



# Form K (Kinship Care Assessment) frequently asked questions and answers

## Implementation of Form K

### Q: Should I use Form C or Form K?

If your local authority is currently using CoramBAAF's Form C, please note that this form will no longer be licenced following publication of Form K on 3 February 2025. If you are midway through an assessment using Form C, you may complete the assessment using Form C, but all new assessments should be completed using Form K. If a Form C assessment has been started, it can still be filed with court or presented to fostering panel, but all future assessments should be completed using Form K.

Form C is no longer available on the list of our licensed forms having been replaced by form K. Form C therefore will no longer be updated by CoramBAAF in line with any legislation or guidance changes, whereas Form K will be kept up to date for licence holders. If moving to Form K for new assessments is too quick a transition for local authorities then we understand but we would encourage practitioners to move to the new form as soon as is reasonably practicable as it will encourage better practice and outcomes for children and families.

### Q: How do I access Form K?

If your organisation's application for a Forms Licence has been approved, or you have an existing Forms Licence, a member of the CoramBAAF team will be in touch with your designated contact. We will share with you the relevant access instructions, and secure weblink, to begin accessing your chosen forms - alongside guidance and additional documents. For further support, please contact [licences@corambaaf.org.uk](mailto:licences@corambaaf.org.uk).

### Q: What format is Form K available in?

Form K is a Word document that can be uploaded into your local authority's electronic case management system such as Liquid Logic, Mosaic or Eclipse. It will not be automatically uploaded. As a licence holder, you will be informed of updates to Form K and/or the guidance and it would be your responsibility to add any updates to your electronic case management system.



### **Q: Can we make changes to Form K?**

CoramBAAF Forms are copyright and in accordance with your licence agreement cannot be changed without our permission. Minor text changes can often be agreed. If more major changes are requested we can usually find a way forward even if we don't give permission for changes to our form. We'd need to see your proposed changes in order to give permission (or not, as the case may be). To request permission please send any proposed changes to [licences@corambaaf.org.uk](mailto:licences@corambaaf.org.uk).

### **Q: Will Form K be used in Wales?**

CoramBAAF will be piloting the Welsh version of Form K later this year to ensure that it is legally compliant with Welsh legislation and regulations. A version will be available in the Welsh language. Further updates will be available on the website as the pilot progresses.

## **Use of Form K**

### **Q: Can Form K be used for Regulation 24 temporary approval?**

Form K is not designed for Reg 24 approval. Based on feedback during the development project for Form K, we felt that in practice local authorities often have their own initial viability template that is used as the mechanism to gather the required information to seek temporary approval. We recommend the [Family Rights Group](#) initial viability assessment guidance for initial viability assessment which will cover much of the information required for Reg 24/Schedule 4 temporary approval. We welcome feedback about Form K and may give consideration to developing a form for temporary approval/Reg 24 approval in the future.

### **Q: Can Form K be used to assess kinship foster carers and special guardians?**

Form K can be used to assess any type of kinship carer, where an assessment of their capacity to care for a child is needed. Specifically, it can be used in these circumstances:

- to approve kinship foster carers (connected persons)
- to recommend a special guardianship order

Although legislation does not require the completion of a specific type of assessment to recommend a child arrangements order, completion of Form K and wider care planning discussions may indicate a child arrangements order is the most appropriate order. In these circumstances, Form K can also be used to make this recommendation.



### **Q: Is Form K legally compliant?**

- Form K is compliant with all the relevant legislation and guidance. Specifically:
- Schedule to the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005, as amended by the Special Guardianship (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (Matters to be dealt with in report for the Court)
- [Special Guardianship Statutory Guidance](#): Statutory guidance for local authorities on the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 (as amended by the Special Guardianship (Amendment) Regulations 2016) January 2017
- Schedule 3 Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations 2013
- Part 5 Paragraph 26 Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations 2013
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards
- Kinship Care Statutory Guidance 2024

Appendix 1 to the Form K Guidance details what sections of the form are compliant with the specific section of legislation or guidance.

### **Q: Can Form K be used for private SGO applications?**

Yes. Form K is legally compliant with the SGO Regulations and the schedule of information required by courts to make a SGO, so can be used for private SGO applications.

For SGOs to be made in either private or public law, the local authority must prepare a Special Guardianship Report in accordance with section 14A(8) of the Children Act 1989 and Regulation 21 of the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005. Under section 14A(8)(b), the report must be provided to the court in cases where a person has given notice of their intention to apply for a Special Guardianship Order. The Schedule to the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 sets out the prescribed matters that must be included in this report (Regulation 21).

### **Q: Are the courts and judiciary aware of Form K?**

As part of the pilot, Form K was filed in a number of local courts and SGOs were granted. A copy has been shared with the President of the Family Division.



## Form K - Support plan

### **Q: Is the Form K – Support Plan a separate document?**

The Form K – Support Plan is a separate document but is an essential and required component of Form K and must be completed as part of the assessment, as the assessment is incomplete without it. It can be used as an interim support plan, when completed while decisions are still being made about a child’s future, and when the assessment is being presented to the fostering panel or when first filed at court. It will therefore need to be updated when a final care plan has been agreed and filed again. It will then become the Special Guardianship Support Plan as required by the law.

The Special Guardianship Regulations clearly support the practice of reviewing and updating a special guardianship support plan to reflect any changes in circumstances or needs, without altering what was originally agreed upon by the court in the special guardianship support plan completed when the order was made. It is good practice to review and update any type of kinship support plan, and therefore you need to state who is responsible for the review, and when it will be completed.

The Form K– Support Plan can be used to review a kinship family’s support needs, once an order has been made or following full approval as a kinship foster carer.

The updated plan will then have the up-to-date information and assessed needs; however, the initial special guardianship support plan will form part of the child’s files and is accessible.

### **Q: Is Form K – Support Plan required for a negative recommendation?**

If the recommendation is negative, there may be occasions when the support plan is not required. However, decisions will need to be made on a case by case basis, and potentially following legal advice.

### **Q: Does the Form K – Support Plan have specific sections for education, finance, child’s family time?**

Yes. Each section of the support plan correlates with the key areas of support for a child: identity, social, emotional and behavioural needs, health, education, maintaining connections/contact/family time and safety. Form K – Support Plan includes cross references to indicate which sections of Part 2 should inform completion of the support plan.



**Q: Is there capacity to add extra boxes to add other specific support needs?**

Yes. Throughout Form K – Support Plan, additional boxes can be added or removed as required. Both are provided in Word format so it is straightforward to amend the form for each assessment.

**Q: Can the sections of the support plan be tailored to the type of plan it is, or does every section need to remain and be answered regardless of the care plan?**

According to the type of support plan being completed and the stage of care planning for the child, the information may be brief when initially completed. It is essential that the information is fully updated when it becomes a Special Guardianship Support Plan as this is likely to be a plan for permanence, and will need to reflect current and likely future support needs.

**Q: Are local authorities able to use their own support plan template if this is reflective of the information in your support plan template?**

Form K – Support Plan is an integral and essential component of the assessment template and should be completed with each assessment.

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**Q: In what circumstance would an interim SGO support plan be used?**

If Form K is completed while a kinship foster carer is temporarily approved under Regulation 24, but the care plan is already special guardianship, it would be completed as an interim Special Guardianship Support Plan. It would then need to be updated at the point of filing final evidence, as the support needs of the carer and child may be different, as the care plan is for permanence.



### **Q: Who should complete the support plan?**

The support plan should draw on the support needs that have been identified throughout the assessment. The assessing social worker needs to have a depth of understanding about the needs of the child to be able to state what support they may need. As the assessing social worker, they will have assessed the support needed by the carer. It is essential therefore that the support plan is completed collaboratively, according to local ways of working. CoramBAAF is aware that the responsibility for writing the support plan may sit with the child's social worker or the assessing social worker. Some local authorities may choose to hold a support planning meeting, involving the kinship carer, where support needs are discussed and agreed. Regardless of how or who completes the plan, it is essential that it relates to identified current and future need, and mitigates assessed risk and vulnerability.

If an independent or freelance social worker is undertaking the assessment, the completion of Form K – Support Plan should be a collaborative process that involves the independent or freelance social worker, the child's social worker and the local team that will be providing support.

## **Timescales for completion of Form K**

### **Q: What timescales do you recommend for completion of Form K?**

A minimum of 12 weeks is required for completion of Form K.

[PLWG Best Practice Guidance](#) – special guardianship orders 2020 requires that 'full and comprehensive assessments are completed of prospective special guardians and that sufficient time is afforded to local authorities to undertake these assessments' (para 33). It states: 'the issues that must be addressed in the schedule and the subsequent amendments to the schedule strongly suggest that an assessment cannot be completed without substantial time and resources', (para 27) and that 'special guardianship assessments and SGSPs should be robust and comprehensive and compliant with regulations. Timetabling for the provision of such assessments should be realistic to provide for this.' (para 38)

Fostering Regulations allow 16 weeks from temporary approval under Regulation 24 to full approval as a kinship foster carer.



## Practice issues

### **Q: Is there an exemplar of Form K?**

No. We do not have a sample completed version of Form K. Form K will remain a standing agenda item at our practice forum for the next few months. Members may wish to share practice and discuss sharing anonymised assessments. We would encourage local authorities to start saving anonymised sample assessments to share good practice within their service.

### **Q: Should the child's social worker write sections of Form K?**

There is no requirement for any specific section to be completed by the child's social worker. According to local practice, the assessing social worker should work collaboratively with the child's social worker, and this may include the assessing social worker meeting the child, where it is in the best interests of the child to do so. The assessing social worker must ensure they have the depth of understanding required, including knowledge of the child's wishes and feelings, to meaningfully match the child's current and likely future needs to the carer's assessed capacity. This will enable identification of what support is likely to be needed. However, if the child's social worker writes any sections, this should be clearly stated at parts 2p and 2q.

### **Q: How is information about the child's parents and their wishes and feelings included in Form K?**

This information should be captured in part 1h – an introduction to the parent/s.

As the assessing social worker for the prospective kinship carer, you may not have any direct communication with the child's parents. However, you need to gather the relevant information about them from other assessments, the court bundle, or attendance at review meetings about the child.

### **Q: What is meant by 'home visit' in Part 3?**

A home visit is required by a social worker for all kinship assessments to meet the SGO schedule and fostering regulations, and therefore you must provide a date of a particular



home visit that meets this requirement. Further information about assessment visits can be included in part 1l – Work undertaken to complete the assessment.

**Q: We currently write a message to the child in our Form C about the rationale for our decision making. Where could this sit in Form K?**

This could be included in Part 1m – Recommendation.

**Q: How about ecomaps? Where would they fit into the assessment/support plan, if at all?**

Ecomaps are one tool that can be very helpful to use during the assessment process. Ecomaps can help to identify support needs, which can then be clearly articulated in the support plan. If you wish to include a completed ecomap as part of Form K, you could include it alongside the genogram in Part 1.

**Q: Where are the voices of the carers' children to be included?**

The needs and voices of carers' children are considered in parts 2b and 2g. Further guidance about having conversations with carers' own children will be included in the Undertaking a Kinship Assessment guide.

**Q: Currently we present a number of supporting documents to fostering panel - is this still the case?**

Yes. All required documents should be submitted alongside Form K as per local policy and fostering regulations.

**Q: How long should a Form K assessment be?**

It is not possible to be prescriptive about the length of any kinship family as each kinship family is unique. The assessment should contain relevant and proportionate information and ensure that all pertinent areas are discussed, analysis provided and support needs identified.





**Q: Can the form be used in anyway to complete special guardianship order addendum assessments when needed?**

Yes. Form K could be used to complete addendum assessments if required. If Form K was used for the original assessment, you can add sub-headings to provide updated addendum information as appropriate. If a different template was used to complete the original assessment, you could use Form K as the update assessment, as appropriate. The detail of updating assessment required will be dependent on assessment completed to date and identified areas requiring update.

**Q: The National Minimum Standards for Fostering are not referenced in Form K. Why is this?**

The National Minimum Standards state that the fostering service should provide support in order for kinship foster carers to meet the standards rather than kinship foster carers being expected to meet those standards without support. We do not therefore encourage use of National Minimum Standards as a benchmarking tool to assess carers against. Form K requires that a carer's support needs are considered throughout and these support needs then clearly set out within the support plan. Therefore, CoramBAAF does not consider that specific reference to the National Minimum Standards is required in addition to this.

## **Undertaking a Kinship Assessment guide**

**Q: Will there be an Undertaking a kinship assessment guide?**

The accompanying 'Undertaking a Kinship Assessment' book is due to be published by June 2025. You can register your interest [here](#) to be notified of the publication date.

## **Information sheets**

**Is there an information sheet for the child?**

There is not an information sheet for the child, given the range of ages and understanding of different children. We would expect that the assessing social worker or the child's social worker should explain the process and answer any relevant questions, depending on the relationship that they have with the child, and the child's age and understanding.



## Training

### **Q: Is there specific training about Form K?**

CoramBAAF provides a 1 day Introduction to Kinship assessment practice and a 2 day Undertaking a Kinship Assessment course. Details can be found on our website [Training & events programme](#).

## Review of other CoramBAAF forms

### **Will there also be a review of the Form F?**

Yes. Form F is currently being reviewed and you can read more about this process [here](#).