

For further information please visit www.kinshipcarersliverpool.co.uk where you will find a range of further guidance, information leaflets and resources related to:

- Local Legal Advice Services including free Law Clinics & specialist legal advisers in Liverpool.
- Our Activities Programme for Kinship Carers, Kids & Families
- Information & Links about Legal Orders related to Kinship Care
- Money & Benefits Advice & Links
- Early Help & Wellbeing Information
- Schools and Learning Resources & Links
- Signposting to national Kinship Websites & Guidance

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Kinship Carers Liverpool

Legal Options - A Guide for Kinship Carers

We advise you to take specialist legal advice at the earliest possible stage about your options & implications related to becoming a kinship carer. Not doing so may have far-reaching implications in terms of the financial & support services you can access at a later stage.

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Q: What are my legal options as a Kinship Carer?

A: If you are a grandparent or other family member raising a child who is not your own, you may wish to consider applying for a legal order to formalise the situation. A legal order will confirm that the child is to live with you and give you the right to be involved in making decisions about their care and upbringing. Some kin carers agree a private/informal arrangement where no legal order is in place.

Q: Are there different types of kinship family legal order arrangements?

A: Care arrangements can be formalised through several different types of legal orders.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) – a formal court order (introduced in 2005) which allows parental control over a child by individuals (grandparent, close relative, family friend) other than the parent.

Child Arrangements Order (CAO)/Residence Order – a court order stating living and contact arrangements for child/ren. Often used as a way for carer to obtain Parental Responsibility (PR) for kin child.

Private fostering - this is when a child under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) is looked after by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and a carer for 28 days or more.

Kinship/Friends & Family Fostering - arrangement where the local authority have legal responsibility for a child and place them with a family member or friend who is a foster carer for that child.