

# IMPORTANT UPDATES AND DEADLINES ON DFPS FINANCIAL AID FOR FOSTER YOUTH AND AGED-OUT YOUNG ADULTS IN TEXAS

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Unbeknownst to most child welfare attorneys and those practicing in the child protection community in Texas, for the past two years over \$3,000,000 of extra pandemic relief funds, a massive sum, has been made available by the federal government through DFPS to assist **current and aged-out foster youth in Texas, ages 14-20 through August 31, 2022.** These funds are now being held in the general DFPS fund, and the vast majority of it is still unused. The monies come from the Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Law, Division X of the mammoth Consolidated Appropriations Act FY 2021.

Mary Christine Reed, Director of the The Texas Foster Youth Justice Project with Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (TRLA) has provided a broad array of helpful resources and information for legal practitioners, CASA advocates and their supervisors, social workers and others who are interested in assisting the thousands of foster youth and aged-out young adults up to their 21st birthdays— for approximately five more months, before the funds being held by DFPS are no longer useable.

Reed and her staff prepared the attached helpful (and colorful) guide for youth and young adults to highlight the availability of the funds and the importance of asking their Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) or Aftercare (now called “Transition Support Services”) Worker for help with financial needs.

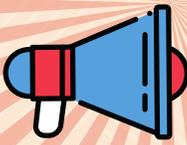
In addition, if youth reach out for help with specific financial needs to their local PAL worker or Transition Support Services (formerly Aftercare) worker and are told they cannot receive help or are not getting responses to their request, they can contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project for legal assistance.

**Youth should contact: Texas Foster Youth Justice Project, Phone: 877-313-3688, and Email: [info@TexasFosterYouth.org](mailto:info@TexasFosterYouth.org).**

According to Reed, these funds provide a remarkable opportunity to provide meaningful financial assistance to vulnerable young adults. Unfortunately however, DFPS has provided very limited information about the availability of the funds, or that more substantive assistance than normal is available. Because of the limited information about the availability of the funds, it is possible that youth seeking help for similar matters will receive varying responses and some may be improperly turned down.

**To help spread the word about the availability of the funds and the importance of seeking help if denied, Reed encourages everyone in this field to share this information with current and aged out foster youth and all who work with them.**

# Financial Help Available for Foster Youth and Young Adults Until August 31, 2022



There is extra financial help available for current and aged out foster youth ages 14-20 through **August 31, 2022!**

## Do You Need Help:



Getting a computer or other equipment for school?



Paying for internet access? \*



Paying money to participate in activities at school?



Any other costs that will help you with school, including graduation related expenses?



Fixing your car so you can drive to work or school or making an insurance payment?



Keeping your cell phone turned on while you are looking for a job?



Paying deposits for an apartment or utilities?



Paying medical, car, or some other kind of important bills? \*



Getting equipment or clothes needed for a job or training program?



Taking driver's education or paying for needed time to practice driving so you can get your license?



Childcare? \*



Winter clothing and supplies?



Bedding, sheets, kitchen items, or household necessities?



Help paying fees to renew your Lawful Permanent Resident Card (green card) or file your application to become a U.S. citizen?

Anything else?

*\* These expenses may only be approved by PAL in limited circumstances. But you should still ask for help and contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project if you are denied.*

If you are struggling to come up with money for something important, you should ask for financial help to pay for it.

Understand this is NOT just a cash payout- you need to:

- identify specific items you need,
- explain why the items are important, and
- ask ahead of time.



# How to Get Help

Ask your PAL worker or Aftercare Worker/Transition Service Coordinator about getting financial help. You can find your PAL worker by going to [bit.ly/31lsD4k](https://bit.ly/31lsD4k) or call the **PAL State Office** at **512-460-7394**. Remember, if you are not able to speak with someone directly, you **MUST** leave a **voicemail**. You need to make it clear in your voicemail that you are a foster youth who needs help.

**Be sure you also leave your name and phone number.**

If you have reached out to your PAL worker for help and were told they cannot help you or if you have trouble getting anyone to help you with your request, contact the **Texas Foster Youth Justice Project**.

The Project can provide you with free legal help from attorneys. Call **877-313-3688** or email **[info@TexasFosterYouth.org](mailto:info@TexasFosterYouth.org)**.

## **Source of funds:**

Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic federal legislation, a part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021., enacted by U.S. Congress December 27, 2020.

**EXTRA ETV (Education Training Voucher)** funds are available too! If you are in college or a post-high school/GED training program that is 1-year or longer, you may be able to get up to \$12,000 of assistance through **September 30, 2022**

In October 2021, a letter from the Children's Bureau in Washington D.C. was sent to child welfare organizations across the U.S. The letter provides some information about how states should be using their Fiscal Year 2022 funds. As Reed noted at the time, it was disheartening to receive the letter because TRLA had no idea what DFPS was going to do with all those funds they have saved for this next fiscal year - how youth can access them and what they are for. And it seemed most people that work with the youth in PAL and aftercare did not have much of a clue either.



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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**ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**  
**Administration on Children, Youth and Families**  
330 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

October 12, 2021

Dear Child Welfare Community,

I am writing to you once again to urge your proactive efforts to engage and serve young people in foster care and formerly in foster care. We have a collective responsibility to ensure that young people exiting foster care and after-care services are able to do so in a planned, youth-driven way.

September 30, 2021, marked the expiration of critical flexibilities and protections for older youth in foster care included in the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act, enacted as Division X of P.L. 116-260, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.

The Children's Bureau has heard - both from young people and the agencies that serve them - that Division X has been a critical lifeline. We are encouraged that Congress is continuing to explore how the federal government can support the needs of youth in foster care and young adults formerly in foster care and it is possible that some provisions of Division X may be reinstated in the coming weeks. We will continue to keep you informed of any future legislative action. In the meantime, here are some suggestions of what you can do now.

### *Maintain Contact and Supports for the Next Six Months For Youth Leaving Foster Care.*

The first six months following a young person's transition from the foster care system are often the most precarious. Over the next six months, I ask the child welfare community to be proactive in reaching out to, engaging, and assisting young people who have made a planful transition from foster care in the last few weeks or who will do so in the coming days. As we know, young people are transitioning into a very challenging world.

From conversations with officials in states and communities, we know that for many young people in foster care or receiving services under the moratorium on aging out of foster care and other flexibilities of Division X, the turning of the calendar to October 1, 2021 did not result in disruptions in their living situations. This is because states have been planning for the expected expiration of Division X flexibilities and have chosen to pursue other available flexibilities, including exercising the Chafee program option to serve youth up to age 23, requesting flexibilities under the Stafford Act, and working with philanthropy and community providers to ensure youth receive seamless services and supports. However, CB has also heard in recent days about concerning situations some young people are finding themselves in-- without a concrete plan or information on resources since the ending of the moratorium on aging out of foster care. Without information and resources, young people are at great risk of homelessness and other precarious situations. A young person should never leave foster without a concrete plan for stable housing and access to immediate resources if the housing plans need to change.

The circumstances and situations of young people can change quickly and that is why we are asking you to develop a specific contact and outreach plan for the youth leaving foster care, including identifying who is best positioned to maintain that meaningful contact, whether it be a caseworker, an advocate, a kinship or foster caregiver, or peer. We know from best practices in the transition planning process that having access to multiple options for support over a longer period of time is critical for their success. While some federal resources to support young people may no longer be available in your state, we always expect states to contact young people and to work with them to identify how to access the resources they need to make a supported and successful transition out of foster care.

*Connect Young People to Other Federal Resources.*

In addition to exploring funding and supports available through the child welfare agency, I urge you to help young people access other available supports.

**Emergency Rental Assistance.** As I wrote about in my recent [letter](#), there are other federal resources to support housing for young people, including the Emergency Rental Assistance. I urge you to connect with the agencies and providers at the state and local community to connect young people to this resources. In addition, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s [Foster Youth to Independence](#) (FYI) and the [Family Unification Program](#) (FUP) are other housing resources available.

**Child Tax Credit.** The [Child Tax Credit](#) in the American Rescue Plan provides the largest Child Tax Credit and can be a critical resource for our young parents and families. As of July 15th, 2021, most families are eligible to automatically receiving monthly payments of \$250 or \$300 per child. It is important for child welfare agencies connect young families to the Child Tax Credit to help all families succeed.

**Other Resources.** There are other federal resources available to young people in transition from foster care but are not specific to them. These include the Economic Impact Payments (stimulus checks), childcare benefits, unemployment benefits, and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). We urge you to work one-on-one with young people to ensure they can access these other crucial resources, offer help with the application process, and follow-up to insure they are approved for benefits.

*Collect and Maintain Contact Information.*

We have discovered many new opportunities from the implementation of Division X. One is that we must have better ways to maintain contact with young people. In October 2010, the implementation of the National Youth In Transition Database (NYTD) survey transformed the way that child welfare engaged with young people from the ages of 18 to 21. We urge child welfare agencies and providers to **collect meaningful contact information** from young people leaving foster care specifically and in general for all young people who have been in contact with you due to resources in Division X.

To obtain meaningful contact information, it is important to let young people know why the agency is collecting the information. In obtaining contact information, we urge agencies to request and/or confirm the contact information of lifelong connections for young people (e.g., kin, foster parents, advocates, relatives, parents, siblings and peers) and record names used on social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter). We also urge you to be proactive in providing young people with information on agency contacts if they have questions or need support. If not already available, we urge you to establish and publicize a toll-free or universal number or website for young people to contact, as future resources and services may become available.

Since the passage of Division X in December 2020, I know the field of child welfare has collectively worked tirelessly to implement resources and services for young people that might have never existed before. I reflect that in our initial guidance on Division X, the Children's Bureau asked you to prioritize the needs of older youth and provide them direct cash assistance. Since then you have worked to pay the rent of young people; assisted them in going back to school to accomplish their educational and employment goals, and helped them to purchase cars, computers, phones and other items they need. You have reached out to individuals to allow them re-enter foster care and you have worked to wrap services around them where they were living to ensure their safety, stability, and well-being. I know the child welfare workforce is fatigued and want to give you my heartfelt thanks for all your efforts. I often hear from young people about how important the relationship with their caseworker or other supportive adult was in order to receive services and supports. By taking care of the workforce we are taking care of young people.

Before closing, I want to note that October 1, 2021 is significant for the child welfare field in another way. That date marks the first day when all states may apply to participate in the title IV-E Prevention Services program and when federal provisions seeking to reduce the child welfare system's reliance on congregate care are required to go into effect nationwide. Successful implementation of these provisions will have a direct and meaningful impact on our collective goals to advance equity and inclusion in the field of child welfare, help ensure that children and youth remain connected to family, and ultimately reduce the number of youth who face aging out of foster care.

Thank you, again, for all your work to support children, youth and families. The Children's Bureau looks forward to our continued partnership. Please let us know how we may best assist you in your work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aysha E. Schomburg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Aysha E. Schomburg, Esq.  
Associate Commissioner  
Children's Bureau

Reed and her staff followed up with the state office PAL program specialist, Todd Serpico, a few weeks later in an effort to obtain more information about the available pandemic funds for Texas foster youth and aged out young adults.

The PAL specialist responded to Reed via email on November 11, 2021 as follows:

“As we discussed, regional PAL have budgets of funds for use for educational, vocational, and auxiliary needs to support the transition of our youth and young adults.

As a reminder, youth and young adults in care or extended foster care can access this support through their PAL Coordinator, and young adults who aged out and are no longer in care can access funds through their Transition Support Services (formerly Aftercare) staff.

The guidance for the use of Chafee funds for our foster population comes from both state and federal policy and code. In particular see:

Federal Child Welfare Policy Manual:

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/grant-funding/john-h-chafee-foster-care-independence-program>

DFPS Policy (in particular sections 10230-10256):

<https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Menu/MenuCPSa10000.asp>

DFPS Transitional Living Services Resource Guide (Optional PAL Services pages 22-23):

[https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Resource\\_Guides/Transitional\\_Living\\_Services\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/handbooks/CPS/Resource_Guides/Transitional_Living_Services_Resource_Guide.pdf)

Reed then followed up with the DFPS PAL specialist a few days later and asked a few direct questions:

1. Can you point to some specific sections of the manual at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/grant-funding/john-h-chafee-foster-care-independence-program> that outline what are allowable expenses that you will be funding. I'm having trouble locating it in the link you sent, as it is just a summary of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. At the bottom of the page is a link to the Child Welfare Policy Manual, but my efforts to locate relevant information there are not yielding much. I'm assuming there are some provisions your office looks to for guidance.
2. I've reviewed the optional PAL services - from the Transitional Living Services Guide. I've attached the two pages. Besides the extra \$500 for TLA and up to \$4,000 for ACRB, is this what the extra funds are going to be available for? (Sections 10230-10256 for the DFPS manual don't seem to list anything else other than a reference back to the Optional Services in the manual)

3. You had mentioned car repairs - was that just for use before 9/30/2021 or is that still available?

Reed expressed that the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project wanted to understand what may be available for a client community so they can share that information on their website and outreach events and to those that work with the youth. She added that “given the amount of money that [is] available, it seems like there is some potential for some really helpful assistance to our clients [youth and aged-out young adults]. But the optional items listed don't seem likely to add up to a significant amount of money. I feel that we must be missing some details about what constitutes educational, vocational, and auxiliary needs. **If not, it seems like there will be confusion amongst the PAL and Aftercare/Transition Support Services staff regarding what is available and that will cause inequities in distribution.”**

The DFPS PAL specialist responded via email with the following information:

“The primary guidance from state/DFPS policy comes from the section of the TLS Resource Guide which you quoted and attached, which includes the following:

- Specialized camps to promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, and other strengths and skills necessary for a successful adulthood (activities may include ropes courses, canoeing, expressive arts, swimming, nature hikes, drama skits and journal writing);
- Vocational assessments, training, and supplies;
- Preparatory classes and testing fees for a General Educational Development (GED) Test or for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT);
- Fees for tutoring, college application, and other special educational services and supplies.
- Fees for summer school (as needed for a youth to progress in school);
- Graduation expenses (examples: caps, gowns, senior rings);
- Tuition, fees, and books for college or vocational school, not provided by the Tuition Fee Waiver or Education and Training Voucher and not to exceed a maximum amount of \$1,000;
- Driver’s education course fees, Texas Driver’s License (TDL) or Personal Identification Certificate issued by Texas Department of Public Safety unless waived;
- Support and coordination of the mentor program and activities to assist youth in preparing for adulthood (activities may include financial literacy, college enrollment, or relationship development);
- Modified or customized equipment such as communication devices or adaptive devices;
- Independent living supplies and household supplies, such as alarm clocks, luggage, first aid kits, calculators, sheets, towels, and cooking utensils for youth who are moving to an independent living setting;

- Emergency personal needs such as eyeglasses that are needed for employment, housing, or education purposes;

That section lays out all of the specific categories where our Ed/Voc/Aux funds are spent in a normal year... and includes a large number of specifically identified items and categories as you are requesting. *With the exceptional funding over this next year, yes we can continue to provide for some larger items such as car repairs, and computers (with supervisor approval).*”

Following this communication, in November 2021, below is the depth of the information that the DFPS was willing to provide Texas Foster Youth Justice Project regarding the millions of dollars in excess PAL funds:

*Under the subject heading: PAL policy guidance for Chafee funds-*

“Rental, food, and utility assistance traditionally is considered ACRB funds, and other needs or requests fall under our ed/voc/aux assistance. *That being said, given the presence of our exceptional funds, if there are particular cases where additional needs exist we will staff them and look into possible options.*”

In a recent telephone discussion with Reed, she expressed concerns that DFPS does not even have an application for the available funds. There is No Written Policy. There is No Written Guidance. Information on the DFPS web page is not informative. And local PAL workers are not helping the youth who are requesting financial aid that should be made available to them.

Reed stated that DFPS was refusing to be cooperative and that they were very defensive when asked about how this arsenal of federal funds is actually being used to help the youth it was allotted for.

**Because there is no application for these available funds, the youth are confused. Reed emphasized several times that the entire process to attempt to access the DFPS aid is very confusing.**

DFPS has a substantial amount of money that could be used to provide tutoring, extra music lessons, summer camps for art, music, theater, dance, film, journalism, etc. And items that youth use and need on a daily basis, such as laptops, Ipads, cell phones and phone or internet account services. For aged out young adults, car repairs, car insurance and transportation assistance is also a common issue.

Reed added that the assistance and how youth can access it needs to be publicized, really promoted with the Aftercare (Transition Support Services) workers. She was appalled that DFPS had absolutely no written information about these funds or how youth can access them.

On November 10, 2021, Reed and Sarah Worthington met with DFPS Transitional Services Leadership. As they noted in the attached letter addressed to the DFPS Council on December 9th, DFPS provided very limited information about the availability of the funds, or that more substantive assistance than normal is available.

## Comments for DFPS Council December 9, 2021

Submitted by:

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The Texas Foster Youth Justice Project provides free legal assistance to current and former foster youth. Visit [TexasFosterYouthJusticeProject.org](https://TexasFosterYouthJusticeProject.org) for more information.

### **Disbursement of Extra Federal Funding to Support Foster Youth During the Pandemic**

In Fiscal Year 2022, DFPS has access to millions of dollars of extra pandemic relief funding to assist current and former foster youth ages 14-21. However, the agency has simply placed most of the funds in their traditional budget and is failing to provide guidance to staff about the expanded resources available to assist young adults. **We are concerned that they are not publicizing the availability of the funds in a meaningful manner or facilitating access to this critical resource.**

On December 27, 2020, the U.S. Congress enacted the Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic federal legislation, found in Division X of the mammoth Consolidated Appropriations Act FY 2021. (Exhibit A) This legislation allocated millions of dollars to provide extra support to current and former foster youth who had weathered the pandemic without the supports available to most young people. In March 2021, the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF), an office of the federal Administration for Children and Families, issued guidance about the use of the funds in Program Instruction 21-04. (Exhibit C) The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) received \$25,322,153. Much of that funding was expended in fiscal year 2021, including extra Education and Training Voucher (ETV) disbursements, the PanAid program which provided cash funds for current and former foster youth young adults up to age 27, and funds distributed through the regional Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) programs and contracted Aftercare Case Management Providers/Transition Support Services Coordinators.

DFPS reserved a portion of the funds for FY 2022. Approximately \$3.45 million is budgeted for the Preparation for Adult Living program regions and at least \$1,555,019.40 for Aftercare Case Management/Transition Support Services contractors. These funds can be used for youth and young adults between the ages of 14-21. Exhibit B, DFPS Public Information Act Response July 12 2021 Pandemic Funds, provides some information about those funds. In a meeting on November 10, 2021, with DFPS Transitional Services leadership we were advised that the amount of funds for the PAL program for Fiscal Year 2022 had been increased to approximately \$3.45 million from \$2,897,246.90.

These funds provide a remarkable opportunity to provide meaningful financial assistance to vulnerable young adults. However, DFPS has provided very limited information about the availability of the funds, or that more substantive assistance than normal is available. The communications regarding these funds have been minimal. The Texas Foster Youth Justice Project's efforts to encourage more transparency about what type of aid young adults could request have met resistance. As best we can determine, based on our inquiries, including public information act requests, no additional written guidance has been provided to the PAL program or Aftercare/Transition Support Services contractor staff about the extra availability of the funds or how the extra funds can be used.

DFPS Transitional Services leadership informed us the funds could be used for Chafee eligible expenses, specifically *Educational*, *Vocational* and *Auxiliary* expenses. When we pressed for more details about what those types of expenses might be, particularly *Vocational* and *Auxiliary*, no examples were provided. When we explained that young adults would not understand those terms and that they needed more concrete examples of realistic items to ask for financial help with, we were told young adults should just ask for help.

After some additional communications on the topic we were referred to an *Optional PAL Services* list in the [Transitional Living Services Resource Guide](#). (Exhibit F) The Guide lists what the generally limited Preparation for Adult Living funds can be used for on page 22. Last updated in April 2020, well before the passage of the funding by Congress, the Guide does not address the existence of additional funds in FY2021 and FY 2022.

The list includes:

- Group and individual counseling to address issues of separation, preparation for placement, emancipation, and interpersonal relationships;
- Specialized camps to promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, and other strengths and skills necessary for a successful adulthood (activities may include ropes courses, canoeing, expressive arts, swimming, nature hikes, drama skits and journal writing);
- Vocational assessments, training, and supplies;
- Preparatory classes and testing fees for a General Educational Development (GED) Test or for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT);

- Fees for tutoring, college application, and other special educational services and supplies;
- Fees for summer school (as needed for a youth to progress in school);
- Graduation expenses (examples: caps, gowns, senior rings);
- Tuition, fees, and books for college or vocational school, not provided by the Tuition Fee Waiver or Education and Training Voucher and not to exceed a maximum amount of \$1,000;
- Driver's education course fees, Texas Driver's License (TDL) or Personal Identification Certificate issued by Texas Department of Public Safety unless waived;
- Support and coordination of the mentor program and activities to assist youth in preparing for adulthood (activities may include financial literacy, college enrollment, or relationship development);
- Modified or customized equipment such as communication devices or adaptive devices;
- Independent living supplies and household supplies, such as alarm clocks, luggage, first aid kits, calculators, sheets, towels, and cooking utensils for youth who are moving to an independent living setting;
- Emergency personal needs such as eyeglasses that are needed for employment, housing, or education purposes;
- PAL age-appropriate activities and training for youth who are ages 14 and 15. Activities may include regional conferences or college tours.

Most of these items in this list are low-cost, do not meet the urgent needs of foster youth, and are already covered in the PAL budget or from separate sources of financial assistance. We are concerned that, by limiting allowable expenses to this list, DFPS will not use the Pandemic funds as Congress intended. We see DFPS opting for the ease of status quo, using these extraordinary funds as padding to their general budget rather than targeted funding for a specific purpose. **This approach to spending Pandemic funds will result in the haphazard and inequitable distribution of assistance and an ultimate misuse of the resources allocated by Congress to meet the critical and unique needs of current and former foster youth during the Pandemic.**

Relying on youth and young adults to seek out or ask for help is not an acceptable approach to disbursing Pandemic funds. Failing to provide written guidance to those responsible for distributing funds is not an acceptable approach to disbursing Pandemic funds.

Our experience with the funds available in fiscal 2021 was similar. Many of the Aftercare providers and PAL regions were not aware that extra funds were available or that they could be used for anything other than a pending eviction or utility shut-off. With the PanAid program, the amount of funds an applicant could receive was at least partially dependent on how their distributing program was choosing to implement the program and on the program's discretion about which applicants were more deserving. Most of the applicants were randomly assigned to

distributing programs as they had no pre-existing relationship with the programs when they filled out the online application, which further increased the arbitrariness of the process.

Because of the lack of adequate communications of concrete details about available help, the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project resorted to preparing our own outreach material. A copy of our material, *Financial Help Available for Foster Youth and Young Adults Until August 31, 2022*, is attached as Exhibit D.

We have also included the limited communications by DFPS we have been able to find about these funds. The DFPS communications are not in a youth friendly language and do not notify youth and those that work with them of the extent of possible aid. (Exhibit E) And, until at least December 2, 2021, the main ETV web page did not mention the availability through September 2022 of additional funds; students can receive up to \$12,000 instead of the usual \$5,000. The website was corrected after we contacted DFPS and BCFS, which administers the ETV program. However, we were then notified that "Covid-19 ETV funding was mistakenly put on hold since October 1st, 2021. We [BCFS staff] are now working with the state of Texas to correct any misinformation received by students and professionals." This raises further concerns about young adults accessing the Pandemic relief funds.

We would like to see DFPS provide written guidance making clear to PAL and Aftercare staff that the Pandemic funds can be used for expenses such as car repairs and insurance, a computer, internet access, a computer for school work, participation in extracurricular or enrichment activities to which other students often have access, equipment and clothes for jobs and training programs, driver's education, childcare, winter clothing and supplies, household necessities, and fees to renew Lawful Permanent Resident cards or file citizenship applications. We would like to see outreach information that encourages young adults to apply for help for these items, and not just reference the terms *auxiliary*, *vocational* and *educational*. **These funds present an extraordinary opportunity for Texas foster youth and young adults. They deserve to know about these resources for their critical needs and have fair and equitable access, regardless of where they are in the state or who is their PAL or Aftercare worker.**

### Exhibits

Exhibit A – Federal Legislation: Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic, Division X, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021

Exhibit B - DFPS Public Information Act Response July 12 2021

Exhibit C - Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) Program Instruction 21-04 Pandemic Funds: Guidance and instruction related to the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act

Exhibit D - Texas Foster Youth Justice Project Outreach Flyer: Financial Help Available for Foster Youth and Young Adults Until August 31, 2022

Exhibit E – DFPS Communications About Pandemic Assistance

Exhibit F – Transitional Living Services Resource Guide

## **DIVISION X—SUPPORTING FOSTER YOUTH AND FAMILIES THROUGH THE PANDEMIC**

### **SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This division may be cited as the “Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act”.

### **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) **COVID–19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.**—The term “COVID–19 public health emergency” means the public health emergency declared by the Secretary pursuant to section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, entitled “Determination that a Public Health Emergency Exists Nationwide as the Result of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus”.

(2) **COVID–19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PERIOD.**—The term “COVID–19 public health emergency period” means the period beginning on April 1, 2020 and ending with September 30, 2021.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

### **SEC. 3. CONTINUED SAFE OPERATION OF CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT FOR OLDER FOSTER YOUTH.**

(a) **FUNDING INCREASES.**—

(1) **INCREASE IN SUPPORT FOR CHAFEE PROGRAMS.**—Out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2021, to carry out section 477 of the Social Security Act, in addition to any amounts otherwise made available for such purpose.

(2) **EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS.**—Of the amount made available by reason of paragraph (1) of this subsection, not less than \$50,000,000 shall be reserved for the provision of vouchers pursuant to section 477(h)(2) of the Social Security Act.

(3) **APPLICABILITY OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 477(g)(2) of the Social Security Act shall apply with respect to the amount made available by reason of paragraph (1) of this subsection as if the amount were included in the amount specified in section 477(h) of such Act.

(B) **RESERVATION OF FUNDS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Of the amount to which section 477(g)(2) of the Social Security Act applies by reason of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the Secretary shall reserve not less than \$500,000 to provide technical assistance to a State implementing or seeking to implement a driving and transportation program for foster youth.

(ii) **PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the entity providing the assistance has demonstrated the capacity to—

(I) successfully administer activities in 1 or more States to provide driver's licenses to youth who are in foster care under the responsibility of the State; and

(II) increase the number of such foster youth who obtain a driver's license.

(4) INAPPLICABILITY OF STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—In making payments under subsections (a)(4) and (e)(1) of section 474 of the Social Security Act from the additional funds made available as a result of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection, the percentages specified in subsections (a)(4)(A)(i) and (e)(1) of such section are, respectively, deemed to be 100 percent.

(5) MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNT.—The dollar amount specified in section 477(i)(4)(B) of the Social Security Act through the end of fiscal year 2022 is deemed to be \$12,000.

(6) INAPPLICABILITY OF NYTD PENALTY TO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—In calculating any penalty under section 477(e)(2) of the Social Security Act with respect to the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) for April 1, 2020, through the end of fiscal year 2022, none of the additional funds made available by reason of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall be considered to be part of an allotment to a State under section 477(c) of such Act.

(b) MAXIMUM AGE LIMITATION ON ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANCE.—During fiscal years 2020 and 2021, a child may be eligible for services and assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act until the child attains 27 years of age, notwithstanding any contrary certification made under such section.

(c) SPECIAL RULE.—With respect to funds made available by reason of subsection (a) that are used during the COVID-19 public health emergency period to support activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary may not require any State to provide proof of a direct connection to the pandemic if doing so would be administratively burdensome or would otherwise delay or impede the ability of the State to serve foster youth.

(d) PROGRAMMATIC FLEXIBILITIES.—During the COVID-19 public health emergency period:

(1) SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall allow a State to waive the applicability of the requirement in section 477(i)(3) of the Social Security Act that a youth must be enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program or making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program if a youth is unable to do so due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(2) AUTHORITY TO USE VOUCHERS TO MAINTAIN TRAINING AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.—A voucher provided under a State educational and training voucher program under section 477(i) of the Social Security Act may be used for maintaining training and postsecondary education, including less than full-time matriculation costs or other expenses that are not part of the cost of attendance but would help support youth in remaining enrolled as described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3) AUTHORITY TO WAIVE LIMITATIONS ON PERCENTAGE OF FUNDS USED FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND ELIGIBILITY FOR

SUCH ASSISTANCE.—Notwithstanding section 477(b)(3)(B) of the Social Security Act, a State may use—

(A) more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment under section 477(c)(1) of such Act for a fiscal year, for room or board payments; and

(B) any of such amounts for youth otherwise eligible for services under section 477 of such Act who—

(i) have attained 18 years of age and not 27 years of age; and

(ii) experienced foster care at 14 years of age or older.

(4) **AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE DRIVING AND TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE.**—

(A) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Funds provided under section 477 of the Social Security Act may be used to provide driving and transportation assistance to youth described in paragraph (3)(B) who have attained 15 years of age with costs related to obtaining a driver's license and driving lawfully in a State (such as vehicle insurance costs, driver's education class and testing fees, practice lessons, practice hours, license fees, roadside assistance, deductible assistance, and assistance in purchasing an automobile).

(B) **MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE.**—The amount of the assistance provided for each eligible youth under subparagraph (A) shall not exceed \$4,000 per year, and any assistance so provided shall be disregarded for purposes of determining the recipient's eligibility for, and the amount of, any other Federal or federally-supported assistance, except that the State agency shall take appropriate steps to prevent duplication of benefits under this and other Federal or federally-supported programs.

(C) **REPORT TO THE CONGRESS.**—Within 6 months after the end of the expenditure period, the Secretary shall submit to the Congress a report on the extent to which, and the manner in which, the funds to which subsection (a)(3) applies were used to provide technical assistance to State child welfare programs, monitor State performance and foster youth outcomes, and evaluate program effectiveness.

**SEC. 4. PREVENTING AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC.**

(a) **ADDRESSING FOSTER CARE AGE RESTRICTIONS DURING THE PANDEMIC.**—A State operating a program under part E of title IV of the Social Security Act may not require a child who is in foster care under the responsibility of the State to leave foster care solely by reason of the child's age. A child may not be found ineligible for foster care maintenance payments under section 472 of such Act solely due to the age of the child or the failure of the child to meet a condition of section 475(8)(B)(iv) of such Act before October 1, 2021.

(b) **RE-ENTRY TO FOSTER CARE FOR YOUTH WHO AGE OUT DURING THE PANDEMIC.**—A State operating a program under the State plan approved under part E of title IV of the Social Security Act (and without regard to whether the State has exercised the option provided by section 475(8)(B) of such Act to extend assistance under such part to older children) shall—

(1) permit any youth who left foster care due to age during the COVID–19 public health emergency to voluntarily re-enter foster care;

(2) provide to each such youth who was formally discharged from foster care during the COVID–19 public health emergency, a notice designed to make the youth aware of the option to return to foster care;

(3) facilitate the voluntary return of any such youth to foster care; and

(4) conduct a public awareness campaign about the option to voluntarily re-enter foster care for youth who have not attained 22 years of age, who aged out of foster care in fiscal year 2020 or fiscal year 2021, and who are otherwise eligible to return to foster care.

(c) PROTECTIONS FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE.—A State operating a program under the State plan approved under part E of title IV of the Social Security Act shall—

(1) continue to ensure that the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of older foster youth, including youth who remain in foster care and youth who age out of foster care during that period but who re-enter foster care pursuant to this section, are met; and

(2) work with any youth who remains in foster care after attaining 18 years of age (or such greater age as the State may have elected under section 475(8)(B)(iii) of such Act) to develop, or review and revise, a transition plan consistent with the plan referred to in section 475(5)(H) of such Act, and assist the youth with identifying adults who can offer meaningful, permanent connections.

(d) AUTHORITY TO USE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR CERTAIN COSTS INCURRED TO PREVENT AGING OUT OF, FACILITATING RE-ENTRY TO, AND PROTECTING YOUTH IN CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a State to which additional funds are made available as a result of section 3(a) may use the funds to meet any costs incurred in complying with subsections (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

(2) RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) The costs referred to in paragraph (1) must be incurred after the date of the enactment of this section and before October 1, 2021.

(B) The costs of complying with subsection (a) or (c) of this section must not be incurred on behalf of children eligible for foster care maintenance payments under section 472 of the Social Security Act, including youth who have attained 18 years of age who are eligible for the payments by reason of the temporary waiver of the age requirement or the conditions of section 475(8)(B)(iv) of such Act.

(C) A State shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that eligibility for foster care maintenance payments under section 472 of the Social Security Act is determined when a youth remains in, or re-enters, foster care as a result of the State complying with subsections (a) and (c) of this section.

(D) A child who re-enters care during the COVID-19 public health emergency period may not be found ineligible for foster care maintenance payments under section 472 of the Social Security Act solely due to age or the requirements of section 475(8)(B)(iv) of such Act before October 1, 2021.

(e) **TERMINATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.**—The preceding provisions of this section shall have no force or effect after September 30, 2021.

**SEC. 5. FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES PROGRAM PANDEMIC FLEXIBILITY.**

During the COVID-19 public health emergency period, each percentage specified in subparagraphs (A)(i) and (B) of section 474(a)(6) of the Social Security Act is deemed to be 100 percent.

**SEC. 6. EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR THE MARYLEE ALLEN PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated \$85,000,000 to carry out section 436(a) of the Social Security Act for fiscal year 2021, in addition to any amounts otherwise made available for such purpose. For purposes of section 436(b) of such Act, the amount made available by the preceding sentence shall be considered part of the amount specified in such section 436(a).

(b) **INAPPLICABILITY OF STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**—In making payments under section 434(a) of the Social Security Act from the additional funds made available as a result of subsection (a) of this section, the percentage specified in section 434(a)(1) of such Act is deemed to be 100 percent.

**SEC. 7. COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

(a) **RESERVATION OF FUNDS.**—Of the additional amounts made available by reason of section 6 of this Act, the Secretary shall reserve \$10,000,000 for grants under subsection (b) of this section for fiscal year 2021, which shall be considered to be made under section 438 of the Social Security Act.

(b) **DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—From the amounts reserved under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall—

(A) reserve not more than \$500,000 for Tribal court improvement activities; and

(B) from the amount remaining after the application of subparagraph (A), make a grant to each highest State court that is approved to receive a grant under section 438 of the Social Security Act for the purpose described in section 438(a)(3) of such Act, for fiscal year 2021.

(2) **AMOUNT.**—The amount of the grant awarded to a highest State court under this subsection shall be the sum of—

(A) \$85,000; and

(B) the amount that bears the same ratio to the amount reserved under subsection (a) that remains after the application of paragraph (1)(A) and subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, as the number of individuals in the State in which the court is located who have not attained 21 years of age bears to the total number of such individuals in all States the highest courts of which were awarded



## Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

RE: Open Records Request R001559-061821

Part of your modified request was concerning:

- Please explain the application process used by DFPS or any contractor for eligible young adults to apply for assistance from the Pandemic Relief Fund. If any forms or applications are being used, please provide copies.
- Please explain how applicants for assistance from the Pandemic Relief Fund are notified about whether they will be granted or denied assistance.
- Of the full amount of funds provided to DFPS to be made available to young adults through the Pandemic Relief Fund (excluding funds to be used administratively), how much has been disbursed as of the date of this request and how much is remaining to be disbursed?

While DFPS is not required to answer questions / provide explanations per Texas Government Code 552, in conjunction with the Texas Attorney General Public Information Handbook:

**Making a Request.** The Act is triggered when a person submits a written request to a governmental body. The request must ask for records or information already in existence. **The Act does not require a governmental body to create new information, to do legal research, or to answer questions.** In preparing a request, a person may want to ask the governmental body what information is available.

DFPS Conservatorship Services has provided the following:



- We have not incurred costs due to the bill, but the bill did provide DFPS with \$25,322,153 in funding for additional Chafee services for youth.
- Currently \$16,672,038 of that amount above is encumbered.
- \$2,897,246.90 of that was funding provided to the PAL regions during FY21 for use for educational, vocational, and auxiliary needs of youth and young adults aged 14-21 who are in care or extended foster care, as well as emergency funding for young adults aged 21-27 who aged out of foster care. during FY21. This funding was made available May 1, 2021. DFPS has currently distributed/spent at least \$747,983.80 of that amount. A further \$2,897,246.90 has been encumbered to provide the same assistance during FY22 (young adults 21-27 are only eligible for funding through Sept 30, 2021).
- \$1,555,019.40 has been provided to Aftercare Case Management contractors to be used to assist young adults aged 18-21 who aged out and have left care. This funding was made available beginning in May 2021. A further \$1,555,019.40 has been encumbered to provide the same assistance during FY22.
- DFPS has provided information about these programs on our Foster Youth Connections website, the external DFPS website, and through our Youth Take Flight Instagram account. DFPS has also sent out a notice regarding support available through Division X programs to a wide base of stakeholders, including: Texas Supreme Court Children's Commission, Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS), CASA, Education Reach, Texas Workforce Commission, all transition centers and Aftercare providers across the state. We have also shared internally with appropriate DFPS staff and have presented the information in meetings with CVS leadership, as well as Kinship Services leadership.
- DFPS has been working through the RFP process, and are close to finalizing contracts to roll out \$9,000,000 in additional funding available for young adults aged 18-27 which will be available until Sept 30, 2021. As a part of that process, we have been holding weekly planning meetings with the prospective contractors. As soon as the contracts are executed DFPS will roll out information about the process and availability of funding widely through our networks as we have done previously.

Part of your request also asked for the following:

- Please provide a copy of the FY 2022 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) with information of the planned use of the additional Chafee and ETV funding provided for by the Pandemic Relief Fund. This report was due to Administration of Children and Families (ACF) on June 30, 2021 and should be readily available.

This report is still in the draft phase and has not been officially accepted by the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) and therefore is not available at this time. It is expected to be available towards the end of the year in it's completed and approved form.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

DFPS Open Records Coordinator

512-929-6764  
1-877-764-7230

Texas Department of Family & Protective Services  
Attn: RMG (Y-937)  
P. O. Box 149030  
Austin, TX 78714-19030

## Pandemic Support for Foster Youth and Young Adults

*Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act was enacted as Division X of P.L. 116-260, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.*

Since the passage of **Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act**, enacted on December 27, 2020, DFPS has been reviewing this legislation and consulting with federal partners as it relates to youth currently and formerly in foster care.

With the March 9, 2021 release by the federal government of additional instructions and clarifications as provided by **Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-21-04**, DFPS is finalizing plans to provide needed financial support to those impacted by the pandemic.

DFPS is working to amend the ETV and PAL Aftercare contracts, providing guidance and financial resources to our PAL staff, and continues to pursue other mechanisms to make funds available to eligible young adults ages 21 up to age 27.

As we are finalizing plans, the following information and guidance may help those serving youth currently and formerly in foster care:

- Young adults currently participating in extended care and those who have recently left care, were notified through their caseworker they can remain in care or return to care through September 30, 2021, even if the young adult is older than the traditional age to be in care, i.e. 21, or 22 (for those attending high-school or a GED program), and that the education and employment requirements continue to be suspended through September 30, 2021.
- The return to care provision applies to those who left care on or after January 27, 2020 and is subject to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services extending the determination that COVID-19 is a public health emergency every 90 days. Regardless of any future extensions, the return to care option expires after September 30, 2021. For any young adult interested in returning to care, please reach out to

the [Regional Preparation For Adult Living \(PAL\) Coordinators](#) or directly to their PAL staff.

- For young adults participating in the Educational Training Voucher program (ETV), or those who lost eligibility at age 23, they can submit a supplemental budget for the fall 2020 semester and the spring 2021 semester or a new application for consideration of funds at <https://discoverbcfs.net/texasetv/>.
- For young adults who aged out of foster and are age 18 or older but have not turned 21, they can seek resources through [PAL Aftercare Case Management Services](#).
- For youth and young adults 14 and older in foster care or participating in extended foster care, they can seek resources through their PAL staff or [Regional Preparation For Adult Living \(PAL\) Coordinators](#).
- For young adults who aged out of foster care and are 21 but have not turned 27 with a critical need(s), they can reach out to the [Regional Preparation For Adult Living \(PAL\) Coordinators](#).

While DFPS anticipates sharing additional information with the community and posting information on our public websites during the month of April, the [CPS Transitional Living Services staff](#) is available to answer any questions you may have regarding youth in foster care approaching 18, young adults participating in extended foster care, and young adults who aged out of foster care or who are receiving assistance through ETV.

<h1>ACF</h1> <p>Administration for Children and Families</p>	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  Administration on Children, Youth and Families	
	<b>1. Log No:</b> ACYF-CB-PI-21-04	<b>2. Issuance Date:</b> March 9, 2021
	<b>3. Originating Office:</b> Children’s Bureau	
	<b>4. Key Words:</b> Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act; Title IV-B, Title IV-E, Court Improvement Program, John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood, Education and Training Vouchers Program, Family First Transition Act	

### PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

**TO:** State, Tribal, and Territorial Agencies Administering or Supervising the Administration of Titles IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act, the Highest State Court of Appeals, and State and Tribal Court Improvement Program Grantees.

**SUBJECT:** Guidance and instruction related to the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act, Division X of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*, Public Law (P.L.) 116-260, enacted December 27, 2020.

**LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES:** Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act (the Act).

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Program Instruction (PI) is to provide instruction and guidance to title IV-B/ IV-E agencies and Court Improvement Program Grantees on actions required to address the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act which was enacted as Division X of P.L. 116-260, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*.

**BACKGROUND:** The *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*, P.L. 116-260, enacted into law on December 27, 2020, makes continuing appropriations for specified federal agencies and provides temporary flexibilities and assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency.<sup>1</sup> Division X of P.L. 116-260, titled, the “Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act,” includes additional, supplemental or enhanced funding for

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<sup>1</sup> “COVID-19 public health emergency” is defined in section 2(1) of Division X for purposes of Division X as the public health emergency declared by the Secretary entitled “Determination that a Public Health Emergency Exists Nationwide as the Result of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus,” beginning January 27, 2020 and currently authorized until April 20, 2021 ([subject to be extended](#)).



several programs authorized under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Act and requires title IV-E agencies to take a number of actions to protect and support youth/young adults currently or formerly in foster care. Please see Information Memorandum [ACYF-CB-IM-21-05](#) issued on January 13, 2021 for a summary of all provisions in Division X.

This PI addresses the following provisions:

**Section A: Youth/Young Adult Provisions.**

1. Temporary requirements for title IV-E agencies to allow youth over age 18 to remain in or re-enter foster care and suspension of the age and education/employment requirements for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for youth;
2. John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (Chafee program) Additional Funding and Flexibilities;
3. Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program Additional Funding and Flexibilities; and
4. Financial and Reporting Information for the Chafee and ETV Program Additional Funding

**Section B: Emergency Funding for the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**

**Section C: Court Improvement Program Supplemental funding**

**Section D: Family First Prevention Services Program Pandemic Flexibility**

**Section E: Adjustment of Baselines for Family First Transition Act Funding Certainty Grants**

A separate PI will be issued to address provisions in Division X relating to the title IV-E Kinship Navigator program.

**Section A: Youth/Young Adult Provisions.**

*Overview:* The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act (Division X of P.L. 116-260) directs title IV-E agencies to prevent youth from “aging out” of foster care and to facilitate re-entry into foster care for youth who previously aged out of foster care for the period specified in Division X. It also temporarily waives certain title IV-E foster care eligibility requirements for youth age 18 and older. The law also provides \$400 million in additional appropriations for the Chafee program for fiscal year (FY) 2021, of which \$50 million is reserved for ETV (see Attachments A and B for Chafee and ETV additional allotments). The law also directs that 1.5 percent of the \$400 million be reserved for HHS technical assistance and evaluation activities. Title IV-E agencies may also use the additional Chafee funding for meeting the extended foster care requirements, as described in detail below.

The temporary title IV-E requirements and the additional Chafee/ETV funding and flexibility address the critical financial needs of youth/young adults who are or were

formerly in foster care. Because many of these young people, once discharged from foster care, lack access to stable housing, income, and other resources that may be available to youth/young adults in intact families, the funding and flexibilities provided by the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act are critical to ensuring youth are protected and supported. Without adequate outreach and support, there is a very real risk that youth who have left the foster care system will become homeless or experience other negative outcomes.

In carrying out the provisions of the law, CB encourages all title IV-E agencies to draw on the expertise of those individuals who will receive the assistance and services at both the individual and system-level. Youth and young adults are in the best position to identify their most critical needs. CB encourages title IV-E agencies to make engagement and peer support<sup>2</sup> a critical part of implementation. Some potential approaches to engaging young people in implementation include:

- Invite existing entities, such as youth advisory boards or other youth leadership groups, to meet with and advise the agency in implementation efforts. Ensure that advisory activities are inclusive of the diverse population of eligible youth, including young people who are expectant or parenting; young people with different racial, cultural and ethnic backgrounds; Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth; and youth from both urban and rural areas.
- Enlist community-based agencies in outreach and notification activities to ensure all eligible young people learn about available assistance and how to access it.
- Partner with community-based organizations that have direct connections with young people, are able to outreach to them, and include young people among their workforce who can support in resource navigation, connection and more.

Investing in these strategies will build youth engagement into the agency's implementation infrastructure from the start and lay the groundwork for sustained youth engagement after the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency.

Young adults are a highly mobile population. CB urges states to evaluate and determine the most expeditious way to verify a youth/young adult's former foster care history. In this time of crisis, a youth's state of origin should not preclude them from receiving critical services to prevent their homelessness and ability to connect to the social service system in the community where they now live.

Detailed information on each of the youth/young adult provisions in the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act is outlined below.

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<sup>2</sup> Peer support is defined as utilizing other individuals with lived expertise in the child welfare system to engage with other youth and young adults.

A1: Temporary requirements for title IV-E agencies to allow youth over age 18 to remain in or re-enter foster care and suspension of the age and education/employment requirements for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for youth.

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act establishes new temporary requirements that all title IV-E agencies must carry out to prevent youth from aging out of foster care and to facilitate re-entry into foster care. These requirements apply whether or not a title IV-E agency currently is approved to provide eligible youth age 18 or older title IV-E foster care maintenance payments under section 475(8)(B) of the Act and regardless of the current maximum age for foster care under the laws and policies of the state or tribe. A chart below provides a summary of timeframes for the provisions described in Section A1.

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act requires:

- *Temporary suspension of aging out of foster care and permitting re-entry of youth who have left foster care:* The title IV-E agency may not require a youth to leave foster care solely due to age from December 27, 2020 through September 30, 2021 (section 4(a) of Division X). Further, the title IV-E agency must permit any youth who left foster care due to reaching the state/tribe's maximum age during the COVID-19 public health emergency (defined in section 2(1) of Division X, currently January 27, 2020 – April 20, 2021, subject to be extended) to voluntarily re-enter foster care (section 4(b) of Division X). Regardless of any future extensions of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the re-entry requirement expires after September 30, 2021. There is no upper age limit on remaining in foster care or re-entering foster care under these provisions, meaning it is possible that a state or tribe would be required to allow a youth age 21 or older to remain in or re-enter foster care.

The title IV-E agency must also: 1) continue to ensure that the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of older foster youth, including youth who remain in or re-enter foster care, are met; and 2) work with any youth who remains in foster care after attaining 18 years of age (or such greater age as the state may have elected under section 475(8)(B)(iii) of the Act) to develop, or review and revise, a transition plan consistent with the plan referred to in section 475(5)(H) of the Act, and assist the youth with identifying adults who can offer meaningful, permanent connections (section 475(5)(H) of the Act; section 4(c) of Division X). The title IV-E agency must make reasonable efforts to determine the title IV-E eligibility of each youth remaining in or re-entering foster care due to the requirements and flexibilities of sections 4(a) and (c) of Division X (section 4(d)(2)(C) of Division X).

For purposes of meeting the temporary suspension of aging out of foster care and permitting re-entry of youth who have left foster care, title IV-E agencies may use a definition of foster care that does not fully accord with the definition used for the purposes of title IV-E in 45 CFR 1355.20. For example, a title IV-E agency could allow a youth to re-enter foster care without extending title IV-E agency placement and care to that youth, while still providing monthly financial support, age-appropriate supervision, and case management services. However, in order to claim FFP for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments, the definition of foster care at 45 CFR 1355.20 applies.

Therefore, in the example above, that same youth would not be eligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments because the arrangement does not meet the 45 CFR 1355.20 foster care definition due to the lack of title IV-E agency placement and care. In these cases, it is possible that the additional Chafee funding may be able to be used to support these youth, as described below in Section A2 of this PI.

- *Temporary suspension of age and education and employment requirements for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments:*<sup>3</sup> The title IV-E agency may not determine a youth ineligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments due to age or failure to meet the education and employment conditions from December 27, 2020 through September 30, 2021 (section 475(8)(B) of the Act; section 4(a) of Division X). In addition, the title IV-E agency may not find a youth who re-enters foster care during the COVID-19 public health emergency period (defined as April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021 in section 2(2) of Division X) ineligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments solely due to age or the education and employment conditions before October 1, 2021 (section 4(d)(2)(D) of Division X). There is no upper age limit for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments under this provision. The age and education and employment requirements are suspended for all otherwise eligible youth in foster care, regardless of whether the youth is in foster care due to the requirements delaying aging out and allowing re-entry described in the previous bullet.

To be eligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments, the youth must meet all other title IV-E foster care eligibility requirements, such as: removal requirements; the applicable AFDC standard; the title IV-E agency having placement and care of the youth; and living in an allowable foster care setting. The definition of “foster care” in 45 CFR 1355.20 applies for the purposes of title IV-E eligibility. Further, the case review requirements in section 471(a)(16) of the Act (which are defined further at section 475(5) of the Act) apply to all children under age 18 who are in foster care, under the placement and care of the title IV-E agency and those children age 18 or older on whose behalf a title IV-E foster care maintenance payment is made. Therefore, the title IV-E agency must ensure that it is meeting the case plan, periodic review, and permanency hearing requirements for these youth.

The same flexibilities for serving young people age 18 and older in title IV-E foster care previously addressed in [ACYF-CB-PI-10-11](#), published July 9, 2010, are available to youth age 18 and older who may be eligible for title IV-E foster care due to the suspension of the age and education/employment criteria. These flexibilities include the option to allow young people age 18 and older to re-enter care through a voluntary placement agreement and the option to use a range of supervised independent living settings, which need not be licensed, as the youth’s foster care placement. For example, a title IV-E agency may determine that when paired with a supervising agency or supervising worker, host homes, college dormitories, shared housing, semi-supervised

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<sup>3</sup> Many title IV-E agencies previously requested flexibility under the Stafford Act to serve older youth who did not meet title IV-E foster care requirements relating to education and work activities (see ACF-ACYF-CB-PI-20-10). However, P.L. 116-260 explicitly prohibits title IV-E agencies to impose the education and employment conditions as a title IV-E eligibility requirement for youth to remain in or re-enter foster care until September 30, 2021.

apartments, supervised apartments or another housing arrangement meet the supervised setting requirement (meaning it can be an allowable title IV-E placement option for youth age 18 or older in foster care).

- *Notice to youth and public awareness campaign about the option to re-enter foster care:* Until September 30, 2021, the title IV-E agency must provide notice of the option to re-enter foster care to each youth who was formally discharged from foster care due to age during the COVID-19 public health emergency (defined in section 2(1) of Division X, currently January 27, 2020 – April 20, 2021, subject to be extended), and facilitate the voluntary re-entry of those youth into foster care (section 4(b)(2 & 3) of Division X). The title IV-E agency must also conduct a public awareness campaign about the option to voluntarily re-enter foster care for youth under age 22 who aged out of foster care in FY 2020 or 2021 who are otherwise eligible to return to foster care (section 4(b)(4) of Division X).

In conducting the public awareness campaign, CB encourages title IV-E agencies to reach out not only to youth under age 22 who aged out of foster care in FYs 2020 and 2021, but to other youth formerly in foster care, if they now potentially would be eligible to return to foster care or receive other services from the agency.<sup>4</sup> CB also encourages agencies to partner with foster care alumni/ae to create the public awareness campaigns and to assist with outreach. It is also important to consider the input of child welfare partners, foster parents, relatives, and others when crafting outreach materials. Finally, CB notes that states are in the process of surveying young adults at age 21 as part of the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) reporting requirements of the Chafee program; therefore, outreach the agency is already doing for NYTD may provide an opportunity to communicate the opportunity to re-enter foster care at the same time.

Action Required: All state and tribal title IV-E agencies must submit the certification in Attachment C to their [CB Regional Office](#) no later than 45 days from the issuance of this PI providing an assurance that the agency will implement the provisions related to aging out of, re-entry into, and eligibility for title IV-E foster care, as described above.

Title IV-E agencies may claim for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments and allowable associated in-placement administrative costs made or incurred from December 27, 2020 to September 30, 2021 on behalf of youth/young adults in foster care who otherwise would have been eligible for title IV-E except for the age or the education and employment conditions. There is no upper age limit for title IV-E eligibility during this time period (i.e., youth over age 21 could be eligible). To qualify for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments, youth must meet all other title IV-E eligibility requirements.

To receive title IV-E reimbursement of foster care maintenance payments and administrative costs on behalf of eligible youth, agencies must submit claims on the appropriate lines of the CB-496 Title IV-E Programs Quarterly Financial Report. There is no requirement to separately

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<sup>4</sup> Title IV-E agencies may use the Chafee Program funding to pay for costs incurred related to the public awareness campaign, including efforts targeted to the broader group of youth who are eligible for services or financial assistance.

report costs on behalf of youth/young adults that are eligible due to the temporary suspension of age and education and employment requirements.

As described in Section A2 below (*Use of Chafee Funds to Meet Requirements Relating to Preventing Youth From Aging out of Foster Care and To Facilitate Re-entry into Foster Care*), a state or tribe may use the additional Chafee funding provided through Division X to pay for costs associated with meeting the requirements described in this section, including the public awareness campaign, except that no Chafee funds may be used to pay for maintenance costs incurred on behalf of a title IV-E eligible youth. The title IV-E agency must make reasonable efforts to determine the title IV-E eligibility of each youth remaining in or re-entering foster care under the flexibilities and requirements of Division X (section 4(d)(2)(C) of Division X).

See the Chart 1 below for a summary of timeframes for the provisions described in Section A1.

<b>Chart 1: Summary of Provisions and Timeframes for the temporary requirements for Title IV-E agencies to prevent aging out of foster care and allow re-entry into foster care for youth over age 18 (section 4 of Division X)</b>		
<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Provision</u>	<u>Citation</u>
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021<sup>5</sup></i>	May not require a youth to leave foster care solely due to age	section 475(8)(B) of the Act  section 4(a) of Division X
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	May not find a youth ineligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments due to age or failure to meet the education and employment conditions	section 475(8)(B) of the Act  section 4(a) of Division X
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	Permit any youth who left foster care due to age during the COVID-19 public health emergency (currently between January 27, 2020 to April 20, 2021, subject to be extended) to voluntarily re-enter foster care	section 4(b)(1) of Division X

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<sup>5</sup> Section 4(e) of Division X.

**Chart 1: Summary of Provisions and Timeframes for the temporary requirements for Title IV-E agencies to prevent aging out of foster care and allow re-entry into foster care for youth over age 18 (section 4 of Division X)**

<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Provision</u>	<u>Citation</u>
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	Youth who re-enter foster care during the emergency period of April 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021 may not be determined ineligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments solely due to age or the education/employment conditions	section 4(d)(2)(D) of Division X
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	Provide notice of the option to re-enter foster care to each youth who aged out during the COVID-19 public health emergency (currently between January 27, 2020 to April 20, 2021, subject to be extended)	section 4(b)(2) of Division X
before October 1, 2021 <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	Public awareness campaign about the option of re-entry for youth who have not attained 22 years of age, who aged out of foster care in FYs 2020 or 2021 (October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2021), and who are otherwise eligible to return to foster care	section 4(b)(4) of Division X
No timeframe <i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i>	The title IV-E agency must continue to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of older youth who remain in or who age out of foster care and re-enter foster care and continue transition planning	section 475(5)(H) of the Act; section 4(c) of Division X

**Chart 1: Summary of Provisions and Timeframes for the temporary requirements for Title IV-E agencies to prevent aging out of foster care and allow re-entry into foster care for youth over age 18 (section 4 of Division X)**

<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Provision</u>	<u>Citation</u>
<p>Costs incurred between December 27, 2020 and September 30, 2021</p> <p><i>Provision has no force or effect after September 30, 2021</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May use the additional Chafee appropriation for certain costs incurred in meeting the requirements related to preventing youth from aging out of foster care, re-entry into foster care, and protections for youth in foster care.</li> <li>• Must not use the additional Chafee appropriation for specified foster care costs identified in Division X for title IV-E eligible youth, including youth age 18 or older who are eligible due to a temporary waiver of the age or education/employment requirements.</li> <li>• Must make reasonable efforts to determine the title IV-E eligibility of each older youth who remains in or re-enters foster care for the reasons specified in Division X.</li> </ul>	<p>section 4(d)(1), (2)(A), (B), and (C) of Division X</p>

A2: John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (Chafee program) Additional Funding and Flexibilities

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act appropriates additional funding for the Chafee program and makes temporary changes in eligibility for Chafee services for the time periods detailed below. Also see Chart 2 at end of Section A for a summary of timeframes for the provisions described in Section A2. The additional Chafee grant provides a flexible source of funding that can be used to provide immediate, critically needed assistance to young people.

In the past year, CB has heard from many young people who are in or were in foster care that they have not benefited from other COVID-19 relief assistance, such as stimulus payments or unemployment insurance. Therefore, CB urges all child welfare agencies receiving the additional Chafee grant to consider using at least a portion of the funds to facilitate quick and streamlined access to direct financial support for youth

who were or are in foster care.<sup>6</sup> Funding under this program can be used as an opportunity to support young people’s resilience and to create opportunities for economic, social and educational success for these youth/young adults in FY 2021 and beyond.

The following temporary flexibilities in the use of funds are applicable to grants issued under both the regular FYs 2020 and 2021 Chafee grant and the additional grant for the time periods specified. State and tribal agencies administering the Chafee program may make immediate use of these flexibilities using FY 2021 regular and additional Chafee grants as well as any FY 2020 Chafee grant funding that remains available for expenditure through September 30, 2021. There is no need for the agency to make a special request or to submit any documentation to make use of the flexibilities.

*Age:* For FYs 2020 and 2021, Chafee funding may be used to provide services and assistance to any otherwise eligible youth or young adult who experienced foster care at age 14 or older and has not yet attained age 27 (section 3(b) of Division X).

*Room and Board:* From April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021<sup>7</sup>:

- Agencies administering the Chafee Program may use more than 30 percent of their Chafee funds for room and board payments for a fiscal year (section 3(d)(3)(A) of Division X; see also section 477(b)(3)(B) and (c)(1) of the Act).
- Agencies may use Chafee room and board amounts for any otherwise eligible youth who experienced foster care at age 14 or older and who at the time of receiving services is age 18-26 (section 3(d)(3)(B) of Division X).<sup>8</sup>

*Authority to Provide Driving and Transportation Assistance:* From April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, Division X:

- Specifically authorizes Chafee funds to be used to provide driving and transportation assistance to otherwise eligible youth from ages 15- 26. These costs may be related to obtaining a driver’s license, vehicle insurance, driver’s education classes and testing fees, practice lessons, practice hours, license fees, roadside assistance, deductible assistance, and assistance in purchasing an automobile (section 3(d)(4)(A) of Division X).
- Creates a cap on the amount provided to each youth/young adult for this driving and transportation assistance at \$4,000 per year (section 3(d)(4)(B) of Division X).
- The driving and transportation assistance must be disregarded for determining the youth’s eligibility for any other federal or federally supported assistance. The state or tribe must also take steps to prevent duplication of benefits (section 3(d)(4)(B) of Division X).

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<sup>6</sup> We note that many state Chafee programs provide financial relief to youth/young adults. Some of these programs require that a youth complete an action plan, case plan, submit receipts, or other documentation as a condition of receiving the assistance. CB urges child welfare agencies to review all procedures to determine if they are a barrier to receiving needed assistance timely, specifically as viewed by youth and young adults.

<sup>7</sup> “COVID-19 public health emergency period” is defined in section 2(2) of Division X.

<sup>8</sup> Previously, states and tribes signed a certification that room and board assistance was to be provided only to youth who experienced foster care at age 18 or older (section 477(b)(3)(C) of the Act). This limitation is not applicable for the specified time period of April 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021.

- While driving and transportation expenses are ordinarily allowable under the Chafee program without dollar limit for eligible youth up to age 21 or 23, as elected by the state or tribe, under the provisions of Division X the services are also available to youth through age 26 during the period from April 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021. During that time period such expenses made for youth ages 15 - 26, whether paid from the regular or additional Chafee appropriation, are subject to the \$4,000 cap per year per youth.

*Use of Chafee Funds to Meet Requirements Relating to Preventing Youth from Aging out of Foster Care and to Facilitate Re-entry into Foster Care*

Section A1 of this PI outlines requirements and actions that title IV-E agencies must take to prevent youth from aging out of foster care, to allow re-entry into foster care, and to make youth aware of the option to re-enter foster care. The title IV-E agency must make reasonable efforts to determine the title IV-E eligibility of each youth remaining in or re-entering foster care due to the requirements and flexibilities of sections 4(a) and (c) of Division X (section 4(d)(2)(C) of Division X).

The additional Chafee grant funding may be used to pay for certain costs incurred in meeting the requirements relating to preventing youth from aging out of foster care, re-entry into foster care, and protections for youth in foster care (section 4(d)(1) and (2) of Division X). Such costs may include paying for maintenance payments and case management costs for youth who are not title IV-E eligible and paying for the public awareness campaign related to the opportunity for youth to re-enter foster care.<sup>9</sup>

*Other Examples of How Additional Chafee Funds May be Used:* Consistent with CB’s commitment to youth voice and youth engagement, we encourage child welfare agencies to ask youth and young adults what they need and then, provided consistent with the law, work to provide those identified services and supports in a timely manner.

However, to assist grantees in identifying allowable expenditures to meet the needs of eligible youth while flexibilities remain in effect (until September 30, 2021), CB is providing examples below of allowable use of funds for eligible youth/young adults, consistent with program purposes (for the full text of Chafee program purposes, please see Attachment D):

- Provide unrestricted one-time or monthly direct financial assistance to youth/young adults to assist them in meeting their needs during the pandemic.
- Provide targeted payments and supports to allow youth/young adults to remain at home during the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency, when needed to ensure their health and well-being. Individuals requiring such assistance may include youth with medical conditions, pregnant or parenting youth, and youth who need to quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19.

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<sup>9</sup> Title IV-E agencies may use the Chafee Program funding to pay for costs incurred related to the required public awareness campaign, as well as efforts to reach a broader group of youth who are eligible for services or financial assistance through Chafee funding.

- Assist youth in meeting living expenses, including rent, groceries, grocery or meal delivery, and utilities. Such assistance may include helping youth pay back payments and fees and/or paying for expenses for youth/young adults who need to stay home for extended periods of time.
- Purchase cell phones, tablets, laptops, internet service, cell phone plans or other technological tools for young people.
- Provide respite care services and additional support for parenting or pregnant youth.
- Help pay salaries of agency staff who administer and oversee emergency assistance for youth, including fiscal staff responsible for generating and issuing payments paid for the Chafee program.
- Partner with national and state organizations to assist young adults, including for activities relating to locating youth, outreach and marketing.
- Hire youth/ young adults with lived experience in child welfare to provide navigation services to fellow youth/young adults. Navigation services help to connect youth to services and support them as they apply for or engage in those services.
- Employ youth/young adults, at the agency level and/or as part of contractor staff, to provide outreach and support to fellow youth and young adults. This could include paid internships for youth/young adults to help prepare them to re-enter the job market.
- Assist youth in paying medical expenses, including COVID testing and treatment, if these expenses are not already covered by other health insurance or Medicaid.
- Purchase or reimburse youth for personal protective equipment (PPE), including cloth masks.
- Provide services and support to combat young peoples' social isolation during the pandemic. This could include sending gift boxes, cooking kits, puzzles, art and hobby supplies, or other interactive items to connect youth/ young adults.
- Provide outreach and offer any needed assistance to youth who experienced foster care after attaining age 14 and were subsequently reunified and to youth who exited foster care to adoption or guardianship after attaining age 16.
- In addition to conducting required public awareness campaign about the option for youth to re-enter foster care, use social media and other strategies to perform outreach to youth, young adults, and other community providers to make them aware of expanded Chafee funding and available supports.
- Expand contracts with service providers who are currently working with youth and young adults formerly in foster care to provide services through the agencies to which such youth are already connected (e.g., supportive housing providers and Runway and Homeless Youth (RHY) grantees).<sup>10</sup>
- Establish websites, hotlines, and other mechanisms to track and provide information on assistance requests.

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<sup>10</sup> Please see the [Family and Youth Services Bureau's Website](#) for more information. Agencies must be sure, however, to supplement and not supplant other funds available for the same general purpose (see Child Welfare Policy Manual [CWPM 3.3E Q3](#)).

Agencies should also carefully consider what data and information they may need to determine the effectiveness of their efforts to provide relief and financial assistance and to ensure equity and transparency.

### A3: Additional Funding and Temporary Flexibilities for the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act provides \$50 million in additional ETV funding and provides temporary flexibilities in the use of funding. This additional funding and flexibility allows agencies to assist youth who had been on track to attend or were attending post-secondary institutions or programs but had their education interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency. For many youth the move to virtual classes did not complement their learning paths. Many were forced to “pause” their education due to financial challenges. CB encourages agencies administering the ETV program to use the flexibility offered by the Supporting Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act to provide support to and engage with youth to explore when and how they can reconnect with their educational goals. Youth and young adults may need multiple supportive opportunities to help them reconnect and succeed with their post-secondary education.

The temporary flexibilities detailed below in the use of ETV funds are applicable to grants issued under both the regular FY 2020 and FY 2021 ETV grants and the additional grant provided by Division X. State and tribal agencies administering the ETV program may make immediate use of these flexibilities using FY 2021 regular and additional Chafee grants as well as any FY 2020 ETV grant funding that remains available for expenditure. Agencies do not need to make a special request or to submit any documentation to make use of the flexibilities for expenditures for the applicable time periods. Also see Chart 2 at end of Section A for a summary of timeframes for the provisions described in Section A3.

*Ages.* For FYs 2020 and 2021, allows ETVs to be provided to youth until they reach age 27 (section 3(b) of Division X).

*Maximum Award Amount:* From October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022:

- Increases the maximum ETV award amount in section 477(i)(4)(B) of the Act from \$5,000 to \$12,000 through the end of FY 2022 (section 3(a)(5) of Division X).

*Suspension of Certain Requirements under the Education and Training Voucher Program.* From April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021<sup>11</sup>:

- Allows states and tribes to waive the requirement in 477(i)(3) of the Act that a youth must be enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program or making satisfactory progress toward completing that program if a youth is unable to do so due to the COVID-19 public health emergency (section 3(d)(1) of Division X). (Note, however, that the law does not waive or modify the requirement in section 477(i)(3) of the Act that

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<sup>11</sup> “COVID-19 public health emergency period” is defined in section 2(2) of Division X.

a youth may participate in the program for no more than 5 years, whether or not consecutive).

*Authority to Use Vouchers to Maintain Training and Postsecondary Education.* From April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021:

- Allows additional ETV funding to be used to help support youth to remain enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program, including expenses that are not part of the cost of attendance (section 3(d)(2) of Division X).

*Examples of ETV Funding for this purpose:* Due to the temporary flexibilities, ETV can be used for expenses youth incur that are not associated with the cost of attendance of the youth/young adult. While states have reported some success in working with post-secondary institutions to include additional items in the cost of attendance specific to individual needs of youth, CB recognizes that there are other expenses related to attending post-secondary institutions that may not be covered in the cost of attendance. Examples of these expenses include but are not limited to laptops or other technology necessary for virtual education; earbuds/earphones; desks, chairs and other items needed to create a learning space; supplies such as printer paper and ink; and tools for internet access (such as broadband internet access, cell phone data cards, routers and WIFI extenders).

CB also reminds agencies that federal law allows ETV funding to be used for advanced degrees, as well as qualifying vocational education, and Associate's and Bachelor's degree programs. Therefore, funding may be used to assist young people in attending law school, a Master's Degree, Ph.D., or other doctoral programs.

#### A4: Financial and Reporting Information for the Chafee and ETV Program Additional Funding

*Eligible Grantees:* All states, territories and tribes approved to receive FY 2021 funding for the Chafee Program and/or ETV Program are eligible to receive additional funds, subject to their qualifying for additional funding under the statutory formula. Because eligible grantees were already approved for FY 2021, grantees do not need to submit a separate application for the additional funding.

*Additional Allotments:* ACF has issued the additional awards to all qualifying Chafee and ETV grantees. Grants were awarded based on the proportionate share of children in foster care in the state or tribe. After reserving 1.5 percent of funding for technical assistance and evaluation activities, as required by the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act, \$344 million is available for Chafee additional awards and \$50 million for ETV additional awards. Allotment amounts are provided in Attachments A and B.

*Matching Requirements and Limitations:* There is no match requirement for the additional funding provided for Chafee and ETV (section 3(a)(4) of Division X).<sup>12</sup> Matching requirements remain in effect for regular FY 2020 and 2021 Chafee and ETV grant awards.

*Obligation/Liquidation Period:* The Chafee and ETV additional funding provided under the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act is available for expenditures over a 2-year period from October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022 and must be liquidated by December 30, 2022. Note, however, that different time periods (detailed in the previous sections and in Chart 2) apply to specific flexibilities. During the second year of the expenditure period (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022), many flexibilities, with the exception of the increase in the maximum ETV award, will no longer be available and regular program requirements must be followed.

*Narrative Report on Planned and Actual Use of Additional Chafee/ETV funding:* Grantees are required to include information on their planned use of the additional Chafee and ETV funding in the FY 2022 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) due June 30, 2021 and information on the actual use of funding in the FY 2023 APSR due June 30, 2022.

The information reported in the FY 2022 APSR should describe the types of assistance to be or being provided to youth/young adults, and the strategies the agency is using to engage youth/young adults. The description should also include the agency's outreach efforts to foster parents, providers, schools, colleges, and the community to make them aware of the additional funding and types of Chafee and ETV support available. States may provide links to policies or other outreach materials as an attachment to the FY 2022 APSR.

CB acknowledges that states and tribes may change their plans for the use of these funds over time to respond to changing community circumstances. Re-programming is allowable as long as activities supported by the funds continue to support in-scope, allowable expenses.

*National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Reporting:* State agencies administering the Chafee program are required to report to NYTD information about youth/young adults of any age who receive an independent living or financial service. Therefore, youth receiving assistance or services through the additional Chafee appropriation are to be included in NYTD reporting.

*Financial Management and Reporting:* The additional Chafee and ETV awards must be tracked and accounted for separately. Federal funds awarded under these grants must be expended for the purposes for which they were awarded and within the time period allotted.

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<sup>12</sup> The additional Chafee and ETV funding is also exempt from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) penalty calculations for April 1, 2020-September 30, 2022 (section 477(c) and (e)(2); section 3(a)(6) of Division X).

Agencies will be required to submit a separate electronic SF-425 for the additional Chafee grant and the additional ETV grant through the Payment Management System (PMS). For more information on gaining access to and using the PMS system, please contact the PMS Help Desk at 1-877-614-5533 or for more information see <https://pms.psc.gov>.

Agencies must submit the SF-425 for expenditures under each additional grant at the end of each year of the 2-year expenditure period. The report is due 90 days after the end of each federal fiscal year (i.e., by December 30, 2021 and December 30, 2022). A negative grant award will recoup any unobligated and/or unliquidated funds reported on the final SF-425.

*Use of Funds to Purchase Supplies and Equipment:* Agencies that choose to use Chafee and ETV funds for purchase of supplies or equipment, such as cell phones or laptops, must meet specific conditions as outlined in 45 CFR Part 75 described below:

- Identify whether the purchase constitutes supplies or equipment pursuant to the applicable definitions at 45 CFR § 75.2.
- If classified as equipment, regulatory provisions regarding management, use, and disposal (discussed below) must be considered (45 CFR § 75.320).
- If classified as supplies, regulatory provisions regarding use and disposal must be considered (45 CFR § 75.321).
- Assure that any procurement meets applicable state/tribal policies and procedures used for procurements made with non-Federal funds (45 CFR § 75.326).
- Address whether use of the cell phones or other technological devices will continue to serve a program purpose over time and either recover or repurpose these devices when a program purpose is no longer served.
- Assure that purchase and operation costs are appropriately cost allocated to all benefiting programs pursuant to the applicable regulations at 45 CFR § 75.405 and § 75.453.

*Used Equipment:* When equipment funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has reached the end of its useful life, the title IV-E agency may use the items in other activities funded by the original program or other HHS programs (see disposition rules for equipment at 45 CFR § 95.707 and § 75.320). Title IV-E agencies may dispose of this equipment by giving it to other children or youth in foster care, their parents or foster parents being served under title IV-E, or other federal child welfare programs, as deemed appropriate and beneficial.

*Redistributions:* As with the Chafee and ETV grants made under the regular annual appropriation, the FY 2021 additional Chafee and ETV funds are subject to redistribution if any funding remains unexpended at the end of the two-year expenditure period (section 477(d)(5) of the Act). If ACF identifies unused funds following the close-out of a grant year, these funds will be reallocated to states or participating tribes that request additional funds for FY 2023.

See Chart 2 below for a summary of timeframes for the provisions described in Section A2.

<b>Chart 2: Summary of Chafee/ ETV Provisions from Division X</b>		
<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>Provision</u>	<u>Citation</u>
October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022	Maximum ETV award amount increased to \$12,000	section 477(i)(4)(B) of the Act  section 3(a)(5) of Division X
October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2021	Chafee and ETV services and assistance to eligible youth until age 27	section 3(b) of Division X
April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021	Waive the requirement that a youth must be enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program or making satisfactory progress toward completing that program if a youth is unable to do so due to the COVID-19 public health emergency	section 477(i)(3) of the Act  section 3(d)(1) of Division X
April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021	Support youth to remain enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program, including expenses that are not part of the cost of attendance	section 3(d)(2) of Division X
April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021	Use Chafee room and board amounts for otherwise eligible youth who are aged 18-26 and experienced foster care at age 14 or older	section 3(d)(3)(B) of Division X
April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021	Provide an otherwise eligible youth aged 15-26 with up to \$4,000 per year in Chafee funds for driving and transportation assistance	section 3(d)(4)(B) of Division X

## **Section B: Emergency Funding for the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**

*Overview:* Division X appropriates \$85 million in FY 2021 emergency supplemental funding for the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program (PSSF) under title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Act, in addition to any amounts otherwise appropriated (section 6(a) of Division X). Of this amount \$10 million is reserved for the Court Improvement Program (see section 7(a) of Division X and Section C of this program instruction). Consistent with section 436(b)(3) of the Act, 3 percent (\$2,550,000) of the \$85 million supplemental appropriation is reserved for tribes. The remaining balance of \$72,450,000 is to be used for PSSF grants to states and territories.

*Eligible Grantees:* All states, territories and tribes approved to receive FY 2021 PSSF funding are eligible to receive supplemental PSSF grants. Because eligible grantees

were already approved for FY 2021 funding, no separate application for the supplemental funding is required.

*Supplemental allotments:* ACF will issue the supplemental awards to all eligible grantees as soon as possible. Grants will be awarded according to the statutory formula in section 433 of the Act. Estimated allotments are not yet available but when finalized will be disseminated and then posted on the CB website as Attachment E to this PI.

*Approved Activities:* The supplemental PSSF funds may be used for the same purposes as the regular annual PSSF grant, i.e., to provide community-based family support, family preservation, family reunification and adoption promotion and support services, consistent with the purposes and definitions in sections 430 and 431 of the Act. There are no other specific programmatic requirements or limitations on use of the emergency supplemental funding. The Children's Bureau encourages child welfare agencies to reach out to families and community-based agencies to identify the unmet needs for services or supports that families are experiencing during the pandemic, so that funds may be used to address those needs.

*Project, Obligation, and Liquidation Period:* These supplemental funds are for fiscal year (FY) 2021. Thus, the funds have a project period of October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022. The funding must be obligated by September 30, 2022 and liquidated by December 30, 2022.

*Matching Requirements and Limitations:* Funds for this supplemental grant are awarded with a **100 percent** Federal Financial Participation (FFP) rate for program costs; therefore, no match (non-federal share) is required to receive the supplemental PSSF funds (section 6(b) of Division X). Matching requirements remain in effect for the regular 2021 PSSF grant awards.

*Administrative Cost Limitation:* In accord with section 434(d) of the Act, states may spend no more than 10 percent of the combined total costs for their PSSF grant program (including the federal funds received under this FY 2021 supplemental award and the grantee's regular FY 2021 PSSF federal allotment and the 25 percent non-federal match on the regular grant award) on administrative costs. The administrative cost limitation under the PSSF program is not applicable to tribal grantees.

*Instruction for Reporting on Planned and Actual Use of Supplemental PSSF funds.*

*Narrative Report on Planned and Actual Use of supplemental funding:*

Title IV-B grantees are required to include information on their planned use of the supplemental PSSF funding in the 2022 APSR due June 30, 2021 and information on the actual use of funding in the 2023 APSR due June 30, 2022.

CB acknowledges that states and tribes may change their plans for use of these funds over time in response to changing community circumstances. Re-programming is allowable as long as activities supported by the funds continue to support in-scope, allowable expenses.

*Financial Management and Reporting:* The supplemental PSSF funds will be awarded separately from the regular FY 2021 PSSF grant and must be tracked and accounted for separately to ensure compliance with specific requirements and allowances. Federal funds awarded under this grant must be expended for the purposes for which they were awarded and within the time period allotted.

Title IV-B agencies are required to submit an electronic SF-425 Federal Financial Report through the Payment Management System (PMS) to report expenditures at the end of each fiscal year (i.e., by December 30, 2021 and December 30, 2022). A negative grant award will recoup any unobligated and/or unliquidated funds reported on the final SF-425 for the title IV-B which will be due on December 30, 2022.

### **Section C: Court Improvement Program Supplemental funding**

*Overview:* From the \$85 million FY 2021 emergency supplemental appropriation for the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families program, Division X reserves \$10 million in FY 2021 supplemental funding for the Court Improvement Program (CIP) authorized in section 438 of title IV-B, subpart 2 of the Act, in addition to any amounts otherwise appropriated (section 7(a) of Division X). Of this amount, \$500,000 is reserved for Tribal CIP grants which are periodically awarded through a competitive discretionary grant process. The remaining \$9.5 million will be awarded as a supplement to the State CIP Data grant.

The \$500,000 in additional Tribal CIP funding will be distributed as supplements to the current seven Tribal CIP grantees. CB will contact the eligible grantees directly to provide instructions on actions needed to receive funds. The following section provides information and instructions about the \$9.5 million in supplemental funds for state CIP grantees.

*Eligible Grantees:* All State Courts approved to receive the FY 2021 CIP Data Grant are eligible to receive these funds. No separate application for funding is required (section 7(b)(3)(A) and (B) of Division X).

*Supplemental allotments:* ACF issued supplemental awards to all eligible grantees during the week of March 8, 2020. Grants were awarded according to the formula specified in section 7(b) of Division X. Each grantee will receive a base amount of \$85,000 and, after the sum of all states' base amounts is subtracted from the total appropriation of \$9.5 million, a percentage of the remainder based on the state's proportionate share of children under age 21. Allotment amounts are provided in Attachment F.

*Allowable activities:* The supplemental CIP funds must be used to address needs stemming from the COVID-19 public health emergency to ensure the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of children are met in a timely and complete manner. Courts must collaborate with child welfare agencies on the local and state levels and jointly plan for the collection and sharing of all relevant data and information to ensure those outcomes (sections 7(b)(1)(B) & 7(c) of Division X and sections 438(a)(3) and 438(b)(1)(A) of the Act).

Use of funds may include:

- Technology investments to facilitate the transition to remote hearings for dependency courts when necessary as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency;
- Training for judges, attorneys, and caseworkers on facilitating and participating in remote hearings that comply with due process and all applicable laws, ensure child safety and well-being, and help inform judicial decision-making;
- Programs to help families address aspects of the case plan to avoid delays in legal proceedings that would occur as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency; and
- Other purposes to assist courts, court personnel, or related staff related to the COVID-19 public health emergency (section 7(c) of Division X).

As described in detail in [ACYF-CB-PI-20-12](#), two key areas that CIPs can support to ensure safety, permanence, and well-being are quality hearings and legal representation. It is critical that judges, lawyers, and clients have the resources necessary to participate in these aspects of their cases, whether hearings are conducted remotely or in person.

CIP grantees should work with their multidisciplinary task force members to identify areas to be supported with the FY 2021 supplemental funding. However, to assist CIPs in identifying potential uses of funds, the following are additional examples of allowable uses of funding:

- Provide support for remote operations such as hearings, legal representation, and other case activities such as family team meetings.
- Supports to address inequities/disproportionalities in service delivery or access for clients, for example, by supporting internet access for clients or communities where it is lacking.
- Provide support for electronic case file applications, secure electronic document transmission, and electronic notice systems.
- Address case-specific barriers to permanency, safety, or well-being such as virtual alternatives to services.
- Implement systems to allow rapid direct communication with clients or resource parents such as mobile applications or emergency notification systems.
- Provide support for safe in-person operations (e.g. personal protective equipment, time certain docketing systems).
- Pay for staff or consultants to work on policy, regulations, or court rules around COVID-19.
- Provide training to judges, attorneys or partners on pertinent topics relating to working with children and families during the pandemic.

In collaborating with the child welfare agencies and tribes on planned use of funds, CIPs should ensure that efforts are not duplicating efforts funded by state agencies or tribes under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) or other sections of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021*.

*Project, Obligation, and Liquidation Period:* These supplemental funds are for FY 2021. Thus, the funds have a project period of October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022.

The funding must be obligated by September 30, 2022 and liquidated by December 30, 2022.

*Matching Requirements and Limitations:* Supplemental funds for this program are awarded with a **100 percent** Federal Financial Participation (FFP) rate for program costs; therefore, no match (non-federal share) is required to receive these supplemental funds (section 7(b)(3)(E) of Division X). Matching requirements remain in effect for the regular FY 2021 CIP Basic, Data and Training grants.

*Use of Funds to Purchase Supplies and Equipment:* CIPs that choose to use their CIP grant to purchase supplies or equipment, such as smart phones or laptops, must meet specific conditions as outlined in 45 CFR Part 75 described below:

- Identify whether the purchase constitutes supplies or equipment pursuant to the applicable definitions at 45 CFR § 75.2.
- If classified as equipment, regulatory provisions regarding management, use, and disposal (discussed below) must be considered (45 CFR § 75.320).
- If classified as supplies, regulatory provisions regarding use and disposal must be considered (45 CFR § 75.321).
- Assure that any procurement meets applicable state/tribal policies and procedures used for procurements made with non-Federal funds (45 CFR § 75.326).
- Address whether use of the equipment will continue to serve a program purpose over time and either recover or repurpose these devices when a program purpose is no longer served.
- Assure that purchase and operation costs are appropriately cost allocated to all benefiting programs pursuant to the applicable regulations at 45 CFR § 75.405 and § 75.453.

*Used Equipment:* When equipment funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has reached the end of its useful life, the grantee may use the items in other activities funded by the original program or other HHS programs (see disposition rules for equipment at 45 CFR § 95.707 and § 75.320). CIPs may dispose of this equipment by giving it to other child welfare stakeholders, as deemed appropriate and beneficial.

*Indirect Costs:* If the CIP wishes to receive reimbursement for indirect costs within its allotment, it must have an approved indirect cost rate with the cognizant Federal agency. The cognizant Federal agency is that Federal agency that provides the most funds to the court. If a court has not been assigned a cognizant agency, it should work with the Federal agency from which it receives the largest amount of funds to negotiate and receive approval of indirect cost proposals.

*Instruction for Reporting on Planned and Actual Use on Supplemental CIP funds.*

*Narrative Reports on Use of CIP COVID-19 Supplemental funding:*

State CIP grantees should include a description of the use of the supplemental funding as part of their Self-Assessment and Strategic Plan submissions as described in [ACYF-CB-PI-20-12](#).

For the Self-Assessment, where projects were supported by the supplement, include the text ‘COVID’ somewhere in the project description. This will allow CB to use a word search for data analysis. Address any efforts supported by the supplement that do not fit into other sections in the response to section IV, question 4.

For the Strategic Plan, CIPs may describe planned uses either as augmenting other projects or as a stand-alone. Include the text ‘COVID’ in the Strategic Plan for projects supported by the supplement.

As noted in [ACYF-CB-PI-20-12](#) and [ACYF-CB-PI-21-02](#), the Self-Assessment and Strategic Plan are due to the Children’s Bureau Regional Office by June 30, 2021.

*Financial Management and Reporting:* The supplemental CIP Data grant will be awarded separately from the regular FY 2021 CIP Data grant and must be tracked and accounted for separately to ensure compliance with specific requirements and allowances. Federal funds awarded under this grant must be expended for the purposes for which they were awarded and within the time period allotted.

CIP grantees are required to submit an electronic SF-425 Federal Financial Report through the Payment Management System (PMS) to report expenditures at the end of each fiscal year (i.e., by December 30, 2021 and December 30, 2022). A negative grant award will recoup any unobligated and/or unliquidated funds reported on the final SF-425 for the title IV-B which will be due on December 30, 2022.

**Section D: Family First Prevention Services Program Pandemic Flexibility**

*Information.* Section 5 of Division X temporarily increases the federal reimbursement rate for the title IV-E Prevention Services Program. During the COVID–19 public health emergency period (April 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021), the costs of title IV-E prevention services and allowable costs for administration and training allocated to the title IV-E prevention program are reimbursable at **100 percent FFP** (section 474(a)(6)(A)(i) and (B) of the Act; section 5 of Division X). See page 9 of [ACYF-CB-PI-18-09](#) for more information about allowable administrative costs under the title IV-E prevention program.

Division X does not make any other changes in the requirements for the title IV-E Prevention Services Program. To qualify for funding, a title IV-E agency must have an approved title IV-E Prevention Plan.

CB and the ACF Office of Grants Management are working to have the necessary computer programming changes completed on Form CB-496 in the On-Line Data Collection (OLDC) System to reflect the 100 percent FFP rate for the applicable quarters and will issue supplemental awards for title IV-E agencies who submitted claims in earlier periods qualifying for the enhanced FFP rate.

ACF does not anticipate that grantees approved to operate the title IV-E Prevention Services Program will need to take any special action to receive the enhanced FFP rate. Should any action be required, ACF Office of Grants Management staff will contact the affected title IV-E agencies directly and provide needed instructions.

### **Section E. Adjustment of Baselines for Family First Transition Act Funding Certainty Grants**

*Information:* Section 9 of Division X amended section 602(c)(2) of Division N of the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020* (P.L. 116-94) to create a hold harmless provision so as not to penalize title IV-E agencies that were operating a title IV-E child welfare waiver demonstration program on September 30, 2019 for the temporary FMAP increases made due to the COVID-19 public health emergency when calculating baselines for Family First Transition Act funding certainty grants. This change necessitated a revision to the Funding Certainty Baseline table previously issued as Attachment A with Program Instruction [ACYF-CB-PI-20-08](#). An Adjusted Qualifying Agency Funding Certainty Baselines table for FY 2020 was provided as Attachment to [ACYF-CB-IM-21-05](#). CB has also now prepared a table displaying the *estimated* Funding Certainty Baselines for FY 2021 and both tables are displayed as Attachment G to this PI. The FY 2021 estimated baseline amount includes a presumption that the temporary FMAP increase of 6.2 percentage points will remain in effect through the end of FY 2021. (The temporary FMAP increase is in effect during the COVID-19 public health emergency from January 27, 2020 through April 20, 2021, [subject to be extended](#).<sup>13</sup>) If the emergency declaration ends before the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY 2021, ACF will alert grantees to any change in the baseline for FY 2021.

CB and ACF Grants Management are working to make needed revisions to reflect the changes in the Funding Certainty Baseline amounts displayed on Form CB-496 Part 3 in section F in the On-Line Data Collection (OLDC) system. No action is needed on the part of title IV-E agencies. ACF will use the updated FY 2020 baseline amount to calculate the initial Funding Certainty Grant amount for FY 2020 and will provide written notification to each agency on the status of its Funding Certainty Grant.

#### **Paperwork Reduction Act:**

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless

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<sup>13</sup> “COVID-19 public health emergency” is defined in section 2(1) of Division X.

it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. The Control Number for this OMB approved information collection is 0970-0426, approved through September 30, 2023.

**Inquiries To:** [Children's Bureau Regional Program Managers](#)

/s/

Amanda Barlow  
Acting Commissioner  
Administration on Children, Youth  
and Families

### **Attachments**

Attachment A: John H. Chafee Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood Additional Funding Allotments

Attachment B: Educational and Training Voucher Program Additional Funding Allotments

Attachment C: Title IV-E Certification: Temporary Changes Related to Aging Out of and Re-entry into and Eligibility for Title IV-E Foster Care for Older Youth

Attachment D: Program Purposes of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood

Attachment E: MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Supplemental Funding Allotment [To be added when available]

Attachment F: Court Improvement Program Supplemental Funding Allotments

Attachment G: Funding Certainty Baseline for FY 2020 and Estimated Baseline for FY 2021

**Fiscal Year 2021 Additional Allotments to States and Tribes  
John H. Chafee Foster Care Program  
for Successful Transition to Adulthood  
Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260  
(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)**

State	2021 Allotment
Alabama	\$ 4,659,625
Alaska	\$ 2,319,740
Arizona	\$ 10,452,735
Arkansas	\$ 3,325,310
California	\$ 41,280,026
Colorado	\$ 4,302,679
Connecticut	\$ 3,491,294
Delaware	\$ 464,109
District of Columbia	\$ 541,461
Florida	\$ 19,791,518
Georgia	\$ 10,367,523
Hawaii	\$ 1,374,601
Idaho	\$ 1,411,666
Illinois	\$ 14,758,834
Indiana	\$ 13,139,286
Iowa	\$ 4,798,212
Kansas	\$ 6,475,743
Kentucky	\$ 7,370,957
Louisiana	\$ 3,157,715
Maine	\$ 1,688,842
Maryland	\$ 3,094,061
Massachusetts	\$ 7,946,259
Michigan	\$ 9,403,852
Minnesota	\$ 6,768,259
Mississippi	\$ 3,352,706
Missouri	\$ 10,220,877
Montana	\$ 2,978,840
Nebraska	\$ 2,796,128
Nevada	\$ 3,658,889
New Hampshire	\$ 987,038
New Jersey	\$ 3,569,451
New Mexico	\$ 1,874,163
New York	\$ 12,961,217
North Carolina	\$ 9,042,878
North Dakota	\$ 1,210,229
Ohio	\$ 13,203,746
Oklahoma	\$ 6,692,519
Oregon	\$ 5,542,398
Pennsylvania	\$ 12,509,999
Puerto Rico	\$ 2,257,698

**Fiscal Year 2021 Additional Allotments to States and Tribes  
John H. Chafee Foster Care Program  
for Successful Transition to Adulthood  
Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260  
(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)**

State	2021 Allotment
Rhode Island	\$ 1,772,639
South Carolina	\$ 3,642,774
South Dakota	\$ 1,374,601
Tennessee	\$ 7,485,372
Texas	\$ 25,322,153
Utah	\$ 2,004,694
Vermont	\$ 1,003,153
Virgin Islands	\$ 116,027
Virginia	\$ 3,968,295
Washington	\$ 8,752,957
West Virginia	\$ 5,856,961
Wisconsin	\$ 6,157,504
Wyoming	\$ 800,911
<b>State Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 343,501,124</b>

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
AZ	Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona	\$ 139,628
AZ	Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community	\$ 148,220
CA	Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Smith River Rancheria)	\$ 28,916
KS	Prairie Band of Potawatomi	\$ 23,397
NE	Santee Sioux Nation	\$ 28,814
OR	Confederated Tribe of Warm Springs	\$ 92,984
WA	Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe	\$ 36,917
<b>Tribal Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 498,876</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 344,000,000</b>

**Fiscal Year 2021 Additional Allotments to States and Tribes**  
**John H. Chafee Foster Care Program**  
**Education and Training Vouchers**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State	2021 Allotment
Alabama	\$ 677,271
Alaska	\$ 337,172
Arizona	\$ 1,540,836
Arkansas	\$ 483,330
California	\$ 6,000,004
Colorado	\$ 625,389
Connecticut	\$ 507,455
Delaware	\$ 67,458
District of Columbia	\$ 78,701
Florida	\$ 2,876,674
Georgia	\$ 1,506,907
Hawaii	\$ 199,797
Idaho	\$ 205,184
Illinois	\$ 2,145,179
Indiana	\$ 1,909,780
Iowa	\$ 697,415
Kansas	\$ 941,241
Kentucky	\$ 1,071,360
Louisiana	\$ 458,970
Maine	\$ 245,471
Maryland	\$ 449,718
Massachusetts	\$ 1,154,979
Michigan	\$ 1,366,839
Minnesota	\$ 983,759
Mississippi	\$ 487,312
Missouri	\$ 1,485,593
Montana	\$ 432,971
Nebraska	\$ 406,414
Nevada	\$ 531,815
New Hampshire	\$ 143,465
New Jersey	\$ 518,816
New Mexico	\$ 272,407
New York	\$ 1,883,898
North Carolina	\$ 1,314,372
North Dakota	\$ 175,905
Ohio	\$ 1,919,149
Oklahoma	\$ 972,750
Oregon	\$ 805,581
Pennsylvania	\$ 1,818,314

**Fiscal Year 2021 Additional Allotments to States and Tribes**  
**John H. Chafee Foster Care Program**  
**Education and Training Vouchers**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State	2021 Allotment
Puerto Rico	\$ 328,154
Rhode Island	\$ 257,651
South Carolina	\$ 529,473
South Dakota	\$ 199,797
Tennessee	\$ 1,087,990
Texas	\$ 3,680,546
Utah	\$ 291,380
Vermont	\$ 145,807
Virgin Islands	\$ 16,864
Virginia	\$ 576,787
Washington	\$ 1,272,232
West Virginia	\$ 851,303
Wisconsin	\$ 894,986
Wyoming	\$ 116,411

**State Subtotal \$ 49,949,032**

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
AZ	Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona	\$ 20,295
CA	Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Smith River Rancheria)	\$ 4,203
KS	Prairie Band of Potawatomi	\$ 3,401
NE	Santee Sioux Nation	\$ 4,188
OR	Confederated Tribe of Warm Springs	\$ 13,515
WA	Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe	\$ 5,366

**Tribal Subtotal \$ 50,968**

**TOTAL \$ 50,000,000**

Title IV-E Agency State/Tribe of \_\_\_\_\_

**TEMPORARY CHANGES RELATED TO AGING OUT OF AND RE-ENTRY INTO AND ELIGIBILITY FOR TITLE IV-E FOSTER CARE FOR OLDER YOUTH**

Instructions: Once this document is signed and submitted, it remains in effect until September 30, 2021.

I certify that \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of State or Tribal Title IV-E Agency)*

Complies with or will comply with the following requirements of P.L. 116-260:

- §4(a) of Division X, P.L. 116-260 relating to temporary suspension of aging out of foster care and permitting re-entry of youth who have left foster care.
- §4(c) of Division X, P.L. 116-260 relating to ensure that the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of older foster youth and work with youth who remains in foster care after attaining 18 years of age (or such greater age elected under §475(8)(B)(iii) of the Act) to develop, or review, and revise, a transition plan (§475(5)(H) of Act).
- §4(a) and 4(d)(2)(D) of Division X, P.L. 116-260 relating to the temporary suspension of age and education and employment requirements for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments.
- §4(b)(2) and (4) of Division X, P.L. 116-260 relating to notice to youth and conducting a public awareness campaign of the option for youth to reenter foster care.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

## PROGRAM PURPOSES

### JOHN H. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE PROGRAM FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD<sup>1</sup>

From the Social Security Act

SEC. 477. [42 U.S.C. 677] (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide States with flexible funding that will enable programs to be designed and conducted—

(1) to support all youth who have experienced foster care at age 14 or older in their transition to adulthood through transitional services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma and post-secondary education, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training and opportunities to practice daily living skills (such as financial literacy training and driving instruction), substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention);

(2) to help children who have experienced foster care at age 14 or older achieve meaningful, permanent connections with a caring adult;

(3) to help children who have experienced foster care at age 14 or older engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities, positive youth development, and experiential learning that reflects what their peers in intact families experience;

(4) to provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age (or 23 years of age, in the case of a State with a certification under subsection (b)(3)(A)(ii) to provide assistance and services to youths who have aged out of foster care and have not attained such age, in accordance with such subsection)<sup>2</sup> to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood;

(5) to make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary training and education, to youths who have aged out of foster care;

(6) to provide the services referred to in this subsection to children who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption, and

(7)<sup>3</sup> to ensure children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age have regular, on-going opportunities to engage in age or developmentally-appropriate activities as defined in section 475(11).

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<sup>1</sup> Sec. 50753(d) of P.L. 115-123 changed the name of the Chafee program from *the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program*, revised the purposes of paragraphs (a)(1) – (3), removed paragraph (a)(4), and renumbered accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> Sec. 50753(a)(1) of P.L. 115-123 revised purpose (a)(4).

<sup>3</sup> Sec. 111 of P.L. 113-183 added sec. 477(a)(8). P.L. 115-123 re-designated it as (a)(7).

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to States and Territories**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State	2021 Allotment
Alabama	\$ 1,434,197
Alaska	\$ 146,420
Arizona	\$ 1,597,355
Arkansas	\$ 724,416
California	\$ 7,844,858
Colorado	\$ 847,869
Connecticut	\$ 552,458
Delaware	\$ 244,094
District of Columbia	\$ 164,951
Florida	\$ 5,028,565
Georgia	\$ 2,954,126
Hawaii	\$ 265,125
Idaho	\$ 315,933
Illinois	\$ 3,234,488
Indiana	\$ 1,223,351
Iowa	\$ 610,050
Kansas	\$ 411,268
Kentucky	\$ 1,015,242
Louisiana	\$ 1,694,360
Maine	\$ 225,795
Maryland	\$ 1,104,067
Massachusetts	\$ 1,084,133
Michigan	\$ 1,981,268
Minnesota	\$ 772,035
Mississippi	\$ 1,007,723
Missouri	\$ 1,345,900
Montana	\$ 186,465
Nebraska	\$ 335,617
Nevada	\$ 746,384
New Hampshire	\$ 138,505
New Jersey	\$ 1,430,012
New Mexico	\$ 797,668
New York	\$ 4,045,821
North Carolina	\$ 2,175,582
North Dakota	\$ 92,513
Ohio	\$ 2,442,286
Oklahoma	\$ 1,074,638
Oregon	\$ 853,069

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to States and Territories**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

<b>State</b>	<b>2021 Allotment</b>
Pennsylvania	\$ 2,738,300
Rhode Island	\$ 208,042
South Carolina	\$ 1,314,830
South Dakota	\$ 174,379
Tennessee	\$ 1,769,942
Texas	\$ 8,319,214
Utah	\$ 403,974
Vermont	\$ 98,477
Virginia	\$ 1,337,210
Washington	\$ 1,311,300
West Virginia	\$ 472,497
Wisconsin	\$ 1,123,698
Wyoming	\$ 57,345

**State Subtotal \$ 71,477,815**

<b>Territory</b>	<b>2021 Allotment</b>
American Samoa	\$ 30,872
Guam	\$ 70,064
Northern Mariana Islands	\$ 22,226
Puerto Rico	\$ 813,062
Virgin Islands	\$ 35,961

**Territory Subtotal \$ 972,185**

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to Tribes**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
<b>AK</b>	Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association	\$ 2,750
	Arctic Slope	\$ 13,287
	Association of Village Council Presidents	\$ 29,632
	Bristol Bay Native Association	\$ 7,401
	Central Council of Tlingit-Haida	\$ 22,519
	Cook Inlet	\$ 70,228
	Kawerak	\$ 12,137
	Kenaitze Indian Tribe	\$ 5,678
	Ketchikan Indian Corporation	\$ 5,670
	Kodiak Area Native Association	\$ 7,986
	Maniilaq Association	\$ 11,487
	Metlakatla Indian Community	\$ 3,108
	Native Village of Barrow	\$ 4,793
	Nome Eskimo Community	\$ 3,616
	Sitka Tribe	\$ 3,616
	Tanana Chiefs Conference	\$ 19,719
	<b>AZ</b>	Colorado River Indian Tribes.
Gila River Indian Community		\$ 26,043
Hopi Tribe		\$ 14,787
Navajo Nation		\$ 312,361
Pascua Yaqui Tribe		\$ 25,435
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community		\$ 18,392
San Carlos Apache		\$ 20,561
Tohono O'odham Nation		\$ 50,955
Yavapai-Apache Nation		\$ 4,039
<b>CA</b>		Hoopa Valley Tribe
	Karuk Tribe	\$ 3,485
	Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Smith River Rancheria)	\$ 2,727
	Tule River Tribal Council	\$ 2,481
	Yurok Tribe	\$ 6,890
<b>ID</b>	Coeur D'Alene Tribe	\$ 4,516
	Nez Perce Tribe	\$ 6,601
	The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes	\$ 9,259

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to Tribes**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
<b>KS</b>	Native American Family Services	\$ 3,231
<b>LA</b>	Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana	\$ 2,554
<b>MA</b>	Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe	\$ 3,324
<b>ME</b>	Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians	\$ 3,027
<b>MI</b>	Bay Mills Indian Community	\$ 2,851
	Grand Traverse of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians	\$ 3,620
	Little Traverse Bay Bands Of Odawa Indians	\$ 2,489
	Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians	\$ 7,594
	Sault St. Marie Chippewa Indians	\$ 48,924
<b>MN</b>	Fond Du Lac Reservation Business Committee	\$ 3,389
	Leech Lake Reservation	\$ 8,236
	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians	\$ 6,986
	Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians	\$ 11,614
<b>MS</b>	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	\$ 15,060
<b>MT</b>	Blackfeet Tribe	\$ 18,530
	Chippewa Cree Tribe	\$ 11,444
	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	\$ 19,569
	Crow Tribe	\$ 22,169
	Fort Belknap Indian Community	\$ 7,240
	Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes	\$ 3,847
	Northern Cheyenne Tribe	\$ 7,840
<b>NC</b>	Eastern Band Cherokee Indians	\$ 21,292
<b>ND</b>	Spirit Lake Tribe	\$ 13,306
	Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	\$ 12,845
	Three Affiliated Tribes (Fort Berthold)	\$ 24,351
	Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians	\$ 23,412
<b>NE</b>	Omaha Tribe	\$ 5,466
	Ponca Tribe	\$ 3,158
	Santee Sioux Nation	\$ 2,439
	Winnebago Tribe	\$ 8,267
<b>NM</b>	Acoma Pueblo	\$ 14,753
	Isleta Pueblo	\$ 5,905
	Jemez Pueblo	\$ 4,855
	Jicarilla Apache	\$ 5,905

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to Tribes**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
	Kewa Pueblo (Santo Domingo)	\$ 8,271
	Laguna Pueblo	\$ 9,206
	Mescalero Apache Tribe	\$ 9,471
	Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo (San Juan Pueblo)	\$ 3,112
	Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc	\$ 4,570
	San Felipe Pueblo	\$ 5,920
	Santa Clara	\$ 3,447
	Taos Pueblo	\$ 2,893
	Zuni Tribe	\$ 17,319
<b>NY</b>	Seneca Nation of Indians	\$ 10,283
	Shinnecock Indian Nation	\$ 2,877
<b>OK</b>	Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Indians	\$ 8,921
	Alabama-Quassarte	\$ 3,366
	Apache Tribe	\$ 4,789
	Cherokee Nation	\$ 364,805
	Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes	\$ 14,937
	Chickasaw Nation	\$ 92,074
	Choctaw Nation	\$ 211,139
	Citizen-Potawatomi Nation	\$ 35,553
	Comanche Nation Indian Child Welfare	\$ 22,762
	Delaware Tribe of Indians	\$ 3,262
	Eastern Shawnee Tribe	\$ 6,082
	Fort Sill Apache Tribe	\$ 3,043
	Iowa Tribe	\$ 3,370
	Kaw Nation	\$ 4,505
	Kialegee Tribal Town	\$ 3,366
	Kickapoo Tribe	\$ 5,039
	Kiowa Indian Tribe	\$ 20,273
	Miami Tribe	\$ 7,147
	Muscogee (Creek) Nation	\$ 110,397
	Osage Nation	\$ 29,071
	Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians	\$ 4,020
	Ottawa Tribe	\$ 3,393
	Pawnee Nation	\$ 3,443

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to Tribes**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
	Peoria Tribe of Indians	\$ 3,758
	Ponca Tribe of Indians	\$ 5,813
	Quapaw Tribe of Indians	\$ 8,559
	Sac and Fox Nation	\$ 10,967
	Seminole Nation	\$ 27,559
	Seneca-Cayuga Tribe	\$ 7,817
	Shawnee Tribe	\$ 3,393
	Thlopthlocco Tribal Town	\$ 3,366
	United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians	\$ 14,860
	Wichita and Affiliated Tribes (includes Caddo Tribe)	\$ 12,756
	Wyandotte Nation	\$ 9,344
<b>OR</b>	Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde	\$ 6,005
	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	\$ 6,255
	Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla	\$ 4,893
	Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	\$ 7,297
<b>RI</b>	Narragansett Indian Tribe	\$ 2,797
<b>SC</b>	Catawba Indian Nation	\$ 4,443
<b>SD</b>	Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe	\$ 26,324
	Oglala Sioux Tribe (Pine Ridge)	\$ 23,423
	Rosebud Sioux Tribe	\$ 36,945
	Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of Lake Traverse	\$ 17,107
	Yankton Sioux Tribe	\$ 9,105
<b>TX</b>	Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo	\$ 7,321
<b>WA</b>	Cowlitz Indian Tribe	\$ 5,170
	Lummi Tribe	\$ 6,440
	Makah Indian Tribe	\$ 3,443
	Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	\$ 4,789
	Quinault Indian Nation	\$ 3,435
	The Tulalip Tribes	\$ 8,075
	Yakama Nation	\$ 17,903
<b>WI</b>	Bad River/Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians	\$ 8,032
	Ho-Chunk Nation	\$ 8,555
	Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	\$ 5,251
	Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	\$ 4,370

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments to Tribes**  
**MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State Code	Indian Tribal Organization	2021 Allotment
	Menominee Indian Tribe Of Wisconsin	\$ 13,425
	Oneida Nation	\$ 18,665
	Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	\$ 8,248
	St. Croix Chippewa Indians	\$ 6,751
<b>WY</b>	Eastern Shoshone Tribe	\$ 6,986
	Northern Arapaho	\$ 17,038
<b>Tribal Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 2,550,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 75,000,000</b>

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments**  
**State Court Improvement Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State	2021 Allotment
Alabama	\$ 158,827
Alaska	\$ 96,891
Arizona	\$ 196,601
Arkansas	\$ 132,239
California	\$ 686,351
Colorado	\$ 170,327
Connecticut	\$ 135,849
Delaware	\$ 98,879
District of Columbia	\$ 94,219
Florida	\$ 370,811
Georgia	\$ 254,844
Hawaii	\$ 104,988
Idaho	\$ 114,900
Illinois	\$ 275,751
Indiana	\$ 191,856
Iowa	\$ 134,767
Kansas	\$ 132,635
Kentucky	\$ 152,921
Louisiana	\$ 157,747
Maine	\$ 102,101
Maryland	\$ 175,175
Massachusetts	\$ 180,764
Michigan	\$ 231,521
Minnesota	\$ 172,407
Mississippi	\$ 132,313
Missouri	\$ 177,696
Montana	\$ 100,469
Nebraska	\$ 117,165
Nevada	\$ 130,732
New Hampshire	\$ 102,856
New Jersey	\$ 215,068
New Mexico	\$ 117,291
New York	\$ 359,977
North Carolina	\$ 242,796
North Dakota	\$ 97,261
Ohio	\$ 260,139
Oklahoma	\$ 149,202
Oregon	\$ 143,558
Pennsylvania	\$ 266,250

**Fiscal Year 2021 Supplemental Allotments**  
**State Court Improvement Program**  
*Authorized by Division X of Public Law 116-260*  
*(Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act)*

State	2021 Allotment
Puerto Rico	\$ 125,442
Rhode Island	\$ 99,731
South Carolina	\$ 160,823
South Dakota	\$ 99,570
Tennessee	\$ 186,636
Texas	\$ 581,168
Utah	\$ 147,058
Vermont	\$ 93,375
Virgin Islands	\$ 86,789
Virginia	\$ 211,948
Washington	\$ 196,291
West Virginia	\$ 109,471
Wisconsin	\$ 171,575
Wyoming	\$ 93,979
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 9,500,000</b>

**Adjusted Qualifying Agency Funding Certainty Baselines Table CB 496 Part 3 - January 2021**

Qualifying Title IV-E Agencies*1	FY 2019 Title IV-E Foster Care Capped Allocations - Calculated Federal Shares				Line 29a, Column C	Line 29b, Column C
	Maintenance Payments - FY 2020 FMAP Rate *2	Maintenance Payments - FY 2021 FMAP Rate *2	Administration - 50% FFP Rate	Training - 75% FFP Rate	FY 2020 Funding Certainty Baseline*5	FY 2021 Funding Certainty Baseline*6
Arkansas	\$ 14,510,753	\$ 14,770,180	\$ 25,955,071	\$ -	\$ 40,465,824	\$ 40,725,251
Arizona	\$ 113,168,334	\$ 115,502,327	\$ 69,585,253	\$ -	\$ 182,753,587	\$ 185,087,580
California	\$ 307,010,131	\$ 315,717,646	\$ 495,829,761	\$ -	\$ 802,839,891	\$ 811,547,407
Colorado*3	\$ 23,332,965	\$ 23,994,741	\$ 30,841,703	\$ -	\$ 54,174,668	\$ 54,836,444
District of Columbia	\$ 19,596,547	\$ 20,003,441	\$ 21,634,717	\$ -	\$ 41,231,263	\$ 41,638,158
Florida	\$ 80,082,695	\$ 82,553,486	\$ 116,373,753	\$ -	\$ 196,456,447	\$ 198,927,238
Hawaii	\$ 5,231,653	\$ 5,330,669	\$ 15,913,670	\$ -	\$ 21,145,323	\$ 21,244,339
Illinois	\$ 61,873,168	\$ 64,549,558	\$ 94,161,206	\$ 3,139,354	\$ 159,173,728	\$ 161,850,118
Indiana	\$ 51,864,814	\$ 52,997,908	\$ 57,983,280	\$ 4,426,151	\$ 114,274,244	\$ 115,407,338
Kentucky	\$ 35,578,585	\$ 36,406,752	\$ 15,764,799	\$ -	\$ 51,343,384	\$ 52,171,550
Maryland	\$ 44,091,737	\$ 45,342,281	\$ 25,280,208	\$ -	\$ 69,371,945	\$ 70,622,489
Nebraska	\$ 10,089,732	\$ 10,650,556	\$ 8,274,433	\$ -	\$ 18,364,165	\$ 18,924,988
Nevada	\$ 14,959,690	\$ 15,160,374	\$ 17,746,607	\$ -	\$ 32,706,297	\$ 32,906,981
New York	\$ 151,913,354	\$ 156,221,967	\$ 123,738,770	\$ -	\$ 275,652,124	\$ 279,960,737
Ohio*4	\$ 78,324,130	\$ 80,824,206	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 78,324,130	\$ 80,824,206
Oklahoma	\$ 30,329,342	\$ 31,840,015	\$ 40,298,869	\$ -	\$ 70,628,211	\$ 72,138,884
Oregon	\$ 30,067,092	\$ 30,596,506	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,067,092	\$ 30,596,506
Pennsylvania	\$ 16,657,682	\$ 17,096,812	\$ 18,063,431	\$ -	\$ 34,721,113	\$ 35,160,243
Tennessee	\$ 45,755,778	\$ 47,353,890	\$ 15,440,696	\$ -	\$ 61,196,474	\$ 62,794,585
Utah	\$ 12,185,141	\$ 12,332,353	\$ 15,775,319	\$ -	\$ 27,960,459	\$ 28,107,671
Washington	\$ 31,476,645	\$ 32,369,395	\$ 65,497,925	\$ -	\$ 96,974,570	\$ 97,867,320
Wisconsin	\$ 26,999,794	\$ 27,657,812	\$ 40,919,897	\$ -	\$ 67,919,691	\$ 68,577,709

Qualifying Title IV-E Agencies*1	FY 2019 Title IV-E Foster Care Capped Allocations - Calculated Federal Shares				Line 29a, Column C	Line 29b, Column C
	Maintenance Payments - FY 2020 FMAP Rate *2	Maintenance Payments - FY 2021 FMAP Rate *2	Administration - 50% FFP Rate	Training - 75% FFP Rate	FY 2020 Funding Certainty Baseline*5	FY 2021 Funding Certainty Baseline*6
West Virginia	\$ 39,101,653	\$ 39,887,714	\$ 10,701,209	\$ -	\$ 49,802,861	\$ 50,588,923
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe	\$ 214,579	\$ 218,373	\$ 288,798	\$ -	\$ 503,376	\$ 507,171
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 1,244,415,992</b>	<b>\$ 1,279,378,961</b>	<b>\$ 1,326,069,370</b>	<b>\$ 7,565,504</b>	<b>\$ 2,578,050,866</b>	<b>\$ 2,613,013,836</b>

\*1- Title IV-E agencies with a title IV-E foster care demonstration project that was operational through September 30, 2019.

\*2- Calculated using average of quarterly applicable Federal Medical Assistance Payment (FMAP) rates in effect for specified FY as per section 9 of Division X of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.

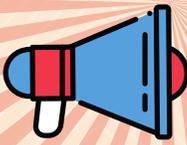
\*3- Colorado's capped allocations differ slightly from amounts in Table 1 of its approved terms and conditions since those amounts are shown by state fiscal year rather than as shown by federal fiscal year.

\*4- Ohio's project did not utilize a capped allocation. Therefore, per section 602(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the Family First Transition Act, the project's final cost neutrality limit for fiscal year 2018 was utilized. As per Ohio's approved terms & condition's, the state's FY 2018 final computed allocation is displayed on this table.

\*5- Calculated based on actual average quarterly FMAP rates in effect (including application of COVID-19 health emergency period enhanced FMAP rate (+6.2 percentage points) in three quarters) during FFY 2020.

\*6- Calculated using average quarterly FMAP rates based on expected continued application of COVID-19 health emergency period enhanced FMAP rate (+6.2 percentage points) in all four quarters of FFY 2021. A revision will be needed should this health emergency period designation not be in place for one or more quarters in FFY 2021.

# Financial Help Available for Foster Youth and Young Adults Until August 31, 2022



There is extra financial help available for current and aged out foster youth ages 14-20 through **August 31, 2022!**

## Do You Need Help:



Getting a computer or other equipment for school?



Paying for internet access?



Paying money to participate in activities at school?



Any other costs that will help you with school, including graduation related expenses?



Fixing your car so you can drive to work or school or making an insurance payment?



Keeping your cell phone turned on while you are looking for a job?



Paying deposits for an apartment or utilities?



Paying medical, car, or some other kind of important bills?



Getting equipment or clothes needed for a job or training program?



Taking driver's education or paying for needed time to practice driving so you can get your license?



Childcare?



Winter clothing and supplies?



Bedding, sheets, kitchen items, or household necessities?



Help paying fees to renew your Lawful Permanent Resident Card (green card) or file your application to become a U.S. citizen?

Anything else?

**Understand this is NOT just a cash payout– you need to:**

- identify specific items you need,
- explain why the items are important, and
- ask ahead of time.

**If you are struggling to come up with money for something important, you should ask for financial help to pay for it.**

EXHIBIT

D



# How to Get Help

Ask your PAL worker or Aftercare Worker/Transition Service Coordinator about getting financial help. You can find your PAL worker by going to [bit.ly/31lsD4k](https://bit.ly/31lsD4k) or call the **PAL State Office** at **512-460-7394**. Remember, if you are not able to speak with someone directly, you **MUST** leave a **voicemail**. You need to make it clear in your voicemail that you are a foster youth who needs help.

**Be sure you also leave your name and phone number.**

If you have reached out to your PAL worker for help and were told they cannot help you or if you have trouble getting anyone to help you with your request, contact the **Texas Foster Youth Justice Project**.

The Project can provide you with free legal help from attorneys. Call **877-313-3688** or email **[info@TexasFosterYouth.org](mailto:info@TexasFosterYouth.org)**.

## **Source of funds:**

Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic federal legislation, a part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021., enacted by U.S. Congress December 27, 2020.

**EXTRA ETV (Education Training Voucher)** funds are available too! If you are in college or a post-high school/GED training program that is 1-year or longer, you may be able to get up to \$12,000 of assistance through **September 30, 2022**

## Pandemic Support for Foster Youth and Young Adults

*Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act was enacted as Division X of P.L. 116-260, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.*

Since the passage of **Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act** enacted on December 27, 2020, and the March 9, 2021 release by the federal government of additional instructions and clarifications as provided by Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-21-04, DFPS has rolled out a wide range of Pandemic-related support to youth and young adults currently in or aged out of foster care.

The following support to youth and young adults is available during FY22:

- Funds for youth and young adults 14-20 (up until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday) currently in care, or in extended foster care, available through our regional Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) staff: \$2,897,000 obligated for each FY2021 and 2022.
  - These funds are able to meet not only pandemic related needs, but also educational, vocational, and a variety of auxiliary personal and transitional needs for youth and young adults.
- Funds for young adults 18-20 (up until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday) who aged out of care, and have left care, available through our Aftercare Case Managers: \$1,555,019.40 for each FY2021 and FY 2022.
  - These funds are able to meet not only pandemic related needs, but also educational, vocational, and a variety of auxiliary personal and transitional needs for youth and young adults.
- For young adults participating in the Educational Training Voucher program (ETV), caps on annual funding through the program are increased to \$12,000, and some non-Cost-of-Attendance fees are able to be met through September 30, 2022. These funds are available through BCFS, applications and information can be found at:  
<https://discoverbcfs.net/texasetv/>.



Links to contact:

[Regional Preparation For Adult Living \(PAL\) Coordinators](#)

[PAL Aftercare Case Management Services](#)



# Pandemic Aid for Foster Youth and Young Adults



## DFPS rolls out financial support to foster youth and young adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Support is available for youth and young adults in the following areas:

- Funds for youth and young adults **age 14-20 (up until their 21st birthday)** currently in foster care or in extended foster care. These funds can meet pandemic-related needs, but also educational, vocational, and a variety of auxiliary personal and transitional needs for youth and young adults.
- Funds for young adults **age 18-20 (up until their 21st birthday)** who have aged out and left foster care. These funds are able to meet not only pandemic related needs, but also educational, vocational, and a variety of auxiliary personal and transitional needs for youth and young adults.
- Education Training Vouchers (ETV) are able to meet up to \$12,000 of needs through September 30, 2022, including some non-Cost-of-Attendance needs.

## How to Request Aid

- Contact a [Preparation for Adult Living specialist](#) to learn more.
- Learn more about the [Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act](#) .

# youthtakeflight

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## Youth Take Flight

Cause

Need financial assistance due to the pandemic? You may be eligible for Pandemic Aid funds. Learn more here:

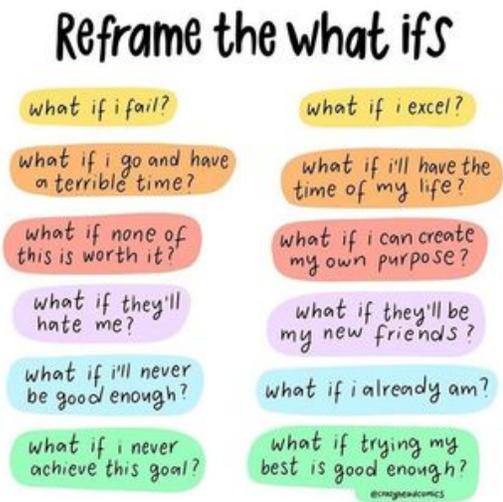
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POSTS

VIDEOS

TAGGED





Young Adult  
**Pandemic Aid**



Young Adult  
**Pandemic Aid**



Young Adult  
**Pandemic Aid**



If you're **FALLING BEHIND** on **RENT**

Apply for **COVID RENT RELIEF**

**cfpb** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

A government agency

**IT'S TIME WE KNOCK OUT COVID!**

**YOUNG ADULT PANDEMIC AID**

**WORLD TRIP IN PROGRESS**  
30 JULY

**#ENDHUMANTRAFFIC**

**Hit the road for FREE**

We're Roadtrip Nation, and we send people out on free road trips in our green RV to interview inspiring people about what it takes to find fulfilling work. We're recruiting three young people from the DFW, Houston, and surrounding regions to travel around Texas and hear from people who've found meaningful work and created compelling careers for themselves. If you're eager to find out how you can find your place in the Dallas-Fort Worth to Houston regions, we want to help you learn about how you can get there. Apply now!

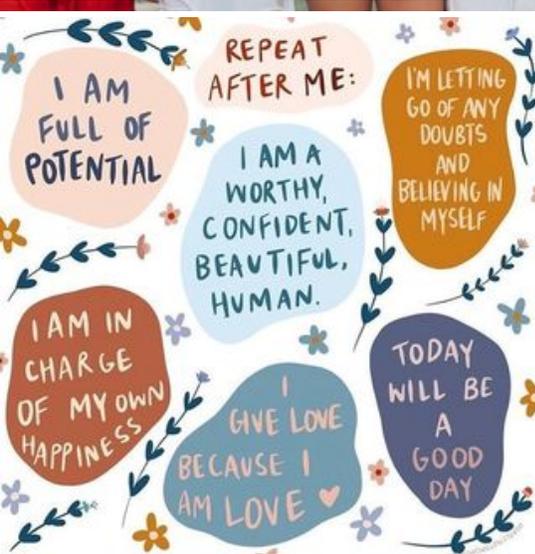
For questions, contact [roadtrips@roadtripnation.com](mailto:roadtrips@roadtripnation.com)

**APPLY BY JULY 18, 2021**  
[rtn.is/texas-roadtrip](https://rtn.is/texas-roadtrip)



**NEED HELP?**

**You have to stop thinking you'll be stuck**



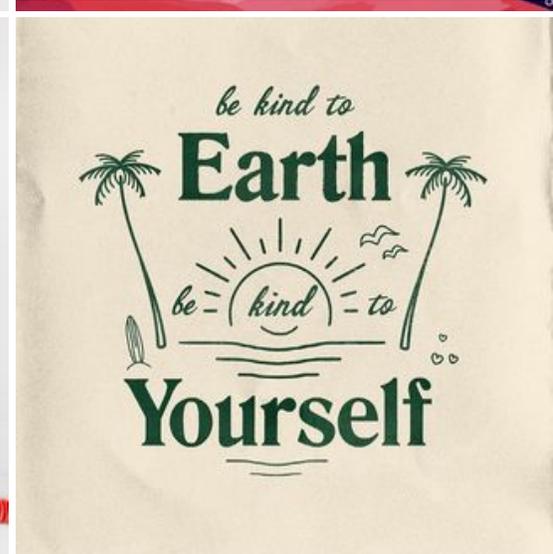
**NEED HELP?  
COVID SUPPORT &  
FUNDS AVAILABLE**

Are you under the age of 27? Aged out of the Texas Foster Care System? Participating in Texas Extended Foster Care?

If so, you may be eligible for the time-limited Federal pandemic relief benefits to help with:

- Basic Need • Rent • Education Assistance (ETV)
- Utilities • Child Care • Other expenses

Reach out to the Regional Preparation For Adult Living (PAL) Coordinators for assistance.





**TEXAS**  
**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**  

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*Child Protective Services*

**Transitional Living Services Resource Guide**

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Updated April 2020



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# Resource Guides

The purpose of Resource Guides is to provide information that helps you do your job better. This information includes reference material, procedures, and guidelines that help you complete the tasks you are required to do by policy.

It's important to remember that the information in Resource Guides does not substitute for policy. We may sometimes include policy statements, but only to show you the policy to which the information is related. We will highlight any policy that actually appears in the Resource Guide and will almost always include a link to the actual policy.

The policy in the handbook always takes precedence over what is in the Resource Guide. We try to keep policy and Resource Guides synchronized, but sometimes there is a delay. **If you have questions, always follow the policy in the Policy Handbook.**

Resource Guides provide important information on a range of topics, for the purpose of assisting and guiding staff to:

- Make essential decisions.
- Develop strategies to address various issues.
- Perform essential procedures.
- Understand important processes.
- Identify and apply best practices.

The information in the Resource Guides is not policy (except where noted), and the actions and approaches described here are not mandates. You should adapt the way you perform critical tasks to the individual needs and circumstances of the children and families with whom you work.

State office and field staff are working together to identify Resource Guide topics, define the content, and develop the appropriate guides. CPS will regularly post Resource Guides as they are developed and update them as needed. Check the Resource Guides page, in the CPS Handbook, to see new or revised Guides.

We hope these Guides provide useful information to guide and assist CPS staff in effectively performing their job tasks. These Guides, combined with clear and concise policy in the Handbook, should help staff provide a high level of service to children in Texas.

## Transitional Living Services

See [10100](#) Overview of Transitional Living Services and its sub-items.

The Transitional Living Services program provides transition planning, services, and benefits to both older youth in foster care and those who have aged out. Transitional Living Services are available to youth age 14 to 23.

The Transitional Living Services program includes:

- Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) (see [10200](#) Preparation for Adult Living);
- Health care coverage for youth and young adults that age out of Foster Care (FFCC) (see [10141](#) The Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Program);
- STAR Health Program;
- Transition center information (see [10130](#) Transition Centers for Youth);
- Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program (see [10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program);
- College tuition and fee waivers for youth who were in DFPS conservatorship, adopted youth, and youth in the Permanency Care Assistance program ([10310](#) College Tuition and Fee Exemption Information);
- Extended Foster Care program (see [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older);
- Supervised Independent Living program (see [10460](#) Supervised Independent Living).
- Trial Independence and Young Adults Returning to Care (see [10500](#) Trial Independence and Return for Extended Foster Care); and
- Preparation for long-term care and support in adulthood for youth with disabilities (see [10340](#) Preparation for Long-Term Care or Support in Adulthood for Youth with Disabilities).

## Experiential Life Skills Training for Youth Age 14 and Older

Foster parents and other child care or residential providers are required to include training in independent living skills through practical activities such as meal preparation, use of public transportation, money management, and basic household tasks for youth age 14 and older. This training prepares youth for successful adulthood upon leaving foster care. Providers can access resource guides and other training information at the [DFPS Residential Contracts](#) website.

The youth's experiential learning while in care and PAL activities should complement one another and are discussed and addressed in each core life skill area within the youth's Child's Plan of Service (CPOS).

## Transition Centers for Youth

Transition centers provide comprehensive services for foster youth, through a one-stop approach that includes access and referrals to community partners and resources. Services may include employment assistance, training, educational support, and various transitional living services geared specifically to meet the individual needs of current and former foster youth age 15 to 25.

Centers may provide additional services, such as PAL Life Skills training classes, job search and job readiness classes, food and housing assistance, and substance abuse or mental health counseling. Transition centers may also serve as a central clearinghouse where local partners such as Workforce Solutions, local community colleges and universities, or the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) can meet on a regular basis to jointly serve the youth's needs.

Effective transition centers involve local, state, and federal partners. Each brings different strengths and resources and serves a particular role to promote positive outcomes for youth.

Each center is independently operated and supported by partnerships between DFPS and the Texas Workforce Commission.

See the [Texas Youth Connection](#) website for transition center locations and contact information. Where centers are available, CPS staff are encouraged to:

- Refer youth for services;
- Meet with the youth at the center to discuss transition planning, other service planning and activities; and
- Support the activities and services the centers provide for the youth.

## Healthcare Coverage for Youth and Young Adults Who Age out of Foster Care

See [10140](#) Overview of Healthcare Coverage for Youth and Young Adults Who Age out of Foster Care and its sub-items.

## The Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Program

Texas is required to provide Medicaid coverage to youth and young adults under age 26 who were in foster care and were receiving Medicaid when they aged out of foster care.

42 U.S.C. [§1396a\(a\)\(10\)\(A\)\(i\)\(IX\)](#)

The [Former Foster Care Children](#) (FFCC) program provides healthcare coverage to young adults through age 25.

To be eligible for the program, a youth must:

- Be age 18 through 25;
- Have been in DFPS foster care on his or her 18th birthday or older;
- Have been receiving Medicaid when she or he aged out of DFPS foster care;
- Be a U.S. citizen, or be a qualified alien; for example, by having an I-551 permanent resident card;
- Once a qualified alien turns age 21, he or she must have had his or her legal immigration status for at least five years to qualify for the FFCC;
- There are no income, asset, or education requirements; and
- Eligible young adults receive Medicaid services through one of the following FFCC healthcare programs, based on age:
  - Young adults ages 18 through 20 are automatically enrolled in the STAR Health program; however, they may switch to a STAR member health plan, if they prefer; or
  - Young adult ages 21 through 25 choose the STAR member health plan of their choice.

For current information on the STAR Health Program, see the DFPS [STAR Health](#) website.

## Out-of-State Eligibility

A young adult who ages out of DFPS foster care and does not live in Texas is not eligible to receive healthcare coverage from the FFCC program; however, if the young adult returns to Texas to live after aging out of DFPS foster care, he or she may apply for FFCC.

A young adult who ages out of foster care from another state's conservatorship is not eligible for the FFCC, even if he or she lives in Texas.

## The Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) Program

If a young adult who is age 18 through 20 was in DFPS foster care, but is not eligible for the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program, she or he may be eligible to receive healthcare through the [Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth](#) (MTFCY) program.

To be eligible to receive healthcare services through the MTFCY program, a young adult must:

- Be age 18 through 20;
- Have been in DFPS foster care on his or her 18th birthday or older;

- Have no other health coverage;
- Meet HHSC's income rules; and
- Be a U.S. citizen, or be a qualified alien; for example, by having an I-551 permanent resident card.

A young adult who ages out of foster care from another state's conservatorship is no longer eligible to receive healthcare services through the MTFCY program; however, if the young adult is already receiving services through MTFCY, the young adult will continue to do so until his or her 21st birthday, or until the young adult no longer meets the eligibility requirements, whichever occurs first.

## Applying or Re-Applying for the FFCC and MTFCY Healthcare Programs

A young adult may apply or reapply for either the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program or the

Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program by:

- Submitting one of the following applications (whichever is appropriate, based on the criteria provided on each application):
  - [Form H1010](#) Texas Works Application for Assistance (used to apply for SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid and CHIP); or
  - [Form H1205](#) Texas Streamlined Application (used to apply for Health Coverage only).
- Visiting the [Your Texas Benefits](#) website;
- Visiting the [HealthCare.gov](#) website; or
- Calling 2-1-1.

The young adult can print Form H1010 and Form H1205 from the [Your Texas Benefits](#) website, after setting up an account.

## Phone and Online Support for the FFCC and MTFCY Healthcare Programs

### The Your Texas Benefits Website

A young adult may use HHSC's [Your Texas Benefits](#) website to:

- Set up an account;
- Apply for healthcare benefits;
- Renew benefits every year;
- Report changes to his or her case;
- Check on benefit-related issues;

- Check when an interview with a representative is scheduled, see what items may be needed for the interview, and upload the items;
- Order or print a Medicaid card; and
- View the Medicaid services for which a young adult is eligible.

## **The 2-1-1 Texas System**

A young adult may call the 2-1-1 Texas phone system or visit the [2-1-1 Texas](#) website for help with Medicaid-related issues, such as applying for benefits, renewing benefits, or reporting changes to a case.

The 2-1-1 system serves the:

- Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program; and
- Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program.

The 2-1-1 Texas system is used only to re-apply, update, or report changes for the FFCC and MTFCY programs. The system is not used to re-enroll in STAR Health.

## **The HHSC Mailbox for FFCC and MTFCY Issues**

If a young adult is not able to resolve issues related to the FFCC and MTFCY programs through the Texas 2-1-1 phone or online system, youth should notify caseworker or PAL staff so they can help send the inquiry to the [HHSC CBS FFCHE/MTFCY](#) mailbox to request assistance for the young adult.

## **The STAR Health Program**

[STAR Health](#) is a statewide, comprehensive healthcare program designed to better coordinate and improve access to health care for:

- Children and youth in DFPS conservatorship (under age 18).
- Young adults in DFPS extended foster care (ages 18 through either 20 or 21, depending on the case circumstances).
- Young adults who have returned to extended foster care (ages 18 through 20).
- Young adults who were previously in DFPS foster care and now receive Medicaid through the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program (ages 18 through 20); and
- Young adults who were previously in DFPS foster care, are living independently, and receive Medicaid through the Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program (ages 18 through 20).

[Superior HealthPlan Network](#) is the current managed care company under contract with HHSC to manage the STAR Health program. For more information, see [STAR Health – A Guide to Medical Services at CPS](#).

# Employment Preference for Former Foster Youth

See [10330](#) Employment Preference for Former Foster Youth.

State agencies are required to give an employment preference to former foster youth who were in DFPS permanent managing conservatorship on the day before his or her 18th birthday, if other applicants for the same position do not have a greater qualification. The employment preference ends the day before the young adult turns age 26.

*Texas Government Code, [Chapter 672](#)*

State agencies include a department, commission, board, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state government created by the state constitution or a state statute, as well as an institution of higher education as defined by Section [61.003](#) of the Texas Education Code.

However, this provision does not apply to:

- The position of private secretary or deputy of an official or department; or
- An individual holding a strictly confidential relation to the employing officer.

Additional employment preference information is available on the [Texas Youth Connection](#) website.

## Preparation for Adult Living (PAL)

For general information on Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) eligibility and services, see [10200](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) and its sub-items.

### PAL Services

#### Who Provides PAL Services for Youth and Young Adults Who Move to Texas from Another State?

##### Youth in a Foster Care Placement

If a youth under age 18 in foster care or over age 18 in extended foster care is placed in another state, the state of origin must fund the identified PAL services for that youth. However, DFPS can provide Life Skills training as regional funding permits if:

- A youth (under age 18) is placed in Texas from another state through an interstate compact agreement (ICPC);
- A young adult is placed in a licensed placement; and
- The permanency goal is to age out of the foster care system.

## Youth Formerly in Foster Care

If a young adult between the ages of 18 and 21 was formerly in foster care and moves from the state in which he or she aged out of foster care to another state, he or she is eligible for PAL services in the new state.

The state in which the young adult currently resides is responsible for services only if that state already has a program that provides the services the young adult is requesting.

## Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Assessment

Refer to [10221](#) Life Skills Assessment.

DFPS utilizes the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) to conduct the independent living skills assessment. The assessment instrument can be found at [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org).

It is a self-reporting instrument that gives youth and their caregivers the opportunity to assess the youth's strengths and challenges. It is not a test. The CLSA is a comprehensive assessment with 113 assessment items categorized within 8 areas for skills, knowledge and awareness.

Areas Assessed in the CLSA:

Life Skills	Number of Items	Competencies Assessed
Daily Living	17	Meal planning and preparation, cleaning and food storage, home maintenance and computer and internet basics
Self-Care	17	Healthy physical and emotional development such as personal hygiene, taking care of one's health and pregnancy prevention
Relationships and Communication	18	Developing and sustaining healthy relationships, cultural competency and permanent connections with caring adults
Housing and Money Management	23	Banking and credit, finding and keeping affordable housing, budgeting and living within one's means
Work and Study	20	Basics of employment, legal issues, study skills and time management
Career and Education Planning	9	Planning for career and post-secondary education pertinent to older youth
Looking Forward	8	Youth's level of confidence and internal feelings important to their success

Life Skills	Number of Items	Competencies Assessed
Permanency	20	Connection to trusted adults, community of support, and overall interdependent connections

Once the youth and caregiver (when possible) provide input into the youth’s assessment, a scored report is generated. A scored comparison report is only available when the caregiver provides their responses within 30 days of the youth’s response. An average score for each life skills area is included in the scored report on a scale of 1-5, with 5 indicating high strength. The remaining assessment results will list all the statements for a particular skill area and the youth’s answers.

When the assessment is provided by the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) contract provider, assessment results are discussed during an interpretation session. The contract provider invites the youth, caregiver and caseworker to the interpretation session. The caregiver, youth and caseworker will receive a copy of the youth’s scored report from the PAL contractor and/or PAL staff.

The interpretation session or future discussions about the assessment results should include the following:

- Ask youth to identify their strengths (areas where the scores are closer to a 5);
- Ask youth where they felt unsure and they think they need help (lower average scores);
- Remind youth that they may not have had the opportunity to gain experience in certain areas yet. Have them connect what they are doing now with future goals; and
- Compare the assessment results of the youth and caregiver and discuss with them areas of agreement and difference.

Results from the assessment can be used to set future goals and to plan activities for real life learning experiences. Achieved success and knowledge of a particular skill should be included in the youth’s plan of service (see section 6241, Child Plan of Service).

## **Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Training Curriculum Outline**

Refer to [10222](#) Life Skills Training.

The PAL Life Skills training curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the following core elements and topics:

- Health and Safety;

- Housing and Transportation;
- Job Readiness;
- Financial Management;
- Life Decisions and Responsibilities; and
- Personal and Social Relationships.

## Health and Safety

### Goal

To provide information that will help youth make healthy choices concerning health care, hygiene, nutrition, birth control, sexual responsibility, and substance abuse. Youth will also develop an understanding of how stress and anger affects their lives, the warning signs of violence, and how to access resources within their community when they are in need of help.

### Desired Outcomes

- a) Understand their health care rights at age 16.
- b) Understand the importance of personal hygiene.
- c) Understand the importance of healthy eating.
- d) Learn how to find a doctor, make an appointment, and understand their health care options when they leave care.
- e) Develop an understanding of their sexual responsibility and risky behaviors.
- f) Understand all birth control options, how they are used, the pros and cons of use and where to get them.
- g) Develop a better understanding of reproduction and pregnancy risks.
- h) Understand the different types of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and know the signs and dangers of STDs.
- i) Understand how to protect themselves against STDs.
- j) Understand the negative impact substance abuse has on self-sufficiency.
- k) Know the signs of addiction.
- l) Know how stress affects their lives and how to develop positive coping skills.
- m) Understand human trafficking, the traps of the trafficker, and how to stay safe.
- n) Know what services and support are available to victims of human trafficking (including reporting alleged abuse to local law enforcement).

**Minimum hours required in class: 5**

### Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

1. Plan, shop for, and prepare a nutritious meal.
2. Create a balanced menu and a shopping list for three days.
3. Make a doctor or dentist appointment for yourself.

4. Develop a list of your current doctors, including their addresses and phone numbers. Also list your medications, their purposes and the name and contact information for your preferred pharmacy.
5. Research local agencies that can help with substance abuse. Call to find out eligibility requirements.
6. Identify three strategies to reduce or eliminate stress. Practice these for a week and evaluate the effectiveness of each strategy.

## **Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline**

### **1. Personal Health Care**

- 1.1 Review medical rights of foster youth at age 16.
- 1.2 Identify elements of good personal hygiene.
  - 1.2.1 Discuss importance of bathing, brushing teeth, washing and combing hair, using deodorant, and other personal hygiene habits.
  - 1.2.2 Discuss importance of wearing clean clothes.
- 1.3 Identify elements of good nutrition.
- 1.4 Identify how to take care of personal health needs, mental health needs and services including preventive care, making appointments, Medicaid, and health insurance. Also discuss the right to confidentiality.

### **2. Sexual Responsibility**

- 2.1 Describe various types of STDs, as well as their transmission and prevention.
- 2.2 Tell where, how, and when to be tested for STDs.
- 2.3 List community resources pertaining to STDs.
- 2.4 List and compare different forms of birth control.
- 2.5 Describe basic reproductive anatomy (male and female).
- 2.6 Describe the process of human reproduction.
- 2.7 Discuss the options for being sexually responsible.
- 2.8 Identify your own personal values around sexual responsibility

### **3. Substance Abuse**

- 3.1 List reasons why people may use or abuse drugs.
- 3.2 Describe the short- and long-term effects of drug use and abuse on relationships, self-sufficiency, and jobs.
- 3.3 List the warning signs of addiction.
- 3.4 Discuss where people can get help for substance abuse.

### **4. Coping and Stress Management**

- 4.1 Label signs of stress due to physical, emotional, environmental, and situational events.
- 4.2 Compare positive and negative coping mechanisms.

4.3 Tell the difference between and list positive and negative support systems.

4.4 Describe when, who, and how to ask for help.

## **Housing and Transportation**

### **Goal**

To provide the tools and strategies for youth to plan for, find, and maintain safe, affordable housing and transportation.

### **Desired Outcomes**

- a. Understand the pros and cons of various housing options.
- b. Understand the pros and cons of various transportation options.
- c. Understand the legal responsibilities and consequences of contracting to rent or purchase property.

**Minimum hours required in class: 5**

### **Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):**

1. Practice reading apartment classified ads.
2. Talk to someone who lives in an apartment and find out what expenses they have in addition to rent.
3. Select an apartment from an advertisement and prepare a monthly budget that includes all monthly expenditures.
4. Select a destination and use the internet or call to find out the bus route to get there, how long it will take, and how much it will cost.
5. Plan a bus trip and take it.
6. Select a car from the classified ads and make a budget to buy and maintain that car for one year (don't forget gas, insurance, maintenance, and monthly payments).

**Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline:****1. Finding Housing**

- 1.1 List the characteristics of safe housing.
- 1.2 Describe types of housing options that could be available after care and the qualifications for each (campus housing, military, job corps, rental properties and homeownership).
- 1.3 Compare various apartment sizes and types (studio, efficiency, shared living).
- 1.4 Define boarding houses and rooms for rent.
- 1.5 Describe the transitional living programs available and their benefits.
- 1.6 Explain housing vouchers and how to apply for and use them (Section 8).
- 1.7 Describe the options for the homeless, such as shelters available in the area.
- 1.8 Consider the costs of housing, such as deposits, utilities, and insurance.
- 1.9 Compare the costs of renting vs. owning, as well as benefits of each.
- 1.10 Define commonly used abbreviations in apartment advertising.
- 1.11 Practice reading apartment classified advertisements.
- 1.12 Compare the effect of various apartment selections on personal budgets.
- 1.13 Describe the role of apartment locator services.

**2. Rentals, Leases, and Contracts**

- 2.1 Review the questions asked on an apartment application and discuss issues such as background checks, rental history, and credit.
- 2.2 Complete a sample apartment application.
- 2.3 Review a tenant lease and discuss tenant rights and responsibilities. Describe the effects of breaking that lease, paying rent late, and damage to the unit.
- 2.4 Describe the legal ramifications of a signed lease.
- 2.5 Review an apartment inspection form (move in/move out).
- 2.6 Describe the negative effects of breaking a lease.
- 2.7 Explain the reasons you may be evicted.

**3. Roommates and Shared Living**

- 3.1 Describe the pros and cons of having a roommate.
- 3.2 Review a roommate agreement and describe the benefits of having a roommate agreement.
- 3.3 Consider options for sharing household duties and bill paying with a roommate.
- 3.4 List regular housekeeping duties and consider whom you can contact for needed repairs in your housing.
- 3.5 List precautions you should take so that you and your belongings stay safe.

#### **4. Getting Around**

- 4.1 List the types, costs, and benefits of public transportation available in your area.
- 4.2 Use a bus schedule to map out a route and determine the cost of taking that route.
- 4.3 Describe steps to obtain a driver's license and the responsibilities included with one.
- 4.4 Describe legal requirements for insurance coverage for drivers and the consequences of not carrying insurance.
- 4.5 List steps to buying a car.
- 4.6 List the ways to research the cost, reliability, dealer reputation, safety information, and warranty on a vehicle.
- 4.7 Compare the options of paying cash or financing a vehicle.
- 4.8 List basic maintenance items on a vehicle.
- 4.9 Compare kinds of insurance for a vehicle and the costs (higher for young adults).

### **Job Readiness**

#### **Goal**

To assist youth in attaining their full career potential by helping them consider, assess, and plan their education and employment goals and by supporting their ability to execute their plan.

#### **Desired Outcomes**

- a. A decision to complete high school or get a GED.
- b. Understand the role education plays in future economic success.
- c. Understand options for higher education and vocational training.
- d. Understand self-marketing (current transferable skills, relevance of a professional resume, and the importance of an interview).
- e. Know how to find and keep a job (including job search and job shadowing/internships).
- f. Recognize and develop a career plan (how to set goals, who to include, how to use all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services, and how to follow through).

**Minimum hours required in class: 5**

#### **Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):**

1. Explore local pay scales for jobs or careers of interest.
2. Find out what your school offers in terms of assistance or resources for help for classes, schedules, and planning for graduation.
3. Create a typical weekly schedule for a student who also works (include homework, writing papers, work schedule, extra-curricular activities, and leisure activities).
4. Research two careers of interest to you and describe a typical work day, the skills required and what you will learn on the job, and the expected starting pay and opportunities for advancement to better paying positions.

5. Create a resume and a cover letter.
6. Obtain an application for a real job and complete it.
7. Practice a mock job interview.
8. Take a tour of a college campus.

### **Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline:**

#### **1. Link between Education and Employment**

- 1.1 Define a livable wage job.
- 1.2 Compare the effect that the level of formal education or trade education has on starting salary scale and lifetime earning ability.

#### **2. Education – Finishing High School**

- 2.1 Describe the positive effects and negative effects of completing or not completing high school education with a GED or diploma.
- 2.2 Describe steps to accomplishing an individual's educational goal of graduation or GED completion and how to overcome barriers to achieving that goal.
- 2.3 Describe when, where, and who to go to for help in reaching educational goals (tutors, teachers, and study skills classes.)
- 2.4 Discuss issues that keep students from meeting all of their time commitments, and tools to help manage time.

#### **3. Career Planning**

- 3.1 Assess strengths using career interest inventory, personality profiler, and aptitude indicator.  
Determine three career options that are reasonable and obtainable based on assessments.
- 3.2 Define transferable job skills and their value in getting a job. (Skills you get from different roles you play in life - such as athlete, volunteer, artist, friend, family member, co-worker - and how to bring this up in a resume or interview).
- 3.3 Describe the value a job, volunteer work, or internships has on gaining experience or building transferable job skills.
- 3.4 Define and compare college, vocational school, or trade school education.
- 3.5 Describe alternative job skill training (WIA or on-the-job).
- 3.6 Learn where to find workforce: resources, programs, and centers in your area.

#### **4. Job Readiness**

- 4.1 Define elements of a resume and cover letter.
- 4.2 Describe and research ways to search for a job (friends or relatives, newspaper ads, applying directly to an employer, temporary agencies, internet research, government agencies, and school placement center).

- 4.3 Review basic instructions on how to complete job applications; complete and critique a practice application.
- 4.4 Participate in a mock interview in class and give and receive feedback to improve interview skills.
- 4.5 Describe how to follow up after interviews and the importance of writing thank you notes.
- 4.6 Describe benefits of pre-employment options such as job shadowing, internships, and mentors.
- 4.7 Describe ways to keep a job, ways to lose a job, and how to best deal with issues that may arise in the workplace.
- 4.8 Describe the best way to leave a job or to change jobs in many circumstances.
- 4.9 Describe dress code as it pertains to various jobs.

## 5. Higher Education

- 5.1 Research higher education options, including College for All Texans (online).
- 5.2 Practice completing the Texas Common Application (online or printed).
- 5.3 Define the various higher education entrance tests (SAT, ACT, TASP, AP).
- 5.4 Define orientation at a place of higher education.
- 5.5 Describe student housing available for higher education.
- 5.6 Describe the different forms of financial aid available: (tuition exemption, ETV, FAFSA, other) and qualifications for each.

## Financial Management

### Goal

To provide the tools and information that will help youth develop financial literacy skills that will lead to financial responsibility and independence.

### Desired Outcomes

- a. Understand banking, including use of online banking.
- b. Understand the effects of good and bad credit.
- c. Understand financial responsibility (bills).
- d. Distinguish between wants and needs.
- e. Develop experience in creating and developing and maintaining a budget.
- f. Develop experience reading a pay stub.
- g. Understand how and when to file an income tax return.
- h. Learn how to balance a checkbook.
- i. Understand the pros and cons of using credit cards, ATM, and debit cards.
- j. List ways to protect against identity theft.

**Minimum hours required in class: 5****Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):**

1. Open a checking or savings account.
2. Make a budget for a week and track expenses.
3. List expenses when moving out on your own and create a plan for covering expenses.
4. Research identity or credit theft.
5. Research check cashing stores and fees.
6. Obtain your credit report and review it for accuracy.
7. Complete a financial management training offered by a bank.

**Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline****1. Banking**

- 1.1 List steps in opening a checking or savings account, to include online banking.
- 1.2 Compare debit cards, check cards, and credit cards and discuss responsible use.
- 1.3 Identify parts of a check.
- 1.4 Practice writing a check.
- 1.5 Describe the consequences of bouncing a check.
- 1.6 Describe how to make a deposit.
- 1.7 Identify steps to balance a checkbook.
- 1.8 Identify how and where to cash a check.
- 1.9 Identify financial management trainings offered by banks.

**2. Pay Stub**

- 2.1 Discuss differences between hourly and salaried employees.
- 2.2 Identify parts of a pay stub (hours worked, wages, gross and net pay, taxes, insurance deductions, benefits).
- 2.3 Describe the safest plan for signing and depositing your check.
- 2.4 Discuss how and when to file income tax returns.

**3. Budgeting**

- 3.1 Learn how to prioritize expenditures by comparing wants and needs.
- 3.2 Describe the importance of having and maintaining a budget.
- 3.3 Learn how to create a budget.
- 3.4 Discuss benefits and ways to save money.
- 3.5 Discuss earning enough to cover costs of living (full time versus part time, more than one job, or higher wages).

**4. Credit**

- 4.1 Describe uses for credit cards.
- 4.2 Describe interest rates and discuss advantages of low interest versus high interest.

- 4.3 Identify the actions that lead to bad credit (late payments, non-payments, breaking a lease, and health debt) and the effects of bad credit on credit scores.
- 4.4 Identify the actions that lead to good credit and the benefits of good credit.
- 4.5 Discuss ways credit companies target young adults.
- 4.6 Discuss scams and identity theft, how to avoid them and/or report them and potential consequences.
- 4.7 Define credit scores/ratings and discuss importance of scores.
- 4.8 List ways to get your credit report.
- 4.9 Review your credit report to locate important information.
- 4.10 Describe the process for disputing items on a credit report.

## **Life Decisions and Responsibilities**

### **Goal**

To provide a forum for youth to consider the many responsibilities and decisions they will be making as they move toward independent living.

### **Desired Outcomes**

- a) Understand the legal rights and responsibilities of being an adult.
- b) Understand how and why certain documents are important and must be secured.
- c) Be aware of community resources and how to access them.
- d) Develop a preliminary transition planning document.
- e) Create a list of caring adults and community supporters.
- f) Understand the risks and benefits of using social media.

### **Minimum hours required in class: 5**

### **Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):**

1. Take a trip to the government offices that issue duplicate birth certificates or ID cards and find out the process for application.
2. Research online where to go in your county to get a driver's license and what is required to get a learner's permit. (Visit the Texas Department of Public Safety's website for information.)
3. Tour your regional transition center or call to find out what services are available to you.
4. Tour your local workforce center or call to find out what services are available to you.
5. Visit, call or research online social service providers that offer transitional housing or emergency shelter.
6. Create a weeklong schedule for yourself that includes school, work, home duties, church, or volunteer commitments.

7. Find out who the candidates are/were for a local, state, or national election and describe their main campaign promises.

## Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline

### 1. Legal Rights, Responsibilities and Civic Engagement

(Use *Now You Are 18*, published by Texas Bar Auxiliary)

- 1.1 Describe the steps to registering to vote and the importance of doing so. List where or how to find out where to go to vote.
- 1.2 List the characteristics of a good citizen.
- 1.3 Define and tell the importance of jury duty.
- 1.4 Tell the requirements for and steps to register for the selective service, as well as the rationale for doing so.
- 1.5 Describe the legal requirements and responsibilities of signing various contracts and other legal documents, such as car loans and apartment leases.

### 2. Legal Documents, Records, and Roots

- 2.1 List reasons why a birth certificate is important and tell how to get a copy.
- 2.2 List reasons why a Social Security card is important and tell how to receive a duplicate copy.
- 2.3 Explain how to qualify and earn a driver's license, as well as the effects and responsibilities of being a licensed driver.
- 2.4 Explain what a state ID is, how to get it and compare this to a driver's license.

See [6452](#) Personal Documents Provided to Youth

### 3. Community Resources and Awareness

- 3.1 List and describe the services your regional transition center offers.
- 3.2 List and describe the services your workforce center offers and your eligibility for those services.
- 3.3 List and describe the social service agencies and the resources offered in your community (including human and labor trafficking and LBGTQ organizations and resources) and how to access these services.
- 3.4 Examine examples of referral forms and release of information forms and discuss why these are needed.
- 3.5 List things to ask when calling a community resource.
- 3.6 List and define information and referral services (211), hotlines, and help lines in your area.
- 3.7 List DFPS benefits, tell the requirements to access them, who to contact to access them and the amount of money you may request and how and why these funds may be used.
- 3.8 Describe the qualification process and steps to applying for public assistance such as TANF and SNAP Employment & Training or public housing.

**4. Life Decisions**

- 4.1 Consider which educational path is a good match for your desired goals.
- 4.2 Compare jobs and career paths that will help you reach your desired goals.
- 4.3 Consider the many effects of significant relationships on desired goals (both positive and negative).
- 4.4 Consider the many effects of becoming a parent on desired goals (both positive and negative).
- 4.5 List the characteristics of quality childcare and the steps to locating it in your area.
- 4.6 Consider the risks (sexting, online predators, cyber-bullying, sharing personal information) and benefits of using social media, including the potential long term consequences some online activities may have on obtaining employment
- 4.7 Consider the potential consequences of criminal activity before and after leaving foster care on desired goals, which may result in potential loss of DFPS services or benefits, fewer placement options, limited employment or housing options, and U.S. military exclusion.

**5. Organizational Skills**

- 5.1 Explore tools for time management and keeping track of multiple responsibilities and obligations.
- 5.2 List ways to organize and safeguard important documents.
- 5.3 Describe ways and reasons to keep personal information secure.

**6. Your Child's Plan of Service (CPOS)**

- 6.1 Describe the process of setting goals and making action plans.
- 6.2 Discuss transition planning options (Circles of Support and permanency conferences).
- 6.3 Review the Child's Plan of Service document.
- 6.4 Discuss goals during each core element.
- 6.5 Discuss family connections and the options for and risks involved in reconnecting.

## **Personal and Social Relationships**

**Goal**

To facilitate training that will promote positive peer relationships, develop appropriate communications skills, help youth to develop a sense of culture and respect for others, and build positive self-esteem.

**Desired Outcomes**

- a) Practice developing and experiencing positive peer relationships.
- b) Be aware of appropriate communication skills.
- c) Develop respect for culture and ethnic diversity.
- d) Understand self-esteem and personal strengths.

- e) Know the warning signs of violence.
- f) Understand what domestic violence resources are available and how to access them when needing help.

**Minimum hours required in class: 5**

**Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2)**

1. Have a discussion with someone of a different culture or ethnicity and find out what is unique to him or her.
2. Describe similarities and differences between your culture or ethnicity and another person's and how these can affect your relationship.
3. List five positive self-talk statements and practice them for one week.
4. Teach a conflict resolution skill to a caretaker, peer, or sibling and discuss situations where it would work well.
5. Practice using new conflict resolution skills to resolve a conflict.

**Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline**

**1. Interpersonal Relationships**

- 1.1 List different relationships at home, school, and work and the skills needed to interact effectively in those relationships.
- 1.2 Discuss and identify personal boundaries and the importance of respect for personal space.
- 1.3 Identify characteristics of and practice forming positive relationships.
- 1.4 Describe the characteristics of a healthy partner relationship and the importance of making healthy choices.

**2. Communication**

- 2.1 Explain the importance of communication in relationships.
- 2.2 Identify how people communicate (verbal vs. non-verbal) and learn to recognize messages that non-verbal communication sends.
- 2.3 Identify the characteristics of active listening. Practice active listening.
- 2.4 Compare formal language, informal language, and slang and describe the appropriate situations for each.
- 2.5 Identify ways to express thoughts, ideas, anger, emotions, and opinions in a healthy manner.
- 2.6 List and practice conflict resolution strategies.

**3. Culture**

- 3.1 Define and discuss cultural and ethnic diversity.
- 3.2 Discuss ways and reasons to respect cultural differences.

**4. Self-Esteem**

- 4.1 Define self-esteem.
- 4.2 Identify traits of healthy self-esteem.
- 4.3 Identify the effects of positive self-talk vs. negative self-talk.
- 4.4 Identify ways to build positive self-esteem.

## 5. Anger Management

- 5.1 Explain when anger can be a healthy emotion.
- 5.2 Define the term de-escalation.
- 5.3 Tell examples of appropriately and inappropriately expressed anger.
- 5.4 List the warning signs of violence toward oneself and of violence toward others.
- 5.5 List resources for getting help with violence.

## 6. Paperwork

- 6.1 Take the ACLSA and participate in a discussion of how it can help build an action plan for improving life skills.
- 6.2 Participate in a discussion about DFPS benefits for eligible and qualifying transitioning youth, how those benefits may be accessed and what they may be used for.
- 6.3 Participate in the formation of class expectations and rules (group norms).
- 6.4 Agree on group norms.

# Life Skills Independent Study Guide

Per [10223](#) *Life Skills Independent Study Guide*:

PAL staff must pre-approve requests for a youth and caregiver to use the Life Skills Independent Study

Guide independently instead of attending Life Skills training. PAL staff must also approve credit for completing any or all of the six core areas of PAL life skills using the guide.

Some reasons PAL staff may approve independent study may be that:

- A youth is a danger to him or herself or others;
- A youth's medical condition prevents formal training class attendance;
- No formal training classes will be provided before a youth's planned discharge from foster care; and
- Funding is not available for youth who are in non-paid substitute care.

## PAL Life Skills Training Refusal

Per [10222](#) Life Skills Training:

PAL staff will make efforts to offer youth the opportunity to participate in PAL Life Skills training. If a youth decides to decline these services, PAL staff or caseworker will ask youth to sign the refusal letter [FORM 2546](#) and explain the consequences of not participating in the training.

If a youth refuses to sign the letter, then PAL staff or caseworker will note the date they spoke to the youth and when the youth declined, on the youth signature line.

For youth age 17 and older in care who refuse to participate in training (including youth in Extended Care), PAL Staff should contact the youth every three months from the refusal date to offer the opportunity to participate in PAL Life Skills Training.

## Optional PAL Services

See:

[10220](#) Required Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Services.

[10230](#) Optional Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Services.

Before using available funds for optional PAL services, staff fully explores other funding options and determines that no other options exist. If funds are available, and it is determined that one or some of these services will meet the individual youth or young adult's needs, PAL staff may provide or arrange for any of the following optional services to be provided to eligible youth or young adults:

- Group and individual counseling to address issues of separation, preparation for placement, emancipation, and interpersonal relationships;
- Specialized camps to promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, and other strengths and skills necessary for a successful adulthood (activities may include ropes courses, canoeing, expressive arts, swimming, nature hikes, drama skits and journal writing);
- Incentives for youth to attend PAL Life Skills training sessions at a fee that does not exceed \$5 per session;
- Snacks at PAL training sessions;
- Vocational assessments, training, and supplies;
- Preparatory classes and testing fees for a General Educational Development (GED) Test or for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT);
- Fees for tutoring, college application, and other special educational services and supplies.
- Fees for summer school (as needed for a youth to progress in school);
- Graduation expenses (examples: caps, gowns, senior rings);

- Tuition, fees, and books for college or vocational school, not provided by the Tuition Fee Waiver or Education and Training Voucher and not to exceed a maximum amount of \$1,000;
- Driver’s education course fees, Texas Driver’s License (TDL) or Personal Identification Certificate issued by Texas Department of Public Safety unless waived;
- Support and coordination of the mentor program and activities to assist youth in preparing for adulthood (activities may include financial literacy, college enrollment, or relationship development);
- Modified or customized equipment such as communication devices or adaptive devices;
- Independent living supplies and household supplies, such as alarm clocks, luggage, first aid kits, calculators, sheets, towels, and cooking utensils for youth who are moving to an independent living setting;
- Emergency personal needs such as eyeglasses that are needed for employment, housing, or education purposes; and
- PAL age-appropriate activities and training for youth who are ages 14 and 15. Activities may include regional conferences or college tours.

## Payment Limits for the PAL Transitional Living Allowance

Refer to [10242](#) Payment Limits for the PAL Transitional Living Allowance.

The maximum allowance amount for eligible young adults should not exceed the following criteria:

Maximum Total Allowance	...for a young adult who...
\$500	enters the Job Corps or a branch of the United States armed forces.
\$500	is in or is moving to a supervised or semi-supervised living arrangement in which another source funds room and board expenses. The funds may be used for independent living needs or adaptive equipment or devices as needed.
\$1,000	is moving into a living situation that requires the youth to pay rent or contribute financially toward rent. The amount of the participant’s rent or contribution must be evidenced by a written agreement between the participant and the landlord.

Maximum Total Allowance	...for a young adult who...
\$1,000	is attending school or college or is receiving vocational or pre-vocational training services other than Job Corps or a branch of the United States armed forces.

## PAL Aftercare Room and Board

See [10250](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Aftercare Room and Board.

### PAL Aftercare Room and Board Limitations While Receiving ETV

If a young adult is in the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program, the ETV program must provide funds for room and board primary expenses before any PAL Aftercare Room and Board funds are used. PAL funds are not considered as a source of income for the ETV program, since young adults are not guaranteed to receive these funds.

See the following:

[10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

[Expenses Covered by ETV](#) in this Resource Guide.

### PAL Aftercare Room and Board Limitations While in Extended Foster Care

While a young adult is in an extended foster care placement, he or she is not eligible for Aftercare Room and Board assistance, since these services are paid for through the Extended Foster Care program.

See [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older.

### Allowable Expenditures and Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board

Refer to [10254](#) Allowable Expenditures and Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board. Only allowable expenditures may be paid. These are:

- Rent deposits.
- Rent payments.
- Utility deposits.
- Utility payments (electric, gas, water, phone).
- Food.

- Residential housing deposits or payments at college (there cannot be duplication of funds from another source, such as ETV funds, as described in *Expenses Covered by ETV* in this Resource Guide, and in [10240](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Transitional Living Allowance (TLA).
- Financial compensation up to \$350 per month to host homes (see [10256](#) Host Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment).

## Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board

Refer to [10255](#) Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board.

## Gradual Decrease of PAL Aftercare Payments

The case manager works with the young adult on budgeting and financial management, to reduce her or his dependency on the PAL Aftercare Room and Board assistance once the assistance is no longer available. The amount of monthly PAL Aftercare Room and Board payments decreases as the young adult increasingly takes on more financial responsibility.

## Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment

Refer to [10256](#) Host Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment.

Individuals providing a host home may include a former foster parent, a former teacher, a church member or a relative. The term host home does not include the young adult's parent's home.

The individual providing the host home serves as the young adult's life coach and mentor. The individual providing the host home and the young adult mutually agree upon rules and expectations while the young adult is living in the home. Host home payments must not exceed \$350 per month.

## Planning How Long the Youth Should Stay in the Host Home

The individual providing the host home and the young adult must discuss the time frame for the young adult to stay with the host. They should take into consideration that early depletion of the \$3000 cap may not be in the young adult's best interest, since the young adult may need future financial assistance before reaching age 21.

## National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

See [10260](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Data Entry and its sub-items.

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) gives flexible funding to states to assist youth and young adults in transitioning to a successful adulthood. The law also requires the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to:

- Develop a data collection system to track the independent living services provided to youth and young adults; and
- Develop outcomes that measure states’ success in preparing youth and young adults for their transition to a successful adulthood.

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data collection system was created to meet this requirement.

NYTD has federal standards for data reporting. If Texas does not meet these standards, it may be assessed a penalty from one to five percent of the annual State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) allotment for the reporting period for which data was supposed to be submitted. This allotment does not include Education Training Vouchers (ETV) funds. The standards include the following:

- Meet the file submission and data standards;
- Meet the standard for the participation rate for youth in foster care and for discharged youth or young adults;
- Provide full or partial outcome survey information on all young adults ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population or sample, or indicate why the survey information was not obtainable;
- Have participation in the outcomes survey from at least 60 percent of young adults, ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population, who are no longer in foster care; and
- Have participation in the outcomes survey from at least 80 percent of young adults, ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population, who are still in foster care.

## Key NYTD Terms

Term	Definition
Served population	Any youth or young adult who received even one NYTD-defined independent living service paid for or provided by DFPS during the reporting period.
Survey (baseline) population	Any youth who was in foster care at some point during the 45 days after his or her 17th birthday for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 or every third FFY following FFY 2011, such as 2014, 2017, 2020. Foster care is defined in <a href="#">45 CFR 1355.20</a> .

Term	Definition
Follow-up (selected) population	Young adults ages 19 and 21 who participated in the outcomes survey as part of the baseline population. In Texas, the follow-up population is determined by a random selection of young adults who, as a part of the baseline population, participated in the outcomes survey.
Reporting period	Each year is made up of two six-month reporting periods based on the federal fiscal year. The first reporting period (A) is from October 1st to March 31st and the second reporting period (B) is from April 1st to September 30th.
NYTD baseline year	The initial baseline year started October 1, 2010. Subsequent baseline years are every three years thereafter.

## National Youth in Transition (NYTD) Independent Living Services

For the purposes of NYTD, an independent living service falls within one of the categories of service as specified in [45 CFR 1356.83](#) (g)(20) thru (33), that are paid for or provided by the State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) agency, regardless of the manner in which it is delivered.

### National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Survey

In Texas, there are several ways the youth or young adult can complete the survey. One way is through the [Texas Youth Connection](#) website. The youth can register on this website and access a NYTD survey portal. The youth can also use this portal to update his or her contact information as it changes.

If the youth cannot complete the survey through the online method, there are other ways PAL staff can help the youth complete the survey. PAL staff are designated as proxy for the youth or young adult when they enter the youth or young adult's responses into the survey. See [Completing a NYTD Survey for a Youth – Instructions](#), in this guide.

The survey may also be completed by:

- Mailing a paper survey to the youth or young adult to complete;
- The youth or young adult completing the survey in the PAL office or any other location; and
- Phoning the youth or young adult and completing the survey over the phone ME Reporting Status.

## Outcome Reporting Status

See [10264.2](#) Outcome Reporting Status

If data is not entered timely, the reporting status in the system ~~becomes~~ will show as “LATE.” PAL staff is required to select one of the following *Outcome Reporting Status* options to explain why the survey was not completed:

- Youth Declined;
- Parent Declined;
- Youth Incapacitated;
- Youth Incarcerated;
- Runway/Missing; or
- Unable to Locate/Invite.

## Designating a National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Primary Contact

If a youth completes a baseline survey at age 17, the youth needs a designated NYTD contact. Having a designated NYTD contact ensures that DFPS has a way to contact the youth in the future, to take the follow-up survey if he or she is part of the random selection. At the time of the NYTD follow-up survey, the young adult may be out of care and contacted through the NYTD Designated Contact person listed in IMPACT.

## Impact Data and Information Alerts

Federal law requires states to collect and report the information needed on each eligible youth or young adult for the NYTD survey, using what is defined as a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). In Texas, IMPACT fits that definition. An alert system in IMPACT notifies PAL staff when they need to update information on the youth or young adult for NYTD purposes.

The federal government has standards regarding an error rate for the states to be in compliance with the NYTD survey. On the IMPACT *NYTD List* page, if there are errors that need to be corrected, a double dash (= equal sign) appears in the column in the child’s row under *Data or Information*.

Data and Information Alerts indicate errors that PAL staff, and possibly the conservatorship caseworker, need to correct.

## Information (Info) Alerts

Information (Info) alerts are about the youth or young adult's contact information. These messages may be:

- Youth or young adult does not have a designated individual for purposes of future contact;
- Youth or young adult does not have a current primary telephone number;
- Youth or young adult does not have a current mailing address; or
- Youth or young adult does not have a current primary email address.

## Data Alerts

Data alerts are messages that information about the youth or young adult is out of date or not in the system. These messages may be:

- Education record is more than 12 months old;
- Education record is missing;
- Youth or young adult survey status is late and there is not an outcome reporting status;
- Date of birth is missing;
- Youth or young adult's sex is missing or is recorded as unknown;
- Youth or young adult's race is missing; or
- Youth or young adult's ethnicity is missing.

## Special Populations

### Reporting NYTD Services on Youth from a Different State (ICPC)

DFPS reports to NYTD any independent living services that DFPS provides to youth who move to Texas from another state. DFPS reports the youth or young adult's basic demographics and characteristics along with the services he or she received.

If IMPACT gives a data error on a youth or young adult from out-of-state, the PAL contract provider may be able to provide the information needed to fix the data error.

If PAL staff cannot obtain the information to fix the data error, staff emails the PAL program specialist in state office and includes:

- The youth or young adult's name;
- Date of birth;

- The state where the youth or young adult is from; and
- The missing required information.

It is possible for a single youth or young adult to be in more than one state’s served population. If two states serve the same youth or young adult during the same reporting period, both states report on all the relevant data elements for the particular youth or young adult, including basic demographics, characteristics, and independent living services received.

## Reporting on Youth in Placement with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

DFPS is required to survey youth or young adults who would not otherwise be provided a PAL service because they are in a Title IV-E placement (receiving Title IV-E foster care maintenance payments) with Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) or county juvenile probation department.

To meet the survey requirement during a baseline year, a TJJD youth is assigned a PAL stage if the youth is age 17 - and does not currently have a PAL stage. There are an estimated 50-60 youth who fall into this category during a baseline survey year.

All of the youth appear under the *Region* drop down list when staff selects *State Office* on the IMPACT NYTD *List* page but are assigned to the lead PAL staff in the county where the most recent legal action was taken regarding the youth or young adult’s status.

## Completing a NYTD Survey for a Youth – Instructions

### Using the NYTD List Page

Pre-Condition	From the NYTD list page
Step 1:	Change the display to those that you need (all, region or just assigned to you)
Step 2:	Change the population type to Survey
Step 3:	Click to remove the Display Urgent checkmark
Step 4:	Click the Status hyperlink to display the NYTD page
Step 5:	Click the Type hyperlink (Base) to display the survey
Step 6:	On the survey, type the date or select it from the calendar icon
Step 7:	Select a Method

<b>Pre-Condition</b>	<b>From the NYTD list page</b>
Step 8:	Type the amount to time spent in the Interview Length box
Step 9:	Check the Special Accommodation box if applicable
Step 10:	Click on answers for each question
Step 11:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the survey is complete, click Submit Completed Survey</li> <li>• If the survey is NOT complete, click Save and Return Later</li> </ul>
Note:	See printing instructions if you want to print the survey.

## Using Your Workload

<b>Pre-Condition</b>	<b>From your workload</b>
Step 1:	Click the stage name hyperlink.
Step 2:	Click the NYTD second level tab.
Step 3:	Click the Type hyperlink (Base) to display the survey.
Step 4:	On the survey, type the date or select it from the calendar icon.
Step 5:	Select a method.
Step 6:	Type the amount of time spent in the Interview Length box.
Step 7:	Check the Special Accommodation box if applicable.
Step 8:	Click on answers for each question.
Step 9:	If the survey is complete, click Submit Completed Survey.
Notes:	See printing instructions if you want to print the survey.

# Overview of NTTD Program Timeline

SERVED	2nd FOLLOW-UP	2nd FOLLOW-UP	BASELINE	Reporting Periods
			(1A) 17 year olds	10/01/10
			(1B) 17 year olds	03/31/11
			Report 5/15/11	04/01/11
			Fix 6/30/11	09/30/11
			Report 11/14/11	10/01/11
			Fix 12/31/11	03/31/12
				04/01/12
				09/30/12
			(1A) 19 year olds	10/01/12
			(1B) 19 year olds	03/30/13
			Report 5/15/13	04/01/13
			Fix 6/30/13	09/30/13
			Report 11/14/13	10/01/13
			Fix 12/31/13	03/31/14
			(2A) 17 year olds	04/01/14
			(2B) 17 year olds	09/30/14
			Report 5/15/14	10/01/14
			Fix 6/30/14	03/31/15
			Report 11/14/14	04/01/15
			Fix 12/31/14	09/30/15
			(1A) 21 year olds	10/01/15
			(1B) 21 year olds	03/31/16
			Report 5/15/15	04/01/16
			Fix 6/30/15	09/30/16
			Report 11/14/15	10/01/16
			Fix 12/31/15	03/31/16
			(2A) 19 year olds	04/01/16
			(2B) 19 year olds	09/30/16
			Report 5/15/16	10/01/16
			Fix 6/30/16	03/31/17
			Report 11/14/16	04/01/17
			Fix 12/31/16	09/30/17
			(3A) 17 year olds	10/01/17
			(3B) 17 year olds	03/31/18
			Report 5/15/17	04/01/18
			Fix 6/30/17	09/30/18
			Report 11/14/17	10/01/18
			Fix 12/31/17	03/31/18
			(2B) 21 year olds	04/01/18
			Report 5/15/18	09/30/18
			Fix 6/30/18	10/01/18
			Report 11/14/18	03/31/19
			Fix 12/31/18	04/01/19
			(3A) 19 year olds	09/30/19
			(3B) 19 year olds	10/01/19
			Report 5/15/19	03/31/19
			Fix 6/30/19	04/01/19
			Report 11/14/19	09/30/19
			Fix 12/31/19	10/01/19
			(4A) 17 year olds	03/31/20

1<sup>st</sup> NYTD Baseline: Turning 17 October 2010-April 2011  
 Following in their 19th and 21<sup>st</sup> year: 2012/2013 & 2014/2015

1st NYTD Baseline: Turning 17 October 2010 – April 2011  
 Following in their 19th and 21st year 2012/2013 & 2014/2015

2nd NYTD Baseline: Turning 17 October 2013-April 2014  
 Following in their 19th and 21st year 2015/2016 & 2017/2018

Group 3 and so on

# Post-Secondary Education Programs

## College Tuition and Fee Exemption

See [10310](#) College Tuition and Fee Exemption Information.

The college tuition and fee exemption program is a state law that exempts payment of tuition and fees at state supported colleges or universities for foster youth currently or formerly in DFPS conservatorship and for those adopted from DFPS.

Refer to the [College Tuition and Fee Waiver website](#) for more information about the College Tuition Exemption, including eligibility criteria.

Each state-supported educational institution is responsible for applying the College Tuition and Fee Exemption, and each institution has its own appeals processes that the student must follow if a college denies the tuition or fee exemption.

The [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) ensures that each Texas state-supported educational institution is in compliance with the college tuition and fee exemption requirements.

This exemption covers fees required for educational purposes but does not cover items such as parking or other optional fees.

Both the college tuition and fee exemption and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds are used to determine need for the cost of attendance (COA) at state-supported higher education institutions.

## Temporary Housing Assistance between Academic Terms

See [10312](#) Temporary Housing Assistance Between Academic Terms.

Texas's public higher education institutions are required to assist young adults formerly in DFPS conservatorship in locating temporary housing between academic terms (such as summer and Christmas holiday breaks). PAL staff may inform youth and young adults of this housing assistance during PAL life skills training classes.

### Eligible Young Adults

Young adults eligible for temporary housing assistance must have been in DFPS conservatorship before the student's:

- 18th birthday; or
- Date of legal emancipation.

## Additional Requirements

The young adult must:

- Be a full-time student in the semester preceding the housing need;
- Be registered or have started the required enrollment actions as a full-time student for the immediate next semester period following the housing accommodation;
- Lack other reasonable temporary housing alternatives; and
- Request the housing assistance.

## How Schools Can Help with Summer and Christmas Breaks

The school may assist students with making housing arrangements by providing a list of available housing resources within the community or by referring students to other resources or community partners that offer housing assistance.

If the student demonstrates a financial need, the school may open up student housing such as dormitories, university-owned apartments or other campus housing, or provide a stipend to cover reasonable costs for temporary housing. Schools aren't required to provide these options, so the housing choices provided to the student will vary depending on the specific school's practice.

If a student receives a stipend for housing assistance, this does not prohibit the student from receiving additional stipends in one or more later academic periods. If a student receives a stipend for housing assistance, it will not affect her or his ability to apply for or receive funds from the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program, or to receive other similar academic assistance.

Institutions of Higher Education are defined in the Education Code [§61.003](#) as public and include:

- Technical institutes;
- Junior colleges;
- Four year or senior colleges or universities;
- Medical or dental school units; and
- State colleges.

## Where to Request Housing Assistance

Campus offices vary at each school of higher education. Examples of campus offices where students may inquire about housing assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Financial aid offices;
- Student affairs offices;
- Admissions offices;
- Housing and residential living offices; and

- Student ombudsperson.

Young adults are also encouraged to research each school's website to locate the appropriate campus housing office.

## The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

See [10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program and its sub-items.

The federal Chafee ETV program provides financial assistance to youth and young adults in post-secondary and vocational or technical programs. Eligible youth or young adults may receive up to \$5,000 per year but can only participate in the program for 5 years, e.g. up to 15 semesters, either consecutive or not consecutive.

The ETV program is federally funded, and all federal law and policy must be followed.

42 U.S.C. [§677](#)

40 TAC [§700.1613](#)

Interested youth and young adults can apply to the ETV program at the Baptist Child and Family Services ([BCFS](#)) [Texas Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\) Program](#) website.

### Eligibility

#### Students in DFPS Care or Formerly in DFPS Care Who Are Eligible for the ETV Program

Refer to the DFPS [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\)](#) website for ETV eligibility criteria.

### Others who are Eligible for the ETV Program

#### Texas Juvenile Justice and Probation

A student may be eligible, if he or she:

- Was in the custody of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJJD), or under the jurisdiction of a local juvenile probation department;
- Was in a Title IV-E placement and receiving Title IV-E payments the day before the student turned age 18.

The DFPS Federal/State Support unit must confirm that the student was in a Title IV-E placement and that the student's care was paid for with Title IV-E funds.

## Tribal Students

See [10322](#) Staff Responsible for the ETV Program, under Tribal Students.

## Scholastic Eligibility Criteria for the ETV Program

In addition to meeting the general criteria for the ETV Program, students must be enrolled in an institution of higher education and meet one of the following criteria:

- The student has either earned a high school diploma or the equivalent of a high school diploma, or is exempt from compulsory school attendance, according to Texas Education Code [§25.086\(a\)\(6\)\(A\)](#).  
OR
- The student is enrolled in a dual-credit course or other course at an institution of higher education for which the student will earn both a high school diploma and college credit.

Participation in the ETV program means that a student has applied for and been approved for the ETV program.

## Eligibility for the ETV Program Based on Citizenship and Immigration

See 10323.1 Citizenship and Immigration.

Undocumented students are not eligible for the ETV program because the program is federally funded and considered to be a federal public benefit.

Once a student obtains the status of lawful permanent resident, or another qualified alien status as defined by 8 U.S.C. §1641, he or she may apply for the ETV program, if the student:

- Is still under age- 23; and
- Otherwise, qualifies for the ETV program.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policies

Once a student turns 21, the student must meet the school's SAP policy for Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) for federal financial aid (such as Pell grants).

A school's SAP policies may include that the student:

- Maintain a certain grade point average;
- Meet a pace/completion rate; and
- Be within a maximum amount of attempted hours as determined by the school.

The student is responsible for knowing the school's SAP policy. This information may be found on the school's website or acquired from the school's registrar's office.

If a student is not meeting his or her school's SAP policy, the student is not eligible for ETV; however, once the student complies with the school's policy, the student can reapply for ETV, if the student complies before turning 21.

Although the ETV application is for the school year, ETV staff may request additional supporting documents before making an ETV payment **each** school term or semester. ETV staff requests these supporting documents to ensure that the school considers the student to be in compliance with the school's SAP policies and therefore eligible for Title IV-E HEA funds.

If the school has denied Title IV-E HEA funds to the student and the student is appealing to the school, ETV staff determines if the student will receive ETV funds after the school makes a decision on the student's appeal.

If the student's federal financial aid is reinstated, the student can reapply for ETV funds, if the student still meets all other ETV participation requirements.

### **Minimum Credit Hours for the ETV Program**

To be eligible for the ETV program, a student must take:

- A *minimum* of six semester hours in college; or
- The vocational equivalent of six hours during the school term.

Students attending college during the summer may split the required six semester hours between two summer sessions.

If the student is enrolled in a dual-credit course or other course for the purpose of earning a joint high school diploma and college credit, the required six semester hours may be waived as long as the student is attending high school full time.

Students must comply with a school's financial aid probations or warnings to continue to qualify for the ETV program.

### **Financial Aid Probation or Warnings for Students in the ETV Program Under Age 21**

A student who is under age 21 may continue to qualify for the ETV program while on financial aid probation or after receiving a financial aid warning, if the student:

- Is still attending school; and
- Is complying with the school's policies on financial aid probation or financial aid warnings.

This allows the student to improve his or her grade-point average (GPA) while still receiving ETV services.

## Age 21 or Older

To receive ETV funds, a student who is age 21 or older must be in compliance with his or her school's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy for Title IV HEA federal financial aid (such as Pell grants).

If the school's policy allows a student who is on financial aid probation or warning to continue receiving Title IV HEA funds, the student may receive ETV funds; however, ETV staff may request additional documentation to ensure that the student is in compliance with the school's policies.

## Moving to Another State to Attend School While Participating in the ETV Program

A student may move to another state and still be eligible for the ETV program funded by DFPS, if:

- The student was already receiving ETV funds while living in Texas; and
- The student's sole purpose for moving out of state is to attend school.

## Schools That Students Must Attend to Qualify for the ETV Program

Students receiving ETV funding are allowed to use the funding to attend an accredited or pre-accredited, nonprofit, private or public institution of higher education that:

- Offers a bachelor's degree, or not less than a two-year program that provides credit toward a degree or certification;
- Offers not less than a one-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation; or
- Exists for at least two years and provides training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

20 U.S.C. [§§1001, 1002](#)

An institution is granted pre-accreditation status, if an accrediting agency or association recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education receives satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet accreditation standards within a reasonable time.

The [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) is the accrediting agency in Texas.

## Enrolling in Correspondence, Distance Education, or Continuing Education Courses

If a correspondence course, distance education course, or continuing education course is offered by one of the institutions of higher education described in [Schools That Students Must Attend to Qualify for the ETV Program](#) (in this Resource Guide), the student interested in the course must contact ETV staff for approval before applying.

Contacting ETV staff beforehand ensures that the courses are part of the student's academic degree or certificate program. Some schools may not include these courses in their costs of attendance. If the courses are not included in the costs of attendance, ETV funds cannot be used to pay for the courses.

## Applying for the ETV Program

See [10324](#) Applying for the ETV Program.

Before applying to the ETV program, the student submits a [Free Application for Federal Assistance \(FAFSA\)](#) to determine which federal student aid programs the student may be eligible for. Students must submit a renewal FAFSA each year that they enroll in school.

Students or staff may call 1-877-268-4063 to talk to ETV staff for information or assistance.

A student is not required to submit a FAFSA if he or she is enrolled in a dual-credit college course at an institution of higher education for which the student will earn both a high school diploma and college credit.

Students may also be eligible for other state and federal grants and scholarships. See [College for All Texans](#).

## Required Supporting Documents

At a minimum, the student must submit with the application:

- A copy of [Form 1016](#) DFPS Verification of ETV Eligibility signed by the appropriate staff person, as explained in the form (see [10322](#) Staff Responsible for the ETV Program – Assistance with the ETV Application), or, when applicable, a signed copy of [Form 1810](#) College Tuition and Fee Waiver Letter;
- A copy of a current financial aid award letter or packet (or a denial letter, if applicable), or a billing statement from a vocational training program;
- A printout of the class schedule for the current semester or academic term (fall, spring, or summer); and
- Verification from the school showing that the student is enrolled in the minimum number of required credit hours and the student's classification.

## Submitting Other Documents after Being Approved for the ETV Program

Once a student is approved for the ETV program, additional documents are required, including:

- The Consent for Release of Information form, signed and dated by the student;
- A Participant Agreement signed and dated by the student;
- A payment form, and supporting documents, if applicable (as explained in About the Payment Form, directly below); and
- A current budget worksheet (as explained in About the Budget Worksheet, below).

The student can obtain these forms from ETV contractor staff.

## About the Payment Form

A student completes a payment form provided by ETV staff to indicate whether to send the ETV funds to:

- A specific vendor (such as a landlord, utility company, or bookstore); or
- Directly to the student.

If the student directs ETV staff to send the funds to a vendor, the student must:

- Include supporting documentation with the payment form (such as a lease agreement, utility bill, or bookstore invoice); and
- Complete and sign the [Consent for Release of Information](#) for the ETV program.

For expenses that are paid directly to a vendor, first- and second-year students must submit supporting documentation with the payment form.

See [10326.3](#) When Students Are Paid ETV Funds.

Students are not required to submit or keep receipts for purchases.

## About the Budget Worksheet

All students are required to submit a budget worksheet:

- After the initial ETV application is approved; and
- After submitting an updated application.

A budget worksheet explains the reasonable estimated or projected basic living or school expenses that the student is allowed to incur during each school term. An estimated expense on the budget worksheet is considered reasonable if it is fairly close to the expense amount established by the school's cost-of-attendance policy.

The student must submit a completed and signed ETV application (initial or updated) with the budget worksheet and other required documentation. Failure to submit the completed application may result in:

- The student's participation in the ETV program being delayed or denied; or
- Delayed disbursement of ETV checks to either the student or the specified vendors.

## Continued Eligibility Requirements after Initial ETV Qualification

To remain eligible for the ETV program, a student must provide ETV staff with the documents listed in [10325](#) Continued Eligibility Requirements after Initial ETV Qualification.

Students under age 21 who are on financial aid probation or have received a financial aid warning may continue to receive ETV funds if they:

- Attend school at least six hours per semester; or
- Meets the school's policies concerning financial aid probation or financial aid warnings, whichever is appropriate.

If a student drops out of school or is placed on academic suspension and cannot attend or re-enroll in school for the period of time determined by the school, ETV funds stop until the student:

- Re-enrolls and is accepted by the school;
- Submits a new or updated ETV application and other documentation; or
- Is approved to participate in the ETV program.

## Determining and Disbursing ETV Funds

See [10326](#) Determining and Disbursing ETV Funds.

## The School's Determination of Financial Aid

Before ETV staff determines the amount of ETV funds the student can receive, the school must first determine how much financial aid the student will receive. The institution takes into consideration available scholarships, Pell grants, loans and other factors.

Ordinarily, one such factor considered by the institution is the expected family contribution (EFC). The EFC is a measure of a family's financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by law.

Schools use the EFC to help determine eligibility for federal student aid and financial aid awards; however, students who were or are in foster care after age 13 are considered independent students and do not have to provide information on family income. Instead, the student proves that he or she was in state foster care by submitting to the school either:

- [Form 1810](#) The College Tuition and Fee Waiver Letter.

- A signed letter from a caseworker or Preparation for Adult Learning (PAL) worker on DFPS letterhead that includes the student's Social Security number and the dates that the student was in DFPS foster care.

Once the school determines the amount of financial aid a student will receive, the school sends the student a financial award letter or package that details the amounts and sources of the aid.

The student submits the most recent financial award letter with the initial or updated ETV application every academic year that the student applies for ETV.

## **Cost of Attendance and DFPS's Determination of the Amount of ETV Funds**

Under federal law, DFPS is allowed to award ETV funds that cover only the cost of attendance (COA); that is, the estimated cost of a student's educational expenses for the period of enrollment as determined by the school the student is attending.

COA varies by school and includes:

- The tuition and fees charged by the institution; and
- Allowances for books, room and board, and other living expenses, based on the average cost of living in the area.

COAs at many post-secondary institutions are updated and posted annually on College for All Texans, the website for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (on the Home Page, select a student type, and then select [College Costs](#)). COAs are also posted on each university's or college's website.

When a student applies for the ETV program, DFPS factors in all of the funding sources identified on his or her financial aid letter or package (such as Pell grants, scholarships, and the state tuition and fee waiver) to determine whether the COA at the student's school will be covered.

If a student's funding sources cover the full COA, DFPS does not award ETV funds. If the student's COA is not fully paid or covered by the other funding sources, DFPS awards an ETV grant to pay for the remaining COA, up to \$5,000 per year.

## **PAL Program Funds**

DFPS does not use the funds a student may receive from the PAL program, such as Aftercare Room and Board funds and the PAL Transitional Living Allowance, to determine the amount of the ETV grant.

ETV funds are used before PAL funds can be used, if the student is eligible and ETV funds are available.

## Disbursing ETV Funds

ETV staff divides the ETV amount that the student receives by the number of school terms that the student will be attending for the next 12 months. The student indicates the number of school terms on the ETV application or re-application.

For example, if a student who is attending college is eligible for the full ETV award of \$5,000, ETV may issue half of the award (\$2,500) for the fall semester and issue the other \$2,500 for the spring semester.

Summer semester enrollments may be split between the two semesters, if the required six semester hours are being met.

Schools offer programs with many kinds of academic calendars that differ from the traditional fall-spring school year. Generally, a school term is a specific period of time in which classes are scheduled to begin and end.

## Students Who Turn 23

A student may remain eligible for the program until he or she turns age 23.

If a student turns age 23 during a college semester or a vocational school term, ETV staff prorates any school-related cost that spans the full semester or term, such as the costs of tuition or room and board prorated.

ETV staff does not prorate expense items included in the COA that are purchased and used before the student turns age 23, such as books and supplies. ETV staff considers these a one-time purchase.

## Expenses Covered By ETV

ETV funds may pay the following expenses, if they are included in the costs of attendance (COA) and are reasonable.

### ETV Expenses

- Housing - Housing includes dormitories, apartments, shared housing, or other housing. Housing costs may include mortgage payments, if the student owns the home and provides evidence of home ownership in his or her supporting documents.
- Utilities- Utility costs associated with the student's housing include water, electricity, gas, phone, and Internet connections.
- Room and board- Room and board includes host homes or single-room rentals that may or may not include meals and utilities, such as hotels or inns.
- Personal living expenses- Personal living expenses may include food, personal hygiene products, a low-cost cell phone, or cleaning products.

- Tuition and fees, if not already covered by the state college tuition and fee waiver.
- Books and school supplies (including the cost to rent or buy a computer, printer, and software).
- Dependent care or childcare.
- Transportation (see Transportation Expenses Covered by ETV Funding).
- Disability-related services and equipment.
- Medical insurance offered by the school.
- Other costs, as allowed by the school.

Other costs may include any expenses applicable to daily living and school attendance that do not apply to the other identified categories.

### **Transportation Expenses Covered by ETV Funding**

ETV funds may be used to pay for reasonable transportation expenses, as defined by the student's institution of higher education.

Reasonable transportation expenses may include:

- Bus fare;
- Taxi fare;
- The cost of gas;
- Campus parking fees;
- The purchase of a bicycle; or
- The expenses of operating or maintaining a vehicle that the student already owns and uses to transport the student to and from school and home.

ETV staff may limit the amount that a student may spend on certain costs of operating or maintaining a vehicle and may request additional information or documentation from the student or the school before allowing the expense to be covered.

Students may not use ETV funds to buy a vehicle.

### **Expenses Not Covered by the Costs of Attendance (COA)**

Certain costs are not included in a university's or college's costs of attendance (COA), such as the cost to buy specialized software needed for an engineering class.

In such cases, the student may contact the institution's financial aid office to discuss having the COA adjusted to reflect any additional expenses that were not previously covered at the time of enrollment. If an institution approves an increase in the COA and if the full amount of the ETV (\$5,000) was not initially awarded at the time of enrollment, the student may request that ETV staff adjust the COA.

The school must provide the student with written justification for an increase in the COA or provide a new financial aid letter reflecting the revised COA.

## Other Educational Resources

For a complete list of Texas institutions of higher education and for information on other state and federal grants and scholarships, see [College for All Texans](#).

The ETV program may also assist students who are interested in attending a career school or college, even if the program's duration is less than 12 months. For more information about career schools, see <https://www.twc.texas.gov/partners/career-schools-colleges-resources> [Career Schools & Colleges](#), on the Texas Workforce Commission site.

For a list of accredited schools and programs, see the U.S. Department of Education's [Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#).