cleared to SWNDX and the relationship entered in the relationship node prior to verification.

Sibling verification is required even when there are no sibling relationships. The purpose of the sibling verification is to confirm there are no identified sibling relationships at the time of the verification. Workers are able to enter additional verifications at a later time if a sibling relationship for the Kinship child is identified.

The Sibling Verification cannot be deleted once it has been saved, verified with a date, and the Kinship Status at DHS is no longer 'Agency Initial set up'.

Sibling Verification

All known sibling relationships for this child have been entered into SSIS and are in the grid below. If this grid is blank, the child has no known siblings at the time of the verification.

Verified date: 04/12/2022 Verified by: Kratt, Eric

Siblings		SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thirteen, Rover		39490658 Sister

Click here to select or de-select siblings

To Verify Siblings:

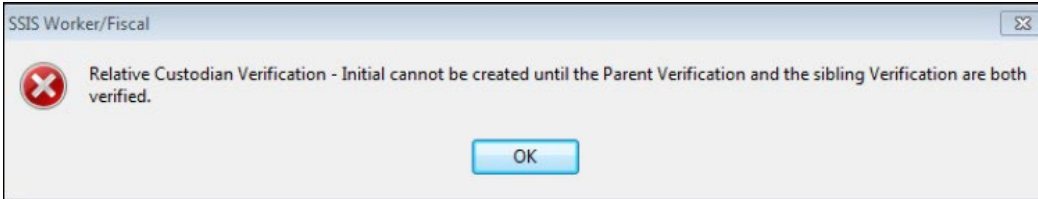
1. From the Kinship folder, access the **Action** menu and select **New Sibling Verifications**.
2. Check or uncheck the box next to the sibling's name to select or de-select that person.
3. Select the date verified from the **Verification date** field.
4. Click **Save**.

Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV Initial

Information about the Relative Custodian(s) who have stated their intention to accept a Transfer of Permanent Legal and Physical Custody (TPLPC) for the child must be entered into SSIS.

When the RCV – Initial is saved with a verified date, this triggers the Kinship information for this child to be sent to DHS.

This verification cannot be started until the parent and sibling verifications are completed. The following error message will be displayed



Only one Relative Custodian Verification – Initial is allowed per Kinship folder. The menu item is disabled when the Relative Custodian Verification – Initial is created, whether verified or not.

The Relative Custodian Verification - initial cannot be deleted once it is saved and verified with a date.

Only Pre-kinship Placements are available for selection in the Placement field on the Relative Custodian Verification screen.

Relative Custodian Verification - Initial

Initial Kinship Placement Agreement Date: 4/12/2022

Continuous Placement: 04/01/2022 - Present (202647455)

If the child is currently in a pre-kinship placement with the Relative Custodian(s), select the Placement

Placement: Placement - 04/01/2022 - Present (202631363)

If the child is not currently in placement with the Relative Custodian(s), select their Business Organization

Business Organization: Rinehart Family Foster Care

Primary Mailing Address: Physical location: 1234 Anywhere Lane, St. Paul, MN 55155

Relationships

If a placement is selected above, the relationships entered on the Placement Foster Parents tab when the child was initially placed in that home will display below. If the relationship is blank or indicates an "other non-relative", select a new relationship here. Only relationships by blood, marriage, or adoption; kin/previous foster parent (which could be the current foster parent) are acceptable for Kinship.

Ever been a foster parent for this child?

Rinehart, John	Aunt/uncle	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No
Rinehart, Suzy	Aunt/uncle	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No

Relative Custodians have been entered in SSIS as foster parents for the pre-kinship placement (if applicable), or as individual providers on the Business Organization. The signed Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA) has been sent or will be sent to DHS. Each Relative Custodian listed on the KPAs is checked into the grid below.

Verified date: 04/13/2022

Verified by: Kratt, Eric

Relative Custodian(s)		
Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rinehart, John	39500655	Uncle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rinehart, Suzy	39500652	Aunt

To Complete the RCV-Initial:

1. From the Kinship folder, access the **Action** menu and select **New RCV-Initial**.
2. Select the date of the signed KPA from the **Initial Kinship Placement Agreement Date** field.
3. If the Kinship child is in placement with the relative custodian, select the placement from the
4. **Placement** drop-down menu.

Or

If the Kinship child is not currently in placement with the relative custodian, select the placement business organization from the **Business Organization** field, and select the mailing address of the placement business organization from the **Primary Mailing Address** field.

1. Select the relationship between the prospective relative custodian(s) and the Kinship child from the business organization drop-down menu.
2. Select **Yes** or **No** from the **Ever been a foster parent to this child** field.
3. Select the date verified from the **Verification date** field.
4. Click **Save**.

Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV Update

There must be a verified Relative Custodian Verification- Initial record to enter an update. This option is used to update information about the prospective relative custodian(s), the child's living situation, the initial KPA date or other information if it was unknown or entered incorrectly on the RCV- Initial verification. At least one relative custodian must be the same as the Relative Custodians initially verified. An updated Kinship Placement agreement may need to be signed.

Relative Custodian Verification - Update

Initial Kinship Placement Agreement Date: 4/12/2022

Continuous Placement: 04/01/2022 - Present (202647455)

Update Reason: Select the update reason from the drop down menu.

Updated Kinship Placement Agreement Date: 4/13/2022

If the child is currently in placement with the Relative Custodian(s), select the Placement

Placement: Placement - 04/01/2022 - Present (202631363)

If the child is not currently in a pre-kinship placement with the Relative Custodian(s), select their Business Organization

Business Organization: Rinehart Family Foster Care

Primary Mailing Address: Physical location: 1234 Anywhere Lane, St. Paul, MN 55155

Relationships

If a placement is selected above, the relationships entered on the Placement Foster Parents tab when the child was initially placed in that home will display below. If the relationship is blank or indicates an "other non-relative", select a new relationship here. Only relationships by blood, marriage, or adoption; kin/previous foster parent (which could be the current foster parent) are acceptable for Kinship.

Ever been a foster parent for this child?

Rinehart, John: Aunt/uncle Yes No

Rinehart, Suzy: Aunt/uncle Yes No

Relative Custodians have been entered in SSIS as foster parents for the pre-kinship placement (if applicable), or as individual providers on the Business Organization. The signed Kinship Placement Agreement (KPA) has been sent or will be sent to DHS. Each Relative Custodian listed on the KPAs is checked into the grid below.

Verified date: 04/13/2022

Verified by: Kratt, Eric

Relative Custodian(s)			
	Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rinehart, John		39500655 Uncle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rinehart, Suzy		39500652 Aunt

To Complete the RCV-Update:

1. From the Kinship folder, access the **Action** menu and select **New RCV-Update**.
2. Select the reason for the update from the **Update Reason** field and update the additional changes. Fields that you do not changed, will autofill with information from the initial RelativeCustodian Verification.
3. Select the date verified from the **Verification date** field.
4. Click **Save**.

Relative Custodian Verifications: RCV-Close

Relative Custodian(s)			
	Name	SWNDX #	Relationship
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rhinehart, John		39500655
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rinehart, Suzy		39500652

To Complete the RCV-Close:

1. From the Kinship folder access the **Action** menu and select **New RCV-Close**.
2. Select the close reason from the **Close Reason** field. Some fields enable, disable or become required based on your reason for closing.
3. Update the remaining fields.
4. Select the date verified from the **Verification date** field.
5. Click **Save**.

Remember to verify the RCV – Close record after the TPLPC is finalized in court. A placement cannot be closed until the RCV-Close is completed. Kinship Nodes that remain open as of the youth’s 19th birthday will be closed automatically by the system.

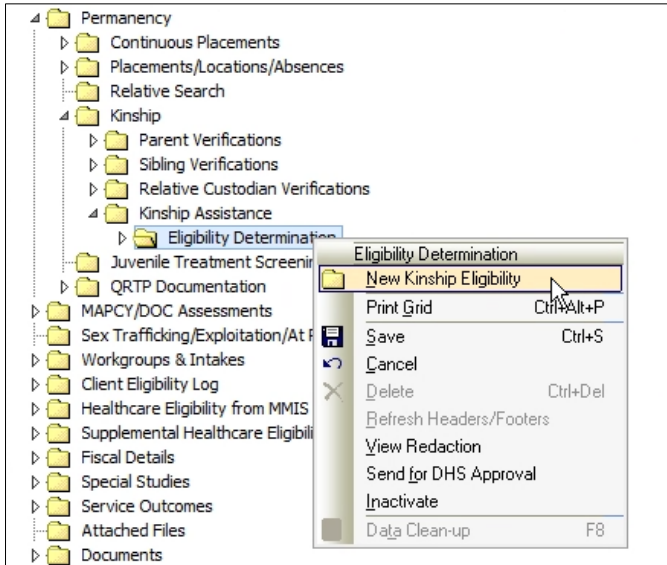
****Once the TPLPC has been finalized in SSIS DHS, RSV-Close is disabled.****

Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination

Northstar Kinship Assistance is a benefits program available to eligible children for whom a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody (TPLPC) has been ordered. The financially responsible agency completes the Eligibility Determination, with input from the legally responsible agency (if different).

To complete a Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination, a child must be:

- placed with the prospective relative custodian(s) as licensed foster parent(s) for at least six consecutive months (unless requesting an exemption); **and**
- a determination has been made that a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody is in the child's best interest, in accordance with [Minnesota Statutes, 260C.212, Subd.2](#), or the equivalent under tribal code.



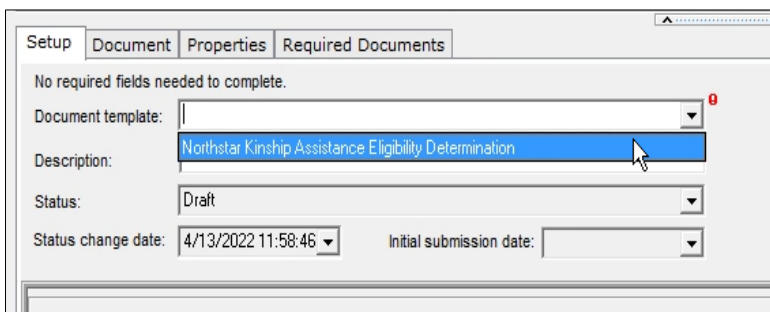
To Create a New Kinship Eligibility:

1. From the **Kinship Assistance** Folder access the **Action** menu
2. Select **New Kinship Eligibility**.

The Kinship Eligibility Determination includes a series of screens with questions that must be answered to determine both eligibility for the program and the funding source (Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E funds).

Kinship Assistance Setup Tab

The Eligibility Determination has a set-up screen that must be filled out prior to answering questions that determine both eligibility for the program and the funding source (Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E funds).



The Document template field auto-fills to Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination.

Document: Northstar Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination

Agency: Test Policy County Family Services
Agency name: Test Policy County Family Services

Participant: Apollo Thirteen
Name: Apollo Thirteen
Date of birth: 01/01/2009
18th birthday: 01/01/2027
14th birthday: 01/01/2023
Citizenship status: U.S. Citizen/naturalized citizen

Kinship verification
Kinship: 04/12/2022 - Active at DHS
Continuous placement dates: 04/01/2022 - present
Placement location dates: 04/01/2022 - present
Legally responsible agency: Aitkin
Kinship placement agreement date: 04/12/2022
Relative custodian 1: John Rhinehart
Relative custodian 2: Suzy Rinehart
Mailing address: 1234 Anywhere Lane
St. Paul, MN 55155
Removal from home: Court ordered
Best interest statement: Yes
6 months IV-E claims: No

MAPCY: 04/01/2022 - Agency approved - Youth Domains (Ages 13 and older, not EF)
MAPCY: 202759513

Worker: Jepson, Erica
Full name: Erica Jepson
Phone:
E-mail: erica.jepson@state.mn.us

Remember to refresh Setup/Participant

If blank- return to Person and enter US Citizen status

Remember to refresh Setup/Kinship

If blank- return to Continuous Placement/Authority

If blank- return to Court Actions/Child's Findings

To Complete the Kinship Assistance Setup Tab:

1. The Document template field auto-fills with Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination.
2. Complete the Setup tab.
3. Click the Document tab.

In the Participant and Kinship verification sections, watch for blank fields in the following fields:

- Citizenship status
- Removal from home
- Best interest statement

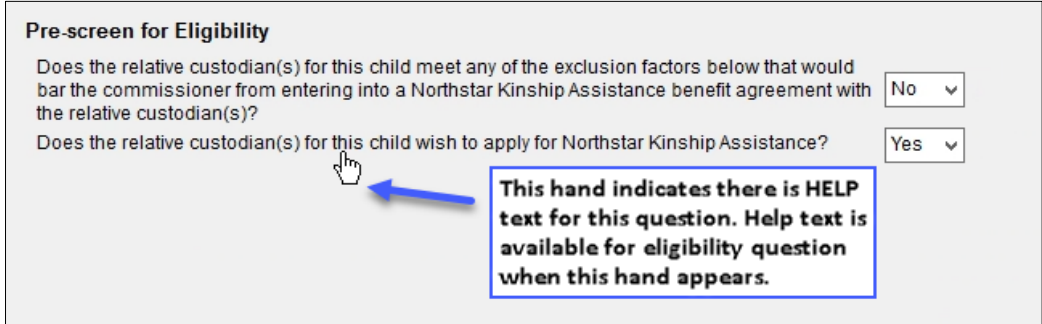
To prevent a false not eligible Kinship Assistance Eligibility result, you must go to the appropriate section of the Tree View to enter the information, return to the Kinship Eligibility Setup tab and click the refresh button(s) to have the information autofill into the previously blank fields.

In the MAPCY section, make sure the MAPCY is up-to-date as this is the rate that will be used for the Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement.

In the Worker section, the person whom DHS should contact regarding Eligibility; i.e., this may be the Financial Assistance Eligibility worker, should be entered. It does not need to be the same person as the Primary worker.

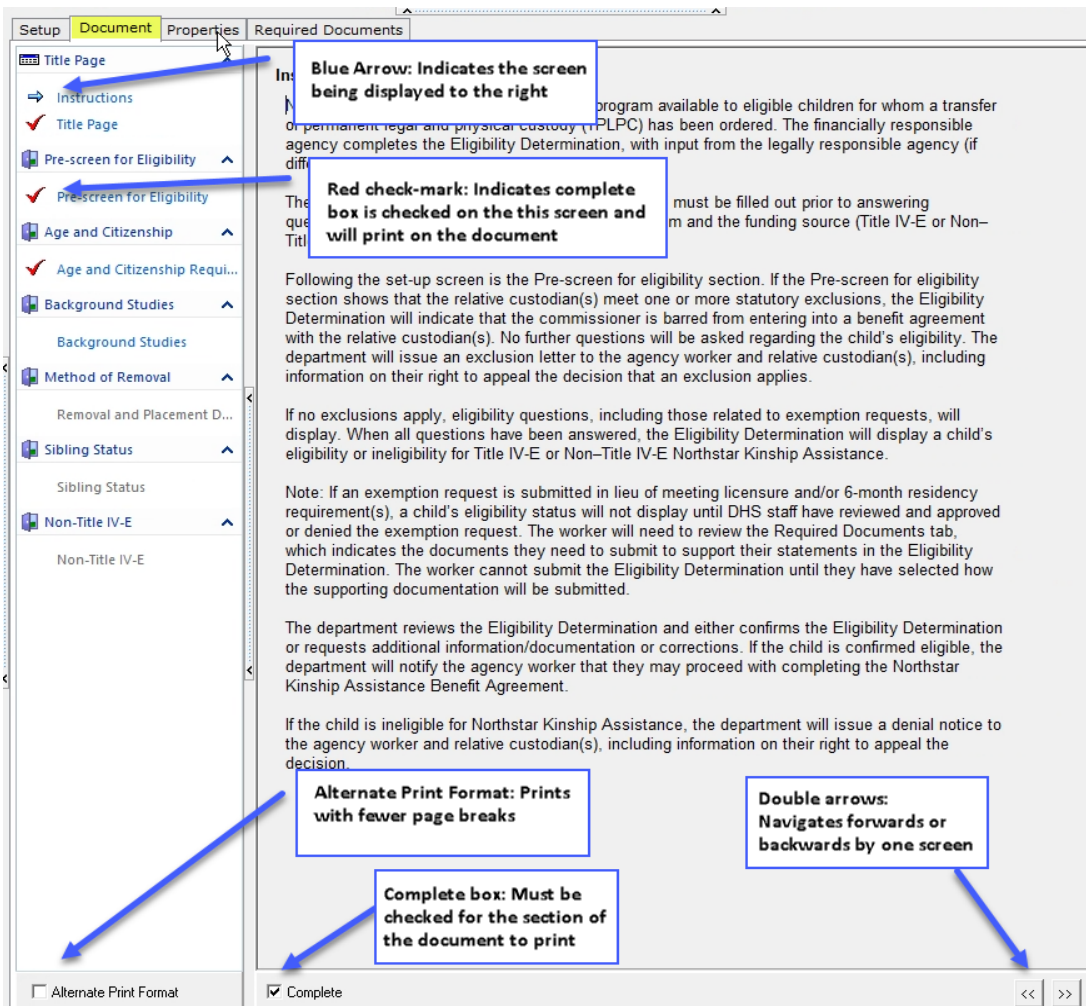
Document Tab

Kinship Eligibility Determination Document will guide the worker through a series of questions based on how the previous question was answered. If you need additional guidance in answering the question click on the help text (hover the cursor over the text, if it turns into a hand there is help text available) in the question. As the questions are answered a list of required supporting documents is being compiled. The worker will need to review the Required Documents Tab to view the list. Based on how the questions are answered, the Eligibility Determination Document will calculate the child’s eligibility for Kinship Assistance and whether it will be IVE or Non-IVE assistance.



Eligibility Questions

When all questions have been answered, the Eligibility Determination will display a child’s eligibility or ineligibility for Title IV-E or Non–Title IV-E Northstar Kinship Assistance.



To Complete the Document Tab:

1. Review the fields on the Title Page and ensure the data that merged in from the Tree View folders is accurate.
2. The Complete checkbox auto checks to ensure this screen prints on the document.
3. Click on each Navigation bar (or advance the screens by clicking the double-arrows at the bottom right of the screen) and answer the questions as listed.
4. Click **Save**.

Help for eligibility questions

Below you will find some of the questions asked in the eligibility determination document. Following the question is text to help you answer the questions. Not every question will be asked for every child as each question asked is based off how the previous question was answered.

Prescreen for eligibility

On the document tab, the Pre-screen for eligibility is the first section. If the Pre-screen for eligibility section shows that the relative custodian(s) meet one or more statutory exclusions, the Eligibility Determination will indicate that the commissioner is barred from entering into a benefit agreement with the relative custodian(s). No further questions will be asked regarding the child's eligibility. The department will issue an

exclusion letter to the agency worker and relative custodian(s), including information on their right to appeal the decision that an exclusion applies.

Does the relative custodian(s) for this child meet any of the exclusion factors below that would bar the commissioner from entering into a Northstar Kinship Assistance benefit agreement with the relative custodian(s)?

The commissioner is barred from entering into kinship assistance benefit agreements with the following individuals:

- Child’s biological parent or stepparent
- Individual who is assuming permanent legal and physical custody of a child, or equivalent under tribal code, without involvement of the child welfare system
- Individual who is assuming permanent legal and physical custody of a child who was placed in Minnesota by another state or a tribe outside of Minnesota.

On Prescreen for eligibility screen, if ‘No’ is selected to the question, “Does the relative custodian(s) for this child wish to apply for Northstar kinship Assistance benefits?” a signed ‘Statement to decline’ document to confirm the relative custodian(s) understanding of the denial must be signed.

If no exclusions apply, eligibility questions, including those related to exemption requests, will display.

Age and Citizenship Requirement:

Will the child be at least age 14 (display 14th birth date) when the TPLPC is finalized?

If yes, was the child consulted about the proposed TPLPC?

Note: The child must be consulted about the proposed TPLPC if the child will be age 14 or older when the TPLPC is expected to finalize. This is a federal eligibility requirement. Typically, the child will have signed the KPA to indicate that they have been consulted; however, the agency’s signature on the KPA attests to the requirement having been fulfilled. The child does not have to consent to the proposed TPLPC. Best practice is that the child is in agreement with the proposed TPLPC.

If the child’s citizen status is lawful permanent resident, does the child meet the qualified alien requirements under PRWORA on their own without regard to the citizenship or immigration status of the relative custodian(s)?

If the child’s citizen status is documented non-citizen, does the child meet the qualified alien requirements under PRWORA on their own without regard to the citizenship or immigration status of the relative custodian(s)?

Note: A child must be a U.S. citizen or meet qualified alien requirements under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) to be eligible to receive Northstar kinship assistance benefits.

Consult with your county/tribal agency or Policy Quest if you are unsure whether a child meets qualified alien requirements. If the child is not a U.S. citizen or in one of the excepted groups at section 403(b) of PRWORA, but is a qualified alien who has not lived in the U.S. as a qualified alien for five years, at least one relative custodian must be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

A child who is not a U.S. citizen or qualified alien is not eligible for Northstar kinship assistance, even if at least one relative custodian is a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

If a child is an undocumented immigrant, consult with your county/tribal attorney to see if it is possible for the child to obtain special immigrant juvenile status or another status that meets qualified alien requirements.

If a child's citizenship/immigration status is unknown or blank, determine the child's citizenship/immigration status before proceeding with the Eligibility Determination.

Consult with DHS if there are questions about this requirement.

Does the child meet the qualified alien requirements under PRWORA on their own without regard to the citizenship or immigration status of the relative custodian(s)?

Note: Consult with your county/tribal agency or Policy Quest if you are unsure whether a child or relative custodian meets citizenship or qualified alien requirements.

If the child is not a U.S. citizen or in one of the excepted groups at section 403(b) of PRWORA, but is a qualified alien who has not lived in the U.S. as a qualified alien for five years, at least one relative custodian must be a U.S. citizen or qualified alien.

Background studies:

Was a background study completed for each required person?

Did the background study reveal the relative custodian(s) has ever been convicted of a felony involving child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, a crime against a child (including child pornography), or a crime involving violence, including rape, sexual assault or homicide (but not including other physical assault or battery)?

Did the background study reveal that the relative custodian(s) has been convicted of a felony involving physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense within the past five years?

Note: There are time-limited federal barrier crimes that make relative custodians ineligible to receive Northstar kinship assistance on behalf of a child. See [Minnesota Statutes, section 256N.22, subdivision 4.](#)

Removal and Placement Duration:

Were there any trial home visits during the continuous placement episode?

If yes, did the legally responsible agency make the required agency determination regarding permanency

after the end date of the most recent trial home visit?

Note: If a trial home visit occurred, the date of the KPA must be on or after the end date of the trial home visit. The legally responsible agency must determine that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options for a child. This is a federal and state requirement. In signing a KPA, the agency is indicating it has made that determination as of that date. A KPA date that is prior to a trial home visit ending means that the agency's determination is no longer valid, since the purpose of a trial home visit is to move towards reunification.

The legally responsible agency must determine that reunification and adoption are not appropriate permanency options for a child. This is a federal and state requirement. In signing a KPA, the agency is indicating it has made that determination as of that date. A KPA date that is prior to a trial home visit ending means that the agency's determination is no longer valid, since the purpose of a trial home visit is to move towards reunification.

Answer "yes" to this question if the KPA date is on or after the end date of the most recent trial home visit.

Answer "no" to this question if the KPA date is prior to the end date of the most recent trial home visit.

Consult with DHS if there are questions about this requirement.

The child was removed from the home and placed in foster care in accordance with

Note: If the value displayed on this screen is blank, protective hold, or court-reviewed voluntary, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E or Non-Title IV-E Kinship Assistance. If this is not accurate, go back to the court actions screen and update the child's method of removal, then refresh the eligibility determination set up screen to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

If court-reviewed voluntary, the following questions will appear:

Have at least six consecutive months of Title IV-E claims been made for foster care payments to the relative custodian(s) for the child during this continuous placement episode?

If no, has the relative custodian(s) been eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments for the child for at least six consecutive months during this continuous placement episode?"

Note: A relative custodian may be eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments for a child, but not actually receive a payment. This would happen under two circumstances:

- The relative custodian declined to receive foster care payments
- The financially responsible agency is behind in their Title IV-E claiming.

Select "yes" only if the relative custodian was eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments AND it was for a period of at least 6 consecutive months. Note: If a relative custodian was eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments for at least one day in a month on behalf of the child, this counts as a full calendar month.

Consult with your agency's Title IV-E trainer with questions.

A “no” response to this question does not mean the child is ineligible. Selecting “no” will prompt additional eligibility questions.

If court ordered, the following questions will appear:

Did the removal court order contain the best interest or contrary to the welfare language?

Note: If the value displayed below is blank, when it should read yes or no, go back to the court actions screen and update the child’s method of removal, then refresh the eligibility determination to update this screen with the correct method of removal.

Did the child’s removal coincide with the court order authorizing the child’s removal for the current continuous placement episode?

If no, Did DHS determine extenuating circumstances existed as to why the child’s removal did not coincide with the court order authorizing the child’s removal?

Note: A child’s removal from their home must “coincide” with the court order authorizing the child’s removal. Coincide means that the child’s removal must have occurred by the end of the next business day following the court order authorizing removal.

If a child’s removal does not coincide with the court order authorizing their removal, the child is not eligible for Title IV-E Northstar Kinship Assistance unless DHS determines there are extenuating circumstances. Only the Title IV-E unit at DHS can determine if there are extenuating circumstances that apply. Do not answer yes if DHS has not made this determination.

If an agency believes extenuating circumstances exist, the **agency must contact their Title IV-E trainer or their records and eligibility consultant at DHS** to initiate the process.

Has the relative custodian(s) been eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments for the child for at least six consecutive months during this continuous placement episode?

Note: A relative custodian may be eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payment for a child, but not actually receive a payment. This would happen under two circumstances:

- The relative custodian declined to receive foster care payments
- The financially responsible agency is behind in their Title IV-E claiming.

Select “yes” only if the relative custodian was eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments AND it was for a period of at least 6 consecutive months. Note: If a relative custodian was eligible to receive Title IV-E foster care payments for at least one day in a month on behalf of the child, this counts as a full calendar month.

Note: A “no” response to this question does not mean the child is ineligible. Selecting “no” will prompt additional eligibility questions.

Consult with your agency’s Title IV-E trainer with questions.

Sibling Status:

Is the child placed with their sibling in the home of the same relative custodian(s)?

If yes, has the child's sibling been determined eligible for Title IV-E Kinship Assistance?

Note: A child is considered placed with their sibling in the home of the same relative custodian(s) if:

- The child is placed with their sibling in the home of the same relative custodian(s) who will accept a TPLPC of both children at the same time; or
- The child is placed for the purpose of a TPLPC in the home of relative custodian(s) who previously accepted a TPLPC of the child's sibling.
 - The sibling's TPLPC may be a tribal equivalent or from a different state, where it is considered the equivalent of a TPLPC in Minnesota.

Other states or tribes may call this Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance or Title IV-E Kinship Guardianship Assistance. If the sibling's Title IV-E Kinship/Guardianship Assistance is issued from a state or tribe other than Minnesota, the local agency must submit a copy of the sibling's Title IV-E Kinship/Guardianship Assistance Eligibility Determination or Title IV-E Kinship/Guardianship Assistance Agreement. If the sibling's Title IV-E Northstar Kinship Assistance is issued from Minnesota, DHS will supply the supporting documentation.

Has the child lived with the relative custodian for at least six consecutive months while that custodian has been a licensed child foster parent or tribally approved foster parent?

Note: The relative custodian must be fully licensed for child foster care for six consecutive months while the child is living with them. If there are two relative custodians, both must be licensed, and the child must have resided with both relative custodians for the same six consecutive month period. Note: If a relative custodian was licensed for at least one day in a month, and the child lived with that relative custodian for at least one day in a month while the relative custodian was licensed, this counts as a full calendar month. Foster care payments do not need to have been paid on the child's behalf. The agency can request an exemption to this requirement.

If the child has not lived with the relative custodian(s) for at least six consecutive months while their home was licensed or tribally approved for child foster care, they are also not eligible for Non-Title IV-E Northstar Kinship Assistance, unless they request, and DHS approves, an exemption to this eligibility requirement

If an exemption request is submitted in lieu of meeting licensure and/or 6-month residency requirement(s), a child's eligibility status will not display until DHS staff have reviewed and approved or denied the exemption request. The worker will need to review the Required Documents tab, which indicates the documents they need to submit to support their statements in the Eligibility Determination. The worker cannot submit the Eligibility Determination until they have selected how the supporting documentation will be submitted.

The department reviews the Eligibility Determination and either confirms the Eligibility Determination or requests additional information/documentation or corrections. If the child is confirmed eligible, the department will notify the agency worker that they may proceed with completing the Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement.

If the child is ineligible for Northstar Kinship Assistance, the department will issue a denial notice to the agency worker and relative custodian(s), including information on their right to appeal the decision.

Required Documents

There are several required documents to submit to DHS. Use the Required Documents tab to select the specific document your Agency is submitting to DHS. It is important to check accuracy, i.e. correct name, spelling, etc. before sending them to DHS. DHS will verify receipt and accuracy of document(s) as part of the approval process.

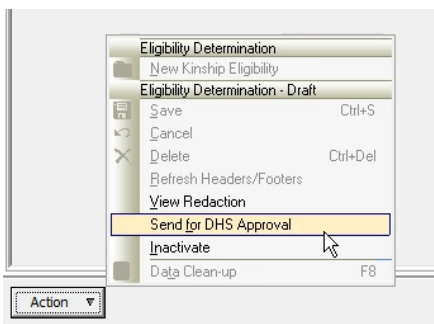
Requirement Needed	Requirement Met By	State Received	State Verified	Submission Method	Comment
Placement Agreement or tribal equivalent					
Background study	John Rhinehart and Suzy Rinehart				
Title IV-E AFDC Relatedness Determination					
MAPCY					

To Complete the Required Documents Tab:

1. Click on the Required Documents tab.
2. Select the required document from the Requirement Met By field drop-down menu.
3. Select the submission method from the Submission method drop-down menu.
4. Enter comment in the Comment field as applicable.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for each required document listed on the screen.
6. Click Save.

Eligibility Determination Action Menu

DHS must confirm all determinations and requests, even when the relative custodian is not eligible for Kinship Assistance.



To Send for DHS Approval:

From the Kinship Eligibility set-up screen, access the **Action** menu and select **Send for DHS Approval**.

Send the documents to DHS according to the method chosen in the Submission method of the Required Documents tab. If documents are being submitted through SSIS from the Kinship Eligibility screen, access the

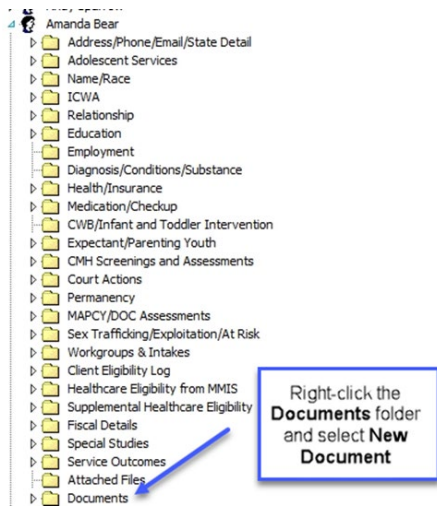
Action menu and select **Send Kinship Elig Document**. Documents should be sent to the agency's assigned Records & Eligibility worker, if the worker does not know who the agency's worker is contact northstar.benefits@state.mn.us. Documents sent through email must be sent secure. When DHS sends back to the Agency for a correction, the Agency will need to complete the corrections and re-send for DHS approval.

Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement

After DHS approval of the Kinship Assistance Eligibility Determination, the financially responsible agency worker will be notified to proceed with completing the Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement.

Participants Folder>Client Node>Documents Folder

The Northstar Kinship Benefit Agreement is a person document and is located beneath the client's node in the Tree View. Person documents remain with the client no matter which future workgroup(s) the client becomes associated with. Reminder person documents are not located in Chronology.



To Access the Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement:

1. Expand the **Participants** folder and double-click on the child's participant's node.
2. Right-click on the **Documents** folder and select **New Document**.
3. Click the search icon in the **Document template** field.
4. Highlight **Northstar Kinship Benefit Agreement** and click **Select**.

It is important to add data to SSIS first in order to have the option of selecting it from the Setup tab to merge into the document. No data typed directly into the document will backfill into the application. In order to edit the document, you must click the blue E from the document tab. It is very important to proof your document. Make sure the names in the agreement match the names and spelling in SSIS, court orders, and all licensing documentation.

NORTHSTAR KINSHIP ASSISTANCE BENEFIT AGREEMENT

Created on: April 14, 2022

This agreement is among the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services ('commissioner'), John Rhinehart and Suzy Rinehart ('relative custodian(s)'), and Test Policy County Family Services, the financially responsible agency, for the purpose of facilitating the transfer of permanent legal and physical custody of Apollo Thirteen ('child'), and to aid the relative custodian(s) in providing proper care for the child. Aitkin is the legally responsible agency that is responsible for the placement, care and supervision of the child through court order or voluntary placement agreement. In this agreement, Test Policy County Family Services, with information from Aitkin, has certified the child, born January 01, 2009, as eligible for Title IV-E Northstar Kinship Assistance.

These parties are authorized to enter into Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreements pursuant to the Northstar Care for Children Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 256N.

Test Policy County Family Services has identified and brought to the attention of the relative custodian(s) any additional resources available to meet the child's needs beyond those available through Northstar Kinship Assistance.

To Create the Northstar Kinship Assistance Benefit Agreement:

1. From the Document **Setup** tab, complete all applicable fields.
2. Click the **Document** tab and click the Blue E, editor button.
3. Click **Save**.
4. Click **Print** to print a copy for signatures

Once the North Star Kinship Benefit Agreement is signed by the prospective relative custodians and the agency representative, it must be sent back to DHS for approval before the TPLPC court order can be finalized. Failure to do this will result in denial of benefits.