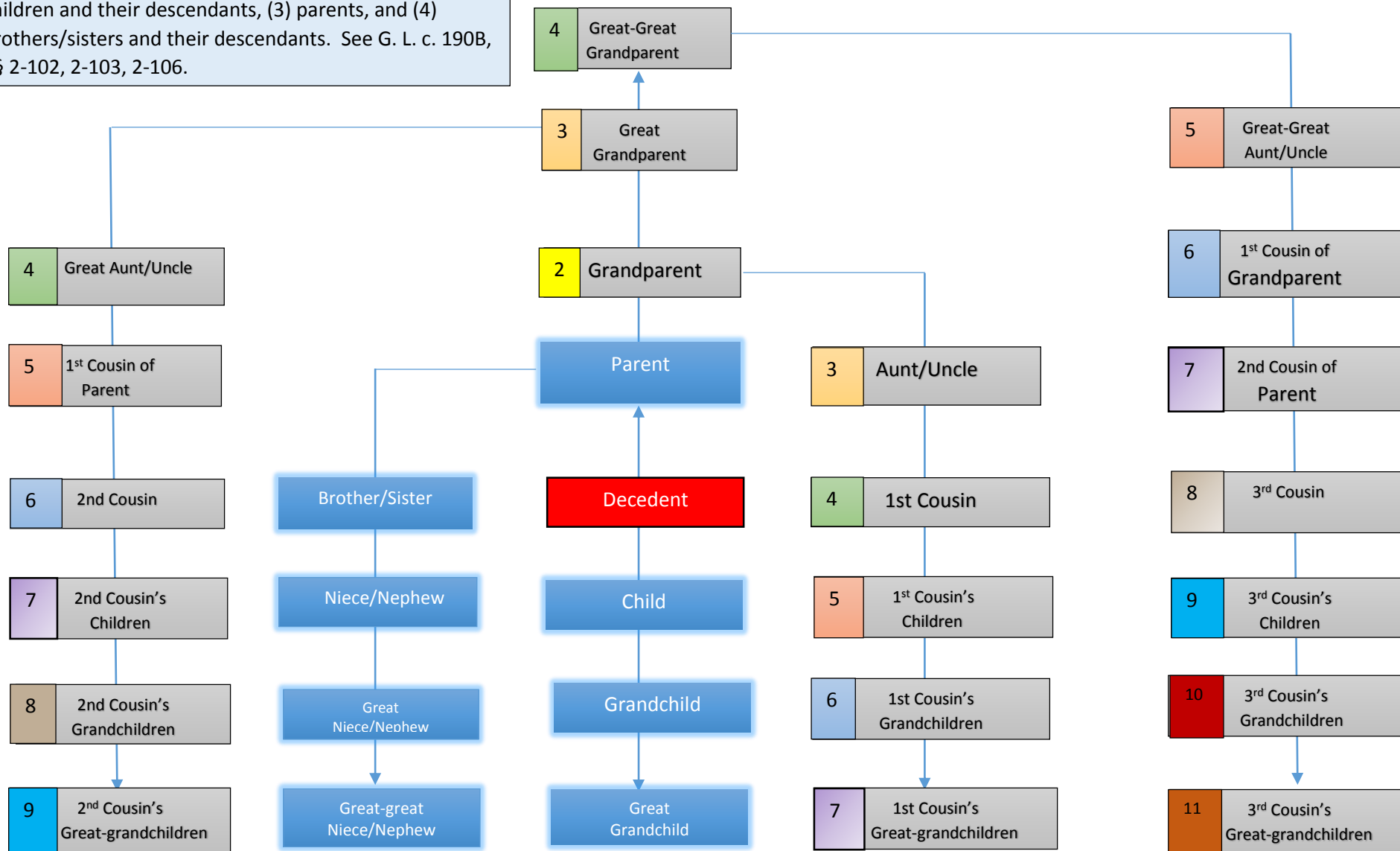


Degrees of kinship are used to identify heirs at law in the “next of kin” category **ONLY** if there are no members in the first four groups of heirs: (1) surviving spouse, (2) children and their descendants, (3) parents, and (4) brothers/sisters and their descendants. See G. L. c. 190B, §§ 2-102, 2-103, 2-106.

MASSACHUSETTS DEGREES OF KINSHIP CHART (MPC 960)

Each title is that person’s relation to the Decedent.



- The numbers above represent the order of nearness in blood to the deceased and are referred to as “degrees of kindred”. The lower the degree or number, the closer a relation is to the Decedent.
- When there are multiple relations with the **same** degree, those who claim through the **nearest** ancestor are preferred. See G. L. c. 190B, § 2-103 (4). For example, if the nearest living relatives are a great-aunt, a great-uncle and two 1st cousins, all are **4th degree** relations, but the two 1st cousins inherit because they claim through the grandparents - a closer ancestor than the great-grandparents.
- The nearest **living** relatives of the **lowest** degree inherit the estate **equally** regardless of whether they claim on the mother’s side or the father’s side of the family. Children of deceased relatives in a class are **excluded**. See G. L. c. 190B, § 2-103 (4).
- If there are no known heirs at law, see G. L. c. 190B, § 2-105. The Attorney General must be provided notice in such cases.