

7. The assessment is likely to be filed with the court and sent to solicitors representing all the parties. The possible outcomes include:

- (a) That Children's Services view you as suitable to act as a carer for the child(ren) without any conditions.
- (b) Children's Services view you as suitable to act as a carer of the child(ren) provided certain conditions are met.
- (c) Children's Services do not consider you are suitable to act as a carer for the child(ren).

Please note that both the viability assessment and the full assessment, if you proceed to it, must include investigation of, and assessment of, all persons in your household and any person with whom you are in a relationship.

8. Even if the assessing social worker recommends that you are suitable to care for the child this does not necessarily mean that the Court will decide to place the child(ren) with you. It is possible that the child(ren) might be returned to the care of his/her parents or there may be other members of the extended family being considered at the same time who may be able to better meet the specific needs of the child(ren).

What to do next?

If you do not agree with the recommendation following the assessment and you wish to take the matter further then we strongly advise that you consult a solicitor specialising in childcare matters regarding the issue

Community Legal Advice:

Offers free confidential legal help direct to the public. You can also find a specialist legal adviser in your area.

 0845345345

 www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk

You can also use the **Law Society:**

 0207242 1222

 www.lawsociety.org.uk

You might be able to always apply to the Court to be joined as part of the care proceedings and if you were successful in your application then you would be able to make your own views known directly to the Court.

Further help and information

Family Rights Group:

A national charity that gives free, independent advice to parents and family members whose children are involved with local Authority children's services.

 0808 801 0366 (Freephone)

Phonelines are open 10am to 3.30pm
Monday to Friday

 www.frg.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau:

Find your local CAB in the phone book or at:

 www.citizensadvice.org.uk



**What happens
when you ask to
be considered to
care for a child
who is connected
to you.**

worcestershire
kinship



worcestershire
county council



1. Childrens Services will contact you and a Social Worker will visit your home to discuss the child(ren) and their concerns with you. You will be asked information about yourself and those living in your home. The social worker will need to see your home, hear about your family and undertake local police checks on all people over the age of 16 who live in your home. This is called a viability assessment.
2. If the viability assessment is positive and recommends further assessment a full kinship assessment may need to take place. This will be undertaken by a kinship assessing social worker and is a detailed study of you and your family involving undertaking references, checks and medicals. It means that the social worker will need to visit you between 6-10 times (depending on the time of each session) and that you will have to give up your time and be prepared for some searching questions.

3. The local authority children's services does have a duty to see if a child can be safely cared for within the extended family network as research tells us that these arrangements can be very successful for children, however we have to be certain that the arrangement is a safe one and the child will not suffer further harm or loss in such a placement. There are a number of reasons why children's services may consider that the offer you are making would not be a suitable one such as;

- You or a member of your household has a criminal record, in particular, any record of offences involving violence
- You or a member of your household has a physical or mental health condition which may negatively impact on your ability to care for the child
- Your family would be unhappy about the arrangement to such an extent that they could interfere making it difficult for you to safely care for the child
- You have other caring/working commitments which mean that you would not have the time to help the child to adjust to their new home or create conflicts within your own family.
- The children's needs due to their previous experiences are such that it would be too difficult for you to manage their behaviour.



4. The social worker undertaking the viability assessment with you will discuss all this with you and hopefully you will be able to agree on the best outcome for everyone concerned. If you both feel positive that this arrangement could be successful and you wish to carry on with a full assessment this will be conducted by Children's Services kinship team. This is unavoidably an intrusive process and normally takes about 8 weeks.
5. The social worker undertaking the viability assessment may however feel that although you wish to continue they cannot recommend you for further assessment for a variety of reasons which will be discussed with you. When this happens you will be told how you can obtain your own legal advice and representation if you want to continue with your application to be considered. However you have the right to get legal advice at any stage and suggestions on how to do this are set out at the end of this guidance leaflet.
6. If you proceed to a full kinship assessment your assessing kinship social worker and the children's social worker will meet to ensure that all the issues are fully addressed in the assessment and will inform you of the outcome of the final assessment. As before, if issues come up in the assessment they will be discussed with you fully so that you are prepared for the final recommendation and given the opportunity to comment on this and seek your own advice if necessary.