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## Section 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction and Overview

The Department has the responsibility to help youth, in their care, develop into self-sufficient adults. In addition, all agencies and individuals who provide substitute parental care for youth, in their care, are charged with helping to ensure that their social, emotional, and intellectual development is achieved to each youth(s) highest potential.

The Department should ensure that all adults entrusted with the care of the state(s) youth demonstrate appropriate social behavior; respond properly to stressful situations; and promote good physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being. It is through the observation of positive adult behavior and through interaction with positive adult role models that youth develop and demonstrate positive attributes.

For all youth, in out of home care, at age 14 or older, the youth(s) caseworker is responsible for the following actions:

- a) Conducting an assessment of each youth(s) potential for eventual independence;
- b) Developing an appropriate learning/transition plan for securing and providing necessary services to assist each youth to achieve independence;
- c) Continuous reviewing and modifying of the learning/transition plan until the youth achieves his permanency goal; and
- d) Developing an age appropriate plan, within the learning/transition plan, for each youth that educates him/her about family planning, which includes information on pregnancy prevention, sexually transmitted infections, and other issues related to healthy sexual development; and
- e) If the youth self-identifies as being sexually active, the worker will develop a plan, within the learning/transition plan, of supportive counseling to work with him/her on issues of abstinence and healthy sexual development. This will be done in conjunction with the youth's MDT in all cases and including the biological parents if parental rights are intact.

## Section 2

### Assessment

#### 2.1 Life Skills Assessment

The Life Skills Assessment is a comprehensive assessment, designed to engage young people in their transition to adulthood, as they move from childhood into their teenage years. The assessment assists in determining life skills domains, deemed critical by youth and caregivers to assist youth transitioning to adulthood successfully. Some youth have special needs and challenges and additional assessment supplements are available to help these youth identify critical life skill needs.

Youth in foster care are required to complete a life skills assessment at the age of 14 or as soon as the youth enters foster care, if they are greater than 14 years old. A new life skills assessment is required to be completed by youth in foster care annually.

**2.1.1** The youths worker will do the following upon a youth's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday or upon a youth entering care at the age of 14 or older:

- a) Assures that each youth in a foster care placement completes the Life Skills Assessment and any needed Supplemental Assessments, no later than 30 days following his or her 14<sup>th</sup> birthday or within 30 days of entering foster care if the youth has already reached the age of 14 or older. The Life Skills Assessment may be provided in the following ways:
  1. Agency staff of foster care placement settings must provide the assessment to youth in their program within 30 days of the youth(s) 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. The results must be submitted to the youth(s) worker. The youth(s) worker must provide or ensure that the Department(s) foster/adoptive parents provide the Life Skills Assessment no later than 30 days following the youth(s) 14<sup>th</sup> birthday or entrance into care if the youth is already age 14. If the assessment is provided by the youth(s) foster/adoptive parents, the results must be submitted to the youth(s) worker.
  2. The youth(s) worker must ensure that the foster care agency staff or foster/adoptive parents provide the Life Skills Assessment to youth placed in their care within 30 days following the youth(s) 14<sup>th</sup> birthday or entrance into care if the youth is already age 14. The results must be submitted to the youth(s) worker.
- b) The youth(s) worker must ensure that the foster care agency staff or foster/adoptive parents perform the annual re-assessment of the Life Skills Assessment until the youth is discharged from foster care.
- c) The results of the assessment must be filed in the youth(s) case record and documentation of such is to be placed in FACTS on the youth transitioning screen and document tracking.

- d) The youth(s) worker, in collaboration with the youth(s) foster/adoptive parents or the foster care agency staff, must develop a personalized transition plan for each youth no later than 60 days following the youth(s) 14<sup>th</sup> birthday or entrance into foster care if the youth is already age 14 or older. The plan must specify the individual needs of each youth and the strategies planned for assuring his full developmental potential is achieved. The youth(s) learning/transition plan must be documented on the Youth Transitioning Screen in FACTS.
- e) The youth(s) worker must assure that a Learning/Transition Plan is developed based on the Life Skills Assessment for the youth. The youth's worker will utilize the Life Skills Guidebook to develop the Learning/Transition Plan.
- f) The youth(s) worker must ensure that the Learning/Transition Plan includes any life skills instruction based on the Life Skills Curriculum.
- g) The Youth's Learning/Transition Plan, which will include the youth's Life Skills Assessments, Learning Plan, Life Skills Instruction/Curriculum, as well as Transitional Services provided, must be incorporated into the Youth's Case Plan and a copy provided to the youth.
- h) The youth(s) worker must ensure that each Youth(s) Case Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis and that the plan is modified as needed to ensure the youth is progressing toward permanency and meeting the learning/transitioning plan.

**2.2 Life Skills Domains and Curriculum**

Foster/adoptive parents and foster care agency staff must use the Life Skills Curriculum as the formal instruction for each youth in care. This instruction must begin at the earliest possible age in which a youth appears ready, but in no case later than 60 days following the youth(s) 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. This instruction must be continuously and rigorously provided until the youth successfully completes each skill area needing improvement demonstrating they have achieved their highest potential.

The Life Skills Curriculum, for each youth, will be dependent upon the youth's needs. The learning topics may range from daily living skills to decision making and judgment skills.

The following is a list of **Life Skills Domains and Skill Areas** that will be addressed with the use of a variety of Life Skills Curriculum:

Domain	Skill Areas		
Career Planning:	<a href="#">Work Goals</a>	<a href="#">Employment</a>	<a href="#">Work _____ Place Communication</a>
Communication:	<a href="#">Personal Development</a>	<a href="#">Interpersonal Communication</a>	<a href="#">Relationships</a>

Daily Living:	<a href="#">Nutrition</a>	<a href="#">Menu Planning</a>	<a href="#">Grocery Shopping</a>
	<a href="#">Meal Preparation</a>	<a href="#">Dining</a>	<a href="#">Kitchen Clean Up &amp; Storage</a>
	<a href="#">Home Management</a>	<a href="#">Home Safety</a>	<a href="#">Beliefs About Money</a>
	<a href="#">Saving</a>	<a href="#">Banking &amp; Credit</a>	<a href="#">Budgeting/Spending Plan</a>
	<a href="#">Consuming</a>	<a href="#">Leisure Time</a>	<a href="#">Legal Issues</a>
Home Life:	<a href="#">Home Life</a>		
Housing & Money Management:	<a href="#">Housing</a>	<a href="#">Transportation</a>	<a href="#">Community Resources</a>
	<a href="#">Beliefs About Money</a>	<a href="#">Saving</a>	<a href="#">Income Tax</a>
	<a href="#">Banking &amp; Credit</a>	<a href="#">Budgeting/Spending Plan</a>	<a href="#">Consuming</a>
	<a href="#">Work Goals</a>		
Domain			
Self Care:	<a href="#">Personal Hygiene</a>	<a href="#">Health</a>	<a href="#">Alcohol, Drugs &amp; Tobacco</a>
	<a href="#">Sexuality</a>	<a href="#">Relationships</a>	
Social Relationships:	<a href="#">Personal Development</a>	<a href="#">Cultural Awareness</a>	<a href="#">Interpersonal Communication</a>
	<a href="#">Relationships</a>		
Work Life:	<a href="#">Work Life</a>		
Work & Study Skills:	<a href="#">Work Goals</a>	<a href="#">Employment</a>	<a href="#">Decision Making</a>
	<a href="#">Study Skills</a>		
American Indian:	<a href="#">Resources / Trust</a>	<a href="#">Money Values</a>	<a href="#">Spiritual / Religious Beliefs</a>
	<a href="#">Tribal Affiliations</a>	<a href="#">Family / Community Values</a>	<a href="#">Living in Two Worlds</a>
Parenting Infants:	<a href="#">Health</a>	<a href="#">Nurturing</a>	<a href="#">Nutrition</a>
	<a href="#">Child Care</a>	<a href="#">Safety &amp; Well-Being</a>	<a href="#">Child Growth and Development</a>

	<a href="#">Future / Goals</a>		
Parenting Young Children:	<a href="#">Health</a>	<a href="#">Nurturing</a>	<a href="#">Nutrition</a>
	<a href="#">Child Care</a>	<a href="#">Safety &amp; Well-Being</a>	<a href="#">Child Growth and Development</a>
	<a href="#">Future / Goals</a>		
Pregnancy:	<a href="#">Medical</a>	<a href="#">Daily Habits and Care</a>	<a href="#">Safety and Well-Being</a>
	<a href="#">Newborn Care</a>	<a href="#">Self Care Following Birth</a>	<a href="#">Expectant Father</a>

The life skill curriculum will be selected by the youth to address each of the domains identified in the youth's life skills assessment. Life skill curriculum must be available and easily accessible to the youth and must be provided to the youth in a manner that is not overwhelming to the youth. If the youth has several domains, which need to be addressed, then the youth may chose one or two domains to focus on at one time. Within those domains, the youth should only choose one to three skill areas to work on at one time. At no time should a youth be addressing more than two domains and one to three skill areas, within each of those domains.

A variety of life skill curriculum resources are available for use by youth to address each domain. Many life skill curriculum resources are available through the internet and are free of charge. Other life skill curriculum may be provided through utilizing community resources or by the youth receiving the instruction from a mentor, provider, foster parent or worker. Some life skill curriculum may be purchased and provided to the youth and worker.

Life skill curriculum resources available through the internet may be accessed at: [Life Skills Curriculum Resources](#)

## Section 3

### Case Plan

#### 3.1 Learning/Transition Plan

A Learning/Transition Plan is a guide that the youth and the youth's worker will use to determine the needed elements for the development of the life skill curriculum and the youth's transition to adulthood. An individual learning/transition plan may be based on selected learning goals and related expectations as the youth transitions to adulthood. **The youth must develop their own Transition/Learning Plan.**

The learning/transition plan is used to document the selected learning goals and activities the youth's worker and/or provider will use during life skill learning sessions and as the youth transitions to adulthood. Once completed the learning/transition plan will provide documentation of all of the youth's planned life skill instructions. Life skills instructions may be completed one-on-one or in a group and will be documented on the learning/transition plan. The learning/transition plan should indicate whether the life skill instruction was provided in a group setting or on a one-on-one basis.

**3.1.1** A youth's Transition/Learning Plan must be personalized for the youth, developed by the youth and contain specific information to assist the youth in their transition to adulthood.

Transition planning is a vital part of the youth's case plan. The plan should be developed as soon as the youth completes a life skill assessment, but must be completed when the youth turns 16 years old. The plan must be specific for the youth and contain information that will assist the youth in their successful transition to adulthood.

During transition planning for older youth, States must ensure that a consumer credit report is completed for each youth age 16 or older, who is in foster care, annually. The consumer credit report must be provided to the youth without cost. The State must also assure that the youth is provided assistance in interpreting the report and resolving any inaccuracies found.

**Since credit reporting agencies do not knowingly maintain credit files on minor children, if a file is found, it must be interpreted and all issues resolved prior to the youth leaving care.**

- a. The youth's worker must request a consumer credit report on all youth in foster care, annually, beginning when a youth turns 16 years old or enters foster care after the age of 16. The consumer credit report request must be submitted within 60 days of the youth turning 16 years old or entering foster care, if the youth is already 16 years of age. The following steps should be taken to obtain a youth's consumer credit report:
  1. The youth's worker will request a consumer credit report through the credit reporting agency [Trans Union's Child ID Theft](#) process via the internet.
  2. Once the consumer credit report check has been completed by [Trans Union](#), the worker will get either an e-mail indicating that there is no record for the youth or requesting additional information, which may indicate that a record has been found.
  3. If there is no record on the youth, the worker will document in the youth's transition plan and in FACTS that the credit report check has been completed. The worker should utilize Document Tracking in FACTS to show that the request has been made.
  4. The worker must provide the youth with information on consumer credit report checks and explain that the State is completing consumer credit report checks annually on them. The worker will explain that this is being done to protect their identity. If the youth needs additional information about consumer credit report or identity theft, the worker can make a referral to a credit counseling agency for the youth.
  5. If the credit reporting agency identifies a record for a youth, the issues must be resolved. The youth must be involved in the credit resolution process and educated on identity theft and how to resolve issues on consumer credit reports.
  6. The worker will assist the youth in resolving any identity theft issues or consumer credit report issues. The youth's attorney, Guardian ad Litem, or the DHHR Regional Attorney should assist in any resolution issues.
  7. The youth worker will submit a letter to the youth's attorney or Guardian ad Litem concerning the youth consumer credit report, if there are issues that need resolved. The letter should be scanned into the FACTS file cabinet and Document Tracked in FACTS.
  8. Any consumer credit report issues or identity theft issues must be documented in the youth's transition plan, as well as in FACTS. The report may be scanned and placed into the FACTS file cabinet or Document Tracking should be completed to indicate where the report has been placed.

- b.** The youth's worker and youth will update or revise the Transition/Learning Plan at least 90 days, prior to the youth turning 18 years old.
- c.** The plan must be personalized by the youth and must contain as much detailed information as the youth decides to incorporate into the plan.
- d.** The plan must contain the following specific information:
  - 1.** housing options and services,
  - 2.** employment services,
  - 3.** health insurance options,
  - 4.** mentor options,
  - 5.** work force options,
  - 6.** information concerning consumer credit report checks,
  - 7.** continuing support services,
  - 8.** health care directives and how to complete an "advance directive", when requested, (See Section 6.1.1, below, for further direction on advance directives)
  - 9.** any other information that the youth deems important.
- e.** The youth's worker must incorporate the Transition/Learning plan into the "Uniform Child or Family Case Plan" for CPS or Youth Services Family or Child Case Plan for Youth Services.

## Section 4

### Case Management

#### 4.1 Services

Youth transitioning often need a variety of services to aid their transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency. Some of these services are “paid” services, such as ASO Services or services paid for through demand payments. Many times youth transitioning from foster care receive services from individuals and community resources, which are “non-paid” services. Some of these services may be foster parents providing life skills training, HRDF (employment program) providing job skills training, tutoring provided by the educational facility, or mentoring by volunteer groups. Some youth may be receiving a service from one provider, that is “paid” and the same service, from a different provider that is “non-paid”, such as Tutoring. Example: A youth could be receiving tutoring from their school for free and also be receiving tutoring from a professional tutoring service that is paid.

When youth are receiving the same service, where one is paid and one is non-paid, both must be entered into the FACTS screens in the appropriate area.

Paid services must continue to be documented on the Services Screen in FACTS. Any non-paid transitioning services provided to a youth, regardless of the youth’s age, must be documented on the Services screen from the Transitioning Youth toolbar button in FACTS.

**4.1.1** Below is a list of services for Youth Transitioning:

- a)** Paid Transition Services include:
1. ASO Chafee Agency Transportation
  2. ASO Connection Visit
  3. ASO Tutoring
  4. Basic Home Management/Life Skills
  5. Education Funding
  6. Education Vocational
  7. Education/Career Planning
  8. Educational Advocacy
  9. Educational Assessment
  10. Educational Services
  11. Educational Supplies
  12. Employment Services
  13. Family Planning
  14. Financial Services
  15. Housing - Rent

16. Housing (Services)
17. IL Subsidies (Supervised Independent Living)
18. Medical Services
19. Parent Education and Training
20. Transportation (Routine)
21. Tutoring
22. Utilities
23. Vocational Testing/Counseling
- b) Non-paid Transition Services include:
  1. Academic Counseling
  2. Addiction Education
  3. Basic Home Management/Life Skills
  4. Career Planning
  5. Consumer Awareness
  6. Personal Identity Protection
  7. Education Funding
  8. Education Planning
  9. Education Supplies
  10. Education Vocational
  11. Educational Advocacy
  12. Educational Assessment
  13. Educational Services
  14. Employment Services
  15. Family Planning
  16. Financial Services
  17. GED Preparation & Support
  18. Health Education
  19. Healthy Relationship Education
  20. Homework & Study Skills Assistance
  21. Housing Education
  22. Literacy Training
  23. Mentoring
  24. Parent Education & Training
  25. Tutoring

26. Vocational Testing/Counseling
27. Youth Transitioning Transportation (YTT)

## 4.2 YOUTH TRANSITION SERVICE DEFINITIONS

**Academic Counseling:** Assisting youth in learning how to concentrate in class better, in discovering the reason for failing grades, the reason for not being able to study appropriately, the reason for not being able to concentrate in class and how to overcome these difficulties.

**Addiction Education:** Providing youth with information on programs and services to prevent substance use and abuse.

**ASO Chafee Agency Transportation:** This code may be utilized for providers' mileage encumbered when Child Protective Services Chafee Services have been implemented within the child/youth's home and the permanency plan is Independence and/or emancipation. If a provider is unable to deliver the identified service upon traveling to the home, this code may be billed up to three times within the ninety-two (92) day authorization period when the following conditions are met:

- a) The provider/agency has a policy and procedure regarding the expectations of the youth being served. The importance of keeping scheduled appointments, notifying the provider when an appointment needs to be cancelled and the means in which the DHHR will be notified if appointments are not kept are reviewed with the client(s).
- b) The provider/agency has a policy and procedure about notifying the Department regarding youth non-compliance with established scheduled appointments.
- c) There is documentation of the visit being scheduled within the case record.

Please note: the rate will be based upon the current State of West Virginia reimbursement rate.

**ASO Connection Visit:** These visits are face-to-face visits for the purposes of preserving the connections between children/youth who are in the custody of the DHHR and living in a foster family home, group home or who are college students living on campus with their siblings, relatives or former foster parents.

**ASO Tutoring:** Structured individualized or small group setting of three or less in which a child is taught or guided on an academic area to enhance skills to avoid failing a core educational requirement. Provider must have demonstrated competence in the area of academics being tutored. A high school diploma is required to provide this service to elementary school age children and an Associate's degree or higher for students in middle school or above. This service is time-limited and the child's academic functioning level/ability must be considered. Tutoring is to build upon a targeted academic skill in which the student has a documented deficit. Tutoring is not to be used for regular homework completion.

**Basic Home Management/Life Skills:** Providing youth with instruction to assist them in the upkeep of their home and in daily living. These basic skills may

include instruction in food preparation, laundry, housekeeping, living cooperatively, meal planning, grocery shopping, and basic maintenance and repairs to the home.

**Career Planning:** Assisting the youth in exploring career interests or options. Assistance may include using career resource libraries, interest inventories, job fairs, and other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Consumer Awareness:** Assisting youth in developing skills in comparative shopping, researching best products and buys, product safety and satisfaction, consumer rights, and other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Educational Advocacy:** Assisting the youth in obtaining the required services to complete their educational plan. Assistance may include: helping the youth maintain contact with school counselors, attendance counselors and social workers for needed services, assisting the youth in obtaining needed IEP services, assisting with problems with financial aid offices, billing offices, and enrollment offices, working with the school on any issue related to the youth's educational plan.

**Educational Assessment:** Providing an academic evaluation of the youth's academic achievements and areas needing improvements to determine the supports and services the youth may need to accomplish their educational plan/goals.

**Education/Career Planning:** Assisting the youth in exploring educational and/or career interest or options. Assistance may include using career resource libraries, interest inventories, job/college fairs, other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Education Funding:** Services provided to youth to assist them in obtaining a post-secondary educational goal, such as a college degree, or a program certification or licensure. Some of the assistance that may be provided for youth in the above programs is tuition and fees, room and board at schools, interim housing, and food.

**Education Planning:** Assisting the youth in exploring educational interests or options. Assistance may include using educational resource libraries, interest inventories, college fairs, other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Educational Services:** Assisting the youth with post-secondary activities that will help them obtaining their educational goals. These activities may include assisting youth with test preparation (ACT, SAT), linking youth to colleges, providing youth an opportunity to attend college orientations/tours (HAT and Upward Bound Program), assisting youth in completing financial aid applications, assisting youth in enrolling and registering in an educational program, and other educational resources that will help the youth in this area.

**Educational Supplies:** Services provided to youth to assist them in obtaining a post-secondary educational goal, such as a college degree, or a program certification or licensure. Some of the assistance that may be provided for youth in the above programs is school clothing, books and supplies.

**Educational Vocational:** Providing the youth with vocational training programs that are designed to build a youth's skills for a specific trade, vocation, or career through classes or on-site training. Vocational training includes a youth's participation in vocational or trade programs and the certification of training in occupational classes for such skills as cosmetology, auto mechanics, building trades, nursing, computer science, and other current or emerging employment sectors. These programs may include a youth's participation in an **apprenticeship, internship, or summer employment program** and do not include summer or after-school jobs secured by the youth alone. Some of these programs may be paid, unpaid or partially paid.

**Employment Services:** Assisting the youth in applying for and retaining gainful employment. Assistance may be in the following area: job seeking and placement support, writing resumes, developing interview skills, understanding workplace ethics, providing work force supports, and other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Family Planning:** Providing youth with information/training on abstinence and ways to prevent pregnancy or childbirth, such as sexual development, pregnancy prevention and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Education. The information/training may also include prevention, and treatment sessions.

**Financial Services:** Assisting youth is the use of a bank, how to make deposits, setting up a checking account, writing checks, utilizing ATM cards, utilizing safe deposit boxes, making loan applications. Assisting youth in basic money management which may include budgeting, saving, paying debts, credit and investing. and providing youth with information on continuing support services. Youth may also be assisted in tax preparation as part of financial assistance.

**GED Preparation & Support:** Providing assistance to youth in obtaining their GED. Such assistance may include providing them with guidance in applying for, enrolling in classes for, attending classes for and testing for their GED.

**Health Education:** Providing the youth with information that increases their awareness favorably and influences their attitudes and knowledge relating to the improvement of health on a personal or community basis.

**Healthy Relationship Education:** Providing youth with the information on how to communicate with greater compassion and clarity. Assisting the youth in developing skills to promote positive family and community interactions.

**Homework and Study Skills Assistance:** Providing youth with instruction on how to obtain information from class better, take notes in class, study better, and how to take tests in order to obtain their high school diploma or GED. Support may include the assistance in homework, when it is needed. This may be provided by teachers, foster parents, social workers, parents, or other individuals.

**Housing Education:** Providing the youth with assistance, training and instructions on issues related to finding a place to live as well as keeping a place to live. The training/skills provided may include locating and maintaining housing, including filling out a rental application/agreement and acquiring a lease, handling security deposits and utilities, understanding practices for keeping a

healthy and safe home, understanding tenants rights and responsibilities, and handling landlord complaints.

**Housing-Rent:** Assisting the youth in covering expenses for the first month's rent and deposit when the youth is moving into his/her own apartment. If utilities are included in the rent, then a payment for rent only should be utilized. **Must be considered as a part of the youth start-up funds and is limited to \$1100.00 dollars per youth total.**

**Housing (Services):** Assisting the youth with start-up supplies when he/she is moving into an apartment or into a dorm. These start-up housing supplies may include such items as linens, towels, dishes, pots and pans, silverware, furniture, basic kitchen food set-up, or other items needed for the apartment. **Must be considered as a part of the youth start-up funds and is limited to \$1100.00 dollars per youth total.**

**IL Subsidies:** Monthly payment to the youth to cover their personal living expenses.

**Independent Living Assessment:** A formal assessment to evaluate the youth's life skills in preparation for transitioning to adulthood.

**Literacy Training:** Providing youth with appropriate reading and writing skills, so they can obtain their high school diploma or GED.

**Medical Services:** Assisting youth with **necessary** medical services, when all other available mechanisms for the youth to obtain these services have been exhausted. These services must be necessary for the youth to achieve independence. Some reasons for these services may be for a youth who needs glasses and is in an educational program and does not have any insurance to cover the expenses, or for a youth who is in an education program and may need an emergency prescription filled for a severe condition, but he does not have any insurance. No routine/maintenance medical payment can be used with this payment type. Not to be used for youth in foster care or those who have any other type of medical insurance. State Office Approval needed for this payment.

**Mentoring:** Mentoring is the provision of knowledge, encouragement and support by a person who has a greater knowledge than the youth. It entails informal communication, usually face-to-face, is done for a sustained period of time and is usually related to the youth's work, career or educational development.

**Parent Education and Training:** Providing youth with information on significant positive involvement, increased contact, healthy parent-child relationships. These could include teen parenting classes, child care skills, responsible fatherhood initiatives, or other community resources to help the youth in this area.

**Personal Identity Protection:** Assisting youth in developing skills that will protect them against fraud and scams, identity theft and what to do when they have been victimized.

**Transportation (Routine):** Providing the youth with needed bus passes, mileage reimbursement, or other transportation resources, so they can get to and from school and/or work or to and from home/relative home.

**Tutoring:** Providing educational instruction either privately or in a group setting, for youth in their pursuit of their educational plan. Educational instruction may be provided by a peer, foster parent, teacher, social worker, family friend, or other individuals. Paid providers must meet the State's qualifications for paid providers. Please see ASO Tutoring.

**Utilities:** Assisting the youth in payment for needed services such as water, electric, natural gas, so they can live independently. Must be considered as a part of the youth start-up funds and is limited to \$1100.00 dollars per youth total.

**Vocational Testing and Counseling:** Providing youth with resources needed for admission requirements for vocational programs or for supportive services needed for a vocational program, such as vocational rehabilitative counseling or a testing fee for an LPN Program.

**Youth Transitioning (YT) Transportation:** Assisting youth in getting to needed appointments, by picking them up and taking them to the appointment.

### 4.3 Transitional Living

In some instances, a youth may wish to practice living semi-independently prior to final discharge from the foster care system. Experiential learning opportunities are available for these youth through the Transitional Living Placement option in which foster care youth establish their own household in the community but are supplied with the following support, supervision and services:

- a) Ongoing social casework;
- b) Continued life skills instruction;
- c) Assistance with career planning and employment and job maintenance;
- d) Scheduled face to face contact between the youth and caseworker in addition to regular phone contact;
- e) Planned and unannounced home visits; and
- f) Medical and behavioral health services, when needed.

Transitional Living Placements may be provided to youth at the age of 17 years old up to the age of 21 years old, but youth must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible for this type of placement. Transitional Living Placements may be structured for youth who are in need of extra support and supervision or they may be structured for youth who are capable to semi-independent living. Transitional Living Placements may be supervised and supported by the youth's caseworker or they may be supported and supervised by a private transitional living agency. The type of Transitional Living Placement will be dependent on the youth's abilities and needs.

Youth residing in a Transitional Living Placement, under a private agency, are normally youth who need extra supports and supervision, and are progressing through two levels of supervision and responsibility. Youth first entering this placement type are subject to a minimum of five hours of supervision/services a week, from the Transitional Living Placement staff (Phase Two - Part One.) As the tasks and responsibilities are achieved, youth gain more autonomy and

require less supervision (Phase Two - Part Two.) (These services are authorized through the ASO Process)

#### **4.3.1** Transitional Living Placement Eligibility

The youth's worker must determine the youth(s) eligibility for Transitional Living Placement based on the following criteria prior to referral for placement supervised by a private agency or prior to placement in a Transitional Living Placement setting directly supervised by the youth(s) worker.

- a) The youth is at least 17 years old but less than 21 years of age.
- b) The youth is demonstrating responsible behavior and capable of living independently.
- c) The youth has completed their life skills assessment.
- d) The youth has basic living skills and can live independently.
- e) The youth must be motivated to achieve goals, such as educational or employment.
- f) The youth is pursuing an educational, employment or some goal for independence. The youth must have a plan for activities of 40 hours a week.

For youth who meet the Transitional Living Placement eligibility criteria, the youth(s) worker will consult with the supervisor and the Multidisciplinary Treatment Team, if the youth is under 18 years old or under the court's jurisdiction. The youth's worker will consult with anyone involved in the youth's life, including the youth(s) current service providers, juvenile probation officer, youth(s) parents to present the youth(s) Transitional Living Plan and determine the best option for obtaining a Transitional Living Placement and necessary services.

When a youth is going to be placed under the supervision of a private agency for transitional living services the youth's worker must take the following actions:

#### **4.3.2** Referral Process

- a) Complete the family(s) and youth assessment, if not already done.
- b) Complete the youth(s) transitional living plan, if not already done.
- c) Compile the necessary information as a referral packet to be sent to appropriate Transitional Living providers for their determination on appropriate placement. This information should include:
  - 1. Transitional Living Placement Referral form, if applicable
  - 2. Youth, Youth and Family Case Plan or YS Youth Case Plan
  - 3. Life Skills Assessment
  - 4. Social summary of the youth
  - 5. School information

6. Psychological/psychiatric evaluation
  7. Original Birth Certificate
  8. Social Security Card
  9. Immunization records
  10. Medical information
  11. Placement history
  12. Copy of the court order granting the Department custody
- d) If the above information is not available at the time of the referral, the youth(s) worker will compile the information as soon as possible. This should not take longer than four weeks.
- e) Schedule and participate in the intake interviews and pre-placement visits for the youth and his family with the prospective Transitional Living Placement agency.
- f) Transportation must be provided to the placement if necessary. Prepare the youth and his family for such interviews and visits. They should understand the purpose of the interviews, who will be present and why, what may be discussed, travel and visit time involved, anticipated expenses if applicable, the physical setting of the placement, and the nature of the agency(s) program.
- g) If a youth is entering a Transitional Living Placement from a family foster care home, it may be advisable to involve the foster parents in the intake and placement visits.
- h) If the agency accepts the youth for placement or if the placement is going to be supervised directly by the Department, the youth(s) worker shall arrange a date for the placement.
- i) If a youth is going to be in a DHHR staff supervised Transitional Living Placement, the youth's worker must provide the following to the youth:
1. Original birth certificate
  2. Social security card
  3. Immunization records
  4. Medical information
  5. Psychological/psychiatric evaluation
  6. School information
  7. Placement history
  8. Any other information deemed necessary to assist the youth in their transition and placement.

#### 4.3.3 Placement

When a youth is placed in a Transitional Living Placement setting, such as in an apartment of their own, whether supervised by a private agency or by the youth's caseworker, placement must be made in accordance to the following guidelines, to assure that the youth continues to receive foster care benefits:

- a) The youth's worker must have the youth complete a W-9, so the youth can be set-up as a transitional living client in FACTS and placed with themselves in placement.
- b) Once a W-9 has been completed by the youth, the worker must complete a search of the open and closed provider records to determine if the youth has been opened as a transitional living client previously.
- c) If the youth has not been opened previously, the youth's worker must open the youth up as a transitional living client provider in FACTS, by completing the General tab in the provider record, then completing the Document Tracking of the W-9, then add services to the youth's provider Service Administrative Screen. Services normally utilized for youth in transitional living are: Educational Services, Transitional Living Services, Housing, and Clothing.
- d) If the youth has been opened previously as a transitional client, then the worker may need to reopen the provider record.
- e) Once the youth's worker obtains the youth's provider number, the youth can be placed in FACTS with themselves. The youth's placement effective date will be entered in FACTS within three business days of the placement. This will also generate a medical card for the youth within a timely manner. In addition, this will also ensure that the youth has an EPSDT Health Check screening scheduled within the five day time frame required by the Sanders Consent Decree. If the youth was in foster care prior to this placement, the youth's medical card and SS-FC-40 and SS-FC-40A is to be given to the agency in case medical services are required prior to the issuance of a card to the facility for the youth.
- f) The youth's worker must submit the W-9 to the local financial clerk, so they can complete and approve the Tax screen in the provider record and make sure that the information is entered in a timely manner.
- g) The youth's worker must document the youth's eligibility in the Youth Transitioning, Placement Plan and Placement Recommendation screens in FACTS, with approval for placement being sent to the worker's supervisor.
- h) Once the youth's placement is approved by the supervisor, the youth's worker must complete the Enter/Exit screen in FACTS, documenting the entry date for the youth.

- i) The youth's worker must complete the youth's address and telephone number in the Demographic screen in FACTS and make sure that the youth's address is correct.
- j) Once a plan has been developed for a youth to be moved into his/her own apartment under the supervision of a transitional living agency, the youth's worker must make an ASO referral for Chafee Pre-Placement Activities.
- k) All concrete items/services (start-up expenses), such as a deposit for an apartment, first month's rent, utility deposit, household items, furniture or other items for the apartment, must be paid for through a demand payment request. These requests are to be submitted to the youth's worker by the private transitional living agency, if they are providing the supervision. Original receipts must be submitted with a request for reimbursement.
- l) Once a request for these start-up expenses is received by the youth's worker, the worker will complete a demand payment request, utilizing payment type **Independent Living Services and Supplies** and document that it is for start-up expenses within three working days of the request.
- m) Once a youth has moved into his/her own apartment, under the supervision of a transitional living agency, the youth's worker must make an ASO referral for Chafee Phase Two-Part One.
- n) The youth's worker will indicate in FACTS that emancipation is the youth's permanency plan on the Permanency Plan screen.
- o) Once the youth's provider record is complete, **including the Tax screen**, the worker should link all needed paid services on the youth's Service Log, as well as any unpaid services on the Services screen in the Youth Transitioning section of the youth's FACTS case record.
- p) The youth's worker must assist the youth in locating and securing safe and affordable housing if the placement is being directly supervised by the Department.
- q) The youth's worker must assist the youth in developing a monthly productivity schedule and a monthly budget and approve the schedule and budget.

#### 4.3.4 Case Management of Transition Living Placements

Once a youth has been placed in a Transitional Living Placement, it is the responsibility of the youth's worker to assure that the youth continues to work towards the goal of "semi-independence" and continues to work on his or her transition plan in order to be successful in becoming self sufficient.

- a) The youth's worker must maintain adequate contact with the youth and Transitional Living agency, if applicable, to assure that the

youth is continuing in his/her educational or job training programs or to assure that his/her needs are being met.

- b)** The youth's worker must continue to assist the youth in developing a monthly productivity schedule and a monthly budget and approve the schedule and budget. Youth are required to have at least 40 hours of productivity hours each week, in order to receive a transitional living subsidy/personal allowance. Youth in school full time are considered to have 40 hours of productivity hours a week. If a Transitional Living agency is working with the youth, their staff may fulfill this responsibility.
- c)** Youth are required to submit their monthly productivity hours to the worker, along with their budget, if they are not enrolled in school full time.
- d)** Youth may have roommates, but they must be approved by the youth's worker and must contribute to the household's finances by at least 50% (if there are two in the house).
- e)** For youth who have completed an educational and/or employment goal and now needs housing assistance, subsidy/housing services are available for up to six months to assist the youth in becoming stable in their new job or in obtaining a job and home, as long as the youth is under the age of 21.
- f)** Youth are responsible for signing leases for any housing. The youth's worker should assist the youth in understanding that the lease is a contract and that it should not be entered into unless the youth can and will fulfill the obligation of the lease.
- g)** The youth's worker should assist the youth in obtaining safe and affordable housing. All avenues for rent assisted housing should be explored for the youth prior to the youth obtaining housing. The apartment should be checked for safety concerns, by the worker prior to the youth accepting a lease also.
- h)** The youth's worker should make unannounced visits to the youth to check the youth's living conditions.
- i)** If a youth is not being compliant with his/her learning/transition plan, then he/she will be removed from the Transitional Living Placement and could be discharged from the program, if he/she are over the age of 18 and the court has dismissed jurisdiction. Some reasons for being non-compliant could be, not participating in their educational or employment programs, having other individuals live off of their subsidy, living in an unsafe home/apartment, or participating in criminal activities.

#### **4.3.5** Transitional Living Subsidy Placement Payments

- a)** The youth will submit his/her monthly budget which accurately reflects the youth(s) expenditures. The Transitional Living Agency worker or the youth's worker should assist the youth in developing

the budget and must sign the request thereby certifying the actual expenditures.

- b) The transitional living subsidy/personal allowance will not exceed \$650.00 a month for youth living in his/her own apartment or \$200.00 a month for youth living in a dormitory at college.
- c) The youth's weekly planner signed by the youth and the transitional living agency worker or DHHR worker, which certifies that the youth earned the amount of the subsidy/personal allowance requested, must accompany the subsidy request.
- d) If the youth does not maintain a weekly schedule which documents 40 hours of productive activity, the subsidy must be pro-rated at \$4.06 per hour for the total documented hours of productive time completed by the youth. The DHHR worker or the transitional living agency staff will adjust the subsidy request for the youth, if needed.
- e) Upon receipt of the subsidy/personal allowance request, the youth's DHHR worker must examine the request and determine that it is proper and correct before signing approval.
- f) If approved, the youth's worker must enter a demand payment request within three working days of receipt of the request. The demand payment request and budget should be imported into the youth's case FACTS File Cabinet. The approval must be placed in Document Tracking in FACTS.
- g) If denied, the request must be returned to the transitional Living agency or youth with a written reason for the denial. The denial must be entered into FACTS through Document Tracking.

#### 4.3.6 Pre-Placement Activities/Start-Up Money Payments

##### a) (Non-ASO Service)

The youth's worker must ensure that each youth participating in a Transitional Living Placement through a transitional living agency has access to funds necessary for establishing a household. Youth in Transitional Living Placement are eligible for up to \$1,100.00 dollars if residing in a scattered site-based apartment and \$400.00 dollars in start up money if residing in a training site-based apartment or dormitory at college.

Appropriate expenditures with start-up money include deposits for rent and utilities, purchasing furniture, bed linens, kitchen appliances, dishes and pots and pans, and an initial supply of food. These payments are made at the state office level.

Youth participating in a Transitional Living Placement, where DHHR staff is directly providing the supervision and services, must have access to money for establishing a household. The amount and uses of these funds are the same as described above. These payments must be made as demand payments directly to **vendors on behalf of the youth**. Vendors include: landlords, utility

companies, and retail stores. The youth's worker will initiate this demand payment by utilizing the **Independent Living Services and Supplies** payment type.

#### 4.3.7 Provider Payments for Supervision and Services

##### a) (ASO Prior Authorization Required)

Each Transitional Living agency may provide pre-placement services to a youth within 30 days immediately preceding a youth's physical move to a Transitional Living Placement. And to the extent no other resource is available (e.g., Medicaid case management, basic living skills, transportation grants, volunteers, etc.), the Division of Children and Adult Services may reimburse for pre-placement activities at a rate of \$28.25 per unit for up to a total of 60 units, within the 30 days. (One unit equals an hour) Documentation required with the invoice for pre-placement activities must include a description of the activity, date, time, place of the activity, and a copy of the completed Transitional Living Admission form.

Each agency providing a Transitional Living Placement with subsidy to a youth may invoice the Department for reimbursement for the services described in the Transitional Living Placement with subsidy section. The reimbursement rate for Supervision and Services is \$28.25 per unit for up to 60 units in a 90 day period in Phase Two-Part One. (One unit equals an hour) The reimbursement rate for Supervision and Services is \$28.25 per unit for up to 24 units in a 90 day period in Phase Two-Part Two. **These payments are made at the state office level and require an ASO referral prior to the services being provided.**

#### 4.4 Guidelines for Policy Waivers for Youth Transitioning Services

A policy waiver request is an attempt to exempt one or more policy rules, which may be related to a client's eligibility to participate in the DHHR's Transitional Living Placement service, for a youth to continue in a Transitional Living Placement when they are not compliant or have been unable to be compliant with the guidelines, to provide additional funding beyond the program limits, or other situations deemed appropriate for a waiver by the youth's worker. If a worker requests to waive a policy rule, the worker must demonstrate that the rule creates a significant barrier to the youth's move towards independence, the youth will be more successful if the waiver is granted and it is in the youth best interest to waive the rule. The youth's worker will request the waiver through the Department Regional Program Manager, for that Region, or the Department's State Program Manager over the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. The waiver will be documented in the youth's FACTS record, under Contacts and on the youth's learning/transition plan.

## 4.5 Chafee National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

The Chafee National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a Federal initiative which requires States to collect and report data to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on (1) youth who are receiving independent living services and (2) on the outcomes of certain youth who are in foster care or who have exited foster care. This initiative has led to multiple additions and changes within the Independent Living section of the West Virginia Families and Children Tracking System (FACTS) as well as within the Foster Care Policy for Youth Transitioning.

### 4.5.1 A Brief History of NYTD

Each year thousands of young people are discharged from state foster care systems because they reach the age at which they are no longer eligible for out-of-home placement. During the early 1980's, research and anecdotal evidence indicated that many young people who emancipated from foster care experienced numerous difficulties in their attempts to achieve self-sufficiency, including homelessness, unemployment, victimization, and dependence on public assistance.

In response to this problem, a law was passed in 1986 which provided funding to make independent living services available to youth in foster care between the ages of 16 and 21. Several improvements were made to the law by the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999. This law established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). The Foster Care Independence Act provides states with greater funding and flexibility to carry out programs to assist youth in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency.

As part of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is required to develop and implement a data collection system to (1) track the independent living services states provide to youth, and (2) develop outcome measures that may be used to assess state performance in operating their independent living programs. The data collection system is called the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).

(From National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development (NCWRCYD); <http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/yd/nytd/history2.html>; captured April 29, 2009)

With the implementation of NYTD, independent living services, assessments, and tracking will expand its population base. While the independent living assessment and learning/transition plan remains mandatory for youth ages 14 and up who are in the care and custody of DHHR, FACTS screens will be accessible for all youth in this age range, regardless of foster care status.

Each year many youth in West Virginia are discharged from foster care at the age of majority, due to numerous reasons. In order for West Virginia to maintain contact with youth who have exited from foster care to determine if the youth needs any transitioning services or to follow-up on

outcomes for the youth, the State must take measures to ensure future contact.

#### 4.5.2 NYTD Baseline Population:

Each youth who is in foster care as defined in [45 CFR 1355.20](#) and reaches his or her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday or youth who enter foster care within 45 days following their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011. The baseline population will be identified using the above definition every third year thereafter. Baseline population will be identified in years, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020 and every third year Youth Survey for NYTD

#### 4.5.3 Under the NYTD requirements, certain youth in foster care must be surveyed during specific years for service and outcome data. The specific requirements of the survey process and the youth that will need to be surveyed are outlined below:

- a) All youth who fall into the “NYTD baseline population” must be surveyed, within 45 days following their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, but not before that birthday. Workers will be notified if youth they are working with fall into the baseline population and require a survey to be completed.
- b) All youth, who fall into the above mentioned category, must be surveyed whether or not they are still in foster care. Example: a youth turns 17 on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, but returns home on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2011, must still be surveyed.
- c) The youth’s worker must provide the survey or assure that the youth completes the survey by meeting with the youth and explaining the survey to the youth. The youth may complete the survey on his/her own. The worker may read the survey to the youth, answer any questions and document the youth’s responses or a private provider may assist the youth in completing the survey. **The responses on the survey must be the youth’s responses and not the worker’s or providers. The youth’s worker or provider may not change the youth’s responses, even if the worker or provider believes the youth’s responses may be incorrect.**
- d) If the worker is unable to meet with the youth in a timely manner to provide the survey, the worker may send the survey via e-mail or mail to the youth and provider with specific instructions on how to complete the survey and a time frame to return it. Follow-up telephone calls may be necessary to ensure that the youth and provider complete the survey accurately and return it timely.
- e) The youth or worker must document if the youth participated or declined to participate on the survey. If the youth has exited care, is under the age of majority, and identified in the baseline population and the youth’s biological or adoptive parent declines the youth’s participation, then the worker must document this response as well. The worker must document if the youth is incapacitated, incarcerated, on runaway, or deceased also.

- f)** The worker should not choose “unable to locate” for youth age 17 in foster care.
- g)** Once the survey is completed, the youth’s worker must document the survey responses on the Youth Transitioning NYTD Outcome Survey Screen in FACTS. The youth’s worker must make sure that they document the youth’s responses accurately. The paper survey document must be kept in the youth’s paper record.
- h)** If the worker has an electronically copy of the youth’s completed survey, that survey should be imported into the FACTS file cabinet for the case. It is recommended that the survey be completed electronically, so it can be imported in FACTS.

## **Section 5**

### **Case Review**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of a case review is to assess progress in the youth(s) foster care experience and to utilize the court, community representatives/third party reviewers, and the Multidisciplinary Treatment Team to determine the adequacy and appropriateness of the services provided to the youth and family. All youth in foster care are required to have a case review at least once every six months according to federal regulations. State law requires that a case plan review occur every 90 days. The Department employs a variety of review mechanisms to ensure it has met its goals i.e., family preservation, child protection, youth services, and compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. The case plan review, the administrative review, the court/judicial review and the Multidisciplinary Treatment Team meetings are used to fulfill these requirements.

During the case review process, the youth's learning/transition plan must be reviewed every 90 days , once a youth turns 14 years old or once a youth, who is older than 14 enters the care and custody of the State.

## Section 6

### Closure

#### 6.1 Transition to Adulthood/Discharge Planning

##### 6.1.1 Discharge Planning for youth at age 18

When youth placed in foster care reach the age of 18 they will exit foster care unless they agree to continue to receive foster care services through the Understanding of the Parties for Foster Care Services Agreement (SS-FC-18). A detailed description of the requirements and process regarding the SS-FC-18 can be found in Section G "[Voluntary Foster Care Services Contract for Youth Over 18 \(FC-18\)](#)", below. The youth's worker should begin planning with the youth for his/her transition to adulthood and/or exit from care well before the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Planning for the youth's transition to adulthood should include the following:

- a) Upon the youth's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday or if the youth has already turned 17 at the time the Department is granted custody, the youth's worker will convene an MDT. The purpose of this MDT is to assess the youth, collect information and develop a transition plan for the youth's exit from the care and custody of the Department. The following areas must be discussed and assessed during the MDT meeting:
  1. Youth's progress with the life skills curriculum and assessment;
  2. Youth's education progress and goals (including information regarding the youth's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transition services provided by the IEP if appropriate);
  3. The youth's preparedness for independence;
  4. The youth's ability and/or desire to be employed.
  5. The importance of designating someone to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the youth if the youth is unable to do so and does not have or want a relative who would otherwise be designated under state law to make such decisions. Youth also must be given information about how to execute a health care "advance directive" document recognized under state law. If it is determined that a youth is mentally incapacitated and unable to make health care decisions, the worker must review and follow the Adult Service Policy Section, Health Care Surrogate Policy 2.2.3
  6. If the youth chooses to "execute" an advance directive, they may be assisted by their worker or referred to the following website for assistance,  
<http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/chel/wvi/forms.html>

- b)** After the discussion and assessment of the items listed above the MDT will gather and/or compose the following:
1. Contact information for three or more close relatives or individuals with which the youth has long term connections or may rely on for social support or assistance when needed;
  2. Youth's contact information including possible mailing addresses, cell phone number and e-mail address;
  3. Personal Exchange Document Discharge List (PEDDL).
- c)** Using the information discussed and collected the MDT should complete the youth's transition/learning plan.
- d)** In addition to inviting individuals already involved in the MDT process, the worker should invite anyone to the MDT meeting who will be instrumental in developing and/or implementing the transition/learning plan (i.e. Chafee worker).
- e)** The worker will begin gathering original documentation on the Personal Exchange Document Discharge List (PEDDL) that will be released to the youth upon his /her exit from the care and custody of the Department. These items may include but are not limited to:
1. the youth's social security card;
  2. certified original birth certificate;
  3. health records including immunization history;
  4. education records;
  5. life book;
  6. completed journey placement notebook;
  7. state photo ID;
  8. SSI application (copy), and;
  9. any other information the youth may find helpful or important.
- f)** If evaluation and assessment of the youth determines the youth may be in need of adult services assistance the youth's worker will collaborate with the appropriate adult services staff to complete a plan for the youth's discharge from foster care at age 18. For a detailed summary refer to section ["Transfer to Adult Services/Guardianship"](#), below.
- g)** The youth's worker will provide the youth and his/her caretaker with the transition/learning plan. The transition/learning plan should be documented in FACTS, within the Youth Transitioning section and an electronic copy added to the FACTS case File Cabinet.
- h)** The youth's worker will arrange referrals for services included in the transition/learning plan and agreed upon by the youth and the MDT. The youth's worker may also assist the youth in filling out applications for employment, college or any other activities that may

require this skill (for example FAFSA for college and/or continuing education application, application for bank account, application for utilities or referral for employment through HRDF).

- i) The youth's worker will evaluate the youth's eligibility for Chafee Services and make an appropriate referral to Chafee Community Support Services in a timely manner. The youth's worker must invite and include Chafee staff in MDT meetings when the youth turns 17 or if the Department is granted custody after the youth's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. Referrals should be made at least six months prior to a youth graduating from high school, obtaining GED or aging out of foster care at 18 or older.
- j) The youth's worker must release all original documentation including health and education records (See #5 above for a detailed list) at no cost to the youth upon his/her exit from care and custody of the Department.
- k) The youth's worker must document all information gathered from steps above in the appropriate FACTS screens.

#### **6.1.2 Discharge Planning for Youth 18 to 21**

In October 2008, the federal government passed the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (PL 110-351). This Act requires States to assist youth, between the ages of 18 and 21, who are in foster care or receiving foster care services, through an FC-18, in developing his/her own transition plan from foster care. The following actions must be followed when youth between the age 18 and 21 are exiting foster care or services:

- a) Upon the youth's decision to exit foster care or services, a transition plan must be developed during the 60 day period prior to the youth exiting care. The youth's input/decisions are vital in the planning process.
- b) The youth's worker will utilize the 18+ Discharge Plan report, from FACTS, to document the transition plan. This discharge plan must specifically detail the youth's choices and options for housing, health insurance, education, mentoring opportunities, employment services, and other support services. The youth will be provided with a copy of the plan.
- c) The youth worker must explain the importance of designating someone to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the youth if the youth is unable to do so and does not have or want a relative who would otherwise be designated under state law to make such decisions. Youth also must be given information about how to execute a health care "advance directive" document recognized under state law. If it is determined that a youth is mentally incapacitated and unable to make health care decisions, the worker must review and follow the Adult Service Policy Section, Health Care Surrogate Policy 2.2.3.

- d) If the youth chooses to “execute” an advance directive, they may be assisted by their worker or referred to the following website for assistance, <http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/chel/wvi/forms.html>
- e) As indicated above, the worker will begin gathering original documentation, on the Personal Exchange Document Discharge List (PEDDL), that will be released to the youth upon his/her exit from the care and custody of the Department. These items may include but are not limited to:
1. the youth’s social security card;
  2. certified original birth certificate;
  3. health records including immunization history;
  4. education records;
  5. life book;
  6. completed journey placement notebook;
  7. state photo ID;
  8. SSI application (copy), and;
  9. any other information the youth may find helpful or important.
- f) As indicated above, if the youth has not been previously assessed by Adult Services and there is question as to the youth’s capacity to live independently, then the worker will provide for an evaluation and assessment of the youth to determine if the youth may be in need of adult services assistance. The youth’s worker will collaborate with the appropriate adult services staff to complete a plan for the youth’s discharge from foster care. For a detailed summary refer to section [“Transfer to Adult Services/Guardianship”](#), below.
- g) The youth’s worker will arrange referrals for services included in the 18+ Discharge Plan and agreed upon by the youth. The youth’s worker may also assist the youth in filling out applications for employment, college applications or any other activities that will assist the youth (for example FASFA for college and/or continuing education application, application for bank account, application for utilities or referral for employment through HRDF).
- h) The youth’s worker will evaluate the youth’s eligibility for Chafee Services and make an appropriate referral to Chafee Community Support Services in a timely manner. Referrals should be made at least six months prior to a youth graduating from high school, obtaining GED or aging out of foster care at 18 or older.
- i) If a youth requests that a Chafee Community Support referral not be made on their behalf, the youth’s worker will provide the youth with information on the Chafee Program, which includes the toll free number.

- j) The youth's worker must release all original documentation including health and education records (See #5 above for a detailed list) at no cost to the youth upon his/her exit from care and custody of the Department.

### 6.1.3 Permanent Connections

Research has shown more frequent, meaningful contact with youth in care leads to better outcomes, stability in placement and timely permanency. The new shift in policy and practice strongly emphasizes building strong, permanent relationships with youth as well as assisting youth in identifying and building other permanent connections. A youth who has permanent connections to other individuals or to community resources will be more successful in becoming self-sufficient and a vital part of the community.

Prior to discharge, youth should be able to identify several individuals and/or community resources that are permanent connections for them. These permanent connections must be documented in the youth's FACTS record under the Youth Transitioning screens, under Discharge Planning, Permanent Connections.

## 6.2 Transfer to Adult Services/Guardianship

As part of a youth's plan for permanency, it is critical to conduct ongoing evaluations of their potential for eventual self-support. The Life Skills Curriculum is one tool that can provide needed information about the youth's functional abilities in core life skill areas. This is to be utilized when a youth reaches the age of 14, as indicated:

- a) If the youth is not progressing through the life skills modules, a Special Needs Curriculum should be employed for those youth to learn life skills.
- b) If youth are still not progressing using the Special Needs material, a comprehensive psychological evaluation, including an assessment of their potential for adult independence, should be obtained by the youth's worker.
- c) If the determination is made, using these two evaluation tools, that self-sufficiency is an unlikely goal, at age 17, the youth's worker must contact the Adult Services staff in the local office to request that they attend all Multidisciplinary Treatment Team meetings, case staffings, and reviews for the youth.
- d) Once the youth has attained the age of 17 years, the youth's worker may make the Adult Service worker a secondary worker for the youth until the youth exits foster care if the Adult Service worker has an active part in the service plan. At this point, the youth's worker and the Adult Service worker should work together in planning for the youth's adulthood and eventual discharge from foster care. The youth's worker will continue to remain responsible for the youth until the youth exits foster care.
- e) If it has been determined that the youth meets the eligibility requirements and should continue in foster care after the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the youth's

- worker will complete all the necessary requirements as described in the Foster Youth Over Age Eighteen section of the foster care policy.
- f) If it has been determined the youth does not have the capacity to make informed decisions regarding their future, due to **severe** developmental, mental health or physical disabilities, the youth may not sign a Voluntary Placement Agreement (SS-FC-18) which allows them to continue in foster care. The Voluntary Placement Agreement is a binding contract between the youth and the department which stipulates the conditions for continued foster care services. This requires the youth to have capacity to fully understand the consequences and terms of the agreement. In these situations the youth's worker must collaborate with the Adult Service Worker to complete an appropriate plan for the youth's discharge from foster care at age 18.
  - g) The youth's worker should refer to Adult Guardianship Services Policy section 5.20.11 which asserts in rare circumstances it may be in the young adult's best interest for the Adult Guardian to sign an SS-FC-18 Voluntary Placement Agreement allowing them to continue receiving foster care services. The option of the Adult Guardian signing an SS-FC-18 should by no means be common practice or a solution for failure to plan for a youth's transition in a timely manner. **This practice should only be used if all other Adult Services and community resource options have been exhausted and foster care services accessible through the Voluntary Placement Agreement (SS-FC-18) are required to ensure necessities are provided.** The exploration of these avenues should be documented in the appropriate case record(s) in FACTS. All Voluntary Placement Agreements (SS-FC-18) must be staffed and approved by the Adult Services Supervisor, Child Welfare Supervisor and the Community Services Manager of the district office allowing the child to receive continued Foster Care Services.
  - h) If a foster youth has a disability, the youth's worker should complete an application for Adult Disabled Social Security Benefits or Supplemental Security Income prior to the youth's 18th birthday. This application should be submitted at least three months prior to the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, as indicated in the federal guidelines for [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#).
  - i) The youth's worker will make referrals to all appropriate community resources that may need to provide services that will be necessary for the youth after he reaches adulthood. This will ensure that services, especially behavioral health services, will continue after the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### 6.3 Youth Over 18 Receiving SSI, SS or Other Benefits

At the time foster youth receiving Social Security, SSI or other benefits reach age 18, they automatically become payee for their own benefits unless they are deemed incompetent and unable to handle their own affairs, by the court, upon discharge from the foster care system. A youth may have another person named as a Representative Payee, without being deemed incompetent. This can be accomplished with the assistance of a physician, who can submit a statement to have a Representative Payee established on behalf of the person.

If it is determined that the youth is incompetent, the Department may be named as the Representative Payee. If the Department continues to be the youth's payee, the benefits will be used towards the youth's housing/living expenses. If the youth chooses to name another payee, then the youth's payee will provide payment for the youth's housing/living expenses with the benefits. The Department will cover any additional costs for the housing services above the amount of the youth's benefits, if the Department is named guardian of the youth.

If a youth chooses to continue to receive foster care services and remain in a foster care setting through an FC-18, then the Department must provide the youth with information about their Social Security, SSI or other benefits. The youth's worker must explain that the Department will remain as the youth's Representative Payee as long as the youth is receiving foster care services. The youth will be provided a copy of the FC-18, which will explain that their benefits will be sent to the Department to cover their housing/living expenses.

It is important for the youth's worker to keep track of the youth's savings and develop plans for purchasing items that the youth needs, wants, or will benefit from in order to keep the youth's assets from exceeding the SSI limit of \$2,000. If a youth's assets are in excess of the SSI limit, the youth will become ineligible for SSI and his benefits will end. A pre-need burial plan may be purchased for the youth before he reaches age 18.

## Section 7

### Other

#### 7.1 Voluntary Foster Care Services Contract for Youth Over 18 (FC-18)

Many youth overestimate their readiness for independence. When their capacity to meet their needs in the community is revealed after they leave foster care placement, a youth may request to return to foster care. Former foster youth, ages 18 through 20, who left care at age 18 or older may apply to return to a foster care living situation if circumstances support the need for them to return to care.

- a) Foster care after age 18 applies to two categories of young adults:
1. Those youth who remain in care after age 18 and;
  2. Those youth who were former foster youth, left at the age of 18 or older, and request to return to foster care after age 18, through the age of 20.
- b) Since many foster youth have not completed their education by the time they reach their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, they have an incentive to remain in foster care. Boarding care may be continued for foster youth from age 18 through ages 20 under the following conditions:
1. The young adult requests continued financial supports after receiving a clear explanation of his right to independence and responsibility for self-support at age 18; and
  2. The young adult will continue his education (college, vocational, or training) and plans to continue his current enrollment, or plans to enroll in a different school or training program within the next three months.

When a former foster youth applies for foster care services, an assessment of the current circumstances shall be made. The individual may be eligible for other services from the Department or from another community resource that would be more appropriate to meet his needs. All other agency and community resources are to be explored before approving foster care services. Attempts to locate other agency and community resources must be documented in the youth's case record. The youth must sign a voluntary placement agreement (SS-FC-18).

The voluntary placement agreement (SS-FC-18) **must** be explained to the youth in detail as a "contract" between the youth and the Department. It does not place the youth back into "custody" of the state. The youth has certain responsibilities to working towards meeting his/her goals and objectives of their transition plan and working on becoming semi-independent and self-sufficient. The Department has responsibilities to provide the youth with assistance in meeting those goals and objectives. If a youth desires to remain in foster care after receiving an explanation of the situation, he must agree to sign a voluntary placement agreement (SS-FC-18).

In rare situations youth who are deemed incompetent may continue to receive foster care services under the voluntary placement agreement (SS-FC-18). Please refer to the section [Transfer to Adult Services/Guardianship](#) above for guidelines.

Boarding care must be discontinued for all youth the month upon their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday if they elect to assume their independence and/or they are not attending an educational program, or do not plan to continue or enroll.

## 7.2 Post Secondary Educational Programs

A youth in the care of the Department who has graduated from high school or obtained his/her GED and has the interest and ability to pursue further education either in college or vocational school should be strongly encouraged to pursue his/her educational goals. The Department may support youth who are continuing their education up to age 21 through the foster care program. Youth over the age of 18 must voluntarily elect to remain in foster care by signing the voluntary placement agreement (SS-FC-18) in order to be eligible for continued foster care services.

Generally, out of state schools and private institutions are not recommended, due to the expense of the school and lack of State financial aid. In those cases where it can be demonstrated that an out of state or private program is less costly than a comparable in-state program or when it can be demonstrated that it is in the youth's best interest to attend an out of state school or program, the situation will be evaluated by the Children and Adult Services (CAS) Management. In these situations, the Department will only provide partial payment for educational expenses, due to the limit on [Education and Training Funding Vouchers](#) (ETV) per youth, per year. If a youth chooses to attend an out of state college, the Department will only provide up to the allowable ETV funding per year, which is \$5000.00 dollars for educational expenses. No other funding can be provided for a youth to attend an out of state educational program. The youth must also follow the same rule as an in-state student (outlined below) and apply for all available financial aid. The following steps must be taken to assist a youth in the pursuit of post-secondary education:

- a) The youth's worker must make a referral for Chafee Services, if the youth is going to pursue a post-secondary educational program. See section on [Eligibility for Chafee Community Services](#) and [Referral Process for Chafee Community Support Services](#).
- b) All avenues of financial aid shall be pursued prior to determining the amount the Department will pay for a youth attending a post-secondary education or training program.
- c) The youth must complete a [FAFSA](#) prior to the deadline every year to obtain all possible financial aid. **The FAFSA deadline for West Virginia is indicated on the FAFSA website every year after January 1<sup>st</sup>.**
- d) The youth, foster/adoptive parents, the youth's parents if appropriate, and/or the group care facility should take the responsibility for the exploration of financial assistance.
- e) The youth's worker must submit a letter to the school to verify the youth's custody status and may need to verify the youth's eligibility for the [Foster Care Tuition Waiver](#) (section below). This must be done to ensure that the youth receives any available financial aid for foster care youth.

- f) It is not recommended that youth accept student loans as a part of their financial aid package. This can place them in jeopardy of losing Chafee funds. **If a youth does not have enough financial aid to cover all of their expenses, with the allowable ETV funds added, then the youth may need to accept a student loan. This may occur, if the youth did not complete the FAFSA by the deadline.**
- g) School tuition and fees are to be paid directly to school by the youth's worker. The school must be set up as a provider and must forward an invoice for the complete amount of all required tuition, fees, room, board, books, or other school items.
- h) The youth's worker will issue a demand payment in FACTS using the Post Secondary Education payment type directly to the educational facility.
- i) For youth living in a dormitory at college, the youth with the assistance of the financial aid officer of the school and the youth's worker, should determine what his/her monthly personal expenses are likely to be including transportation, supplies, personal items, clothing, and any other required needs.
- j) A personal allowance will be paid directly to the youth on a monthly basis to cover these expenses. This payment should not be over \$200.00 per month.
- k) The youth's worker will issue a demand payment directly to the youth for his personal expenses using the Post Secondary Education payment type in FACTS.
- l) The education plan for the youth must be reviewed along with the financial arrangements and any adjustments necessary at the time of the quarterly Multidisciplinary Treatment Team meeting and permanency review. As long as the youth remains a student in good standing the educational plan may continue. **The educational information, including last grade completed, must be documented on the Education screen in FACTS.**
- m) Since Educational and Training Vouchers may only continue through age 22, every effort should be made to assist the youth to obtain other resources for the completion of his course of study in those situations where he will reach age 23 prior to graduation. **Youth cannot remain in a foster care setting past the age of twenty-one (21). Placements must be end-dated on a youth's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Educational funding will only continue past a youth's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, if he/she is already participating in an educational program and making progress when he/she turns 21.**
- n) If the youth spends weekends, days off or holidays with foster/adoptive parents or at a group/residential agency, the youth's worker will make a referral for ASO Connection Visits for the foster family, if they request it.

### **7.3 Foster Care Tuition Waiver**

Youth in foster care are eligible to receive tuition waivers for the purpose of attending a West Virginia public higher education institution. Within limitations of the governing boards, the waiver program is available to any youth who:

- a) Has been in foster care or residential care for at least one year prior to the waiver application;
- b) Graduated from high school or passed the GED examination while in the legal custody of the Department of Health and Human Resources;
- c) Applies for the waiver within two years of graduating from high school or passing the GED;
- d) Has been accepted to a West Virginia public higher education institution; and
- e) Applies for other student financial aid, other than student loans, in compliance with federal financial aid rules, including the federal Pell Grant.

The waiver covers tuition and fees after other sources of financial aid dedicated solely to tuition and fees are exhausted. Each educational facility determines the amount that will be covered by the tuition waiver. The waiver does not cover room and board or the cost of books.

The youth may apply for the West Virginia Foster Youth Tuition Waiver at the financial aid office of the college or university where accepted. A letter on Department letterhead signed by Department Management will be required as proof of foster/residential care placement one year prior to the waiver application. The youth must continue to meet the academic progress standards established by the West Virginia higher educational institution they are attending in order to receive a waiver renewal.

### **7.4 Chafee Community Support Services Program**

#### **7.4.1. Introduction**

The Chafee Community Support Services Program (CCSSP) offers technical assistance to the Department, group residential facilities, specialized foster care agencies, youth, foster parents, and the community for independent living services and youth transitioning out of foster care. Chafee program staff provide direct services to youth who are likely to remain in foster care until they are 18 years old; are aging out of foster care at the age of 18 years or older; or who have already aged out at 18 years or older. Chafee Program staff can either serve youth as a primary worker or as a secondary worker.

- a) The Chafee Community Support Services Program has the following purposes:
  - 1. To ensure that children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age are provided education, training, financial support, and other needed services;
  - 2. To support and serve former foster care recipients between 18 and 20 years of age to complement their own efforts toward

self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing to make the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

**b)** Some of the services and resources available are:

1. Independent Living Services - Preparing youth age 14 and over for independence through life skills training. Please see a list of [Transitional Living Providers](#).
2. Transitional Living Placement - Preparing youth age 17 through age 20 for independence through monitored experiential community living.
3. Educational Benefits - Assist youths' educational attainment through tutoring, provision of computers, tuition and tuition waivers. Please see the [Tuition Waiver Fact Sheet](#) and the [Education and Training Voucher Fact Sheet](#).
4. Job Preparation - Provide tools to help youth become employable through classroom instruction, hands on experience and job coaching. Please see the [Employment Fact Sheet](#).
5. Community Support Services - Providing housing assistance and general support services to those youth age 18 through age 20 who have aged out of the foster care system after age 18. Please see the [Community Support Services Fact Sheet](#).

**7.4.2.** Independent Living Services and Supplies

As a result of Congressional legislation that re authorized the Independent Living Programs, re- titled the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program; states are now required to provide housing assistance and other services to youth who age out of foster care. A youth discharged from foster care after the age of 18 years is considered to have aged out. Those services are to be available to former foster care youth until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Requests for this service from this population will be made to and managed by Chafee Foster Care Independence staff in the state office.

The services may include:

- a) Referral/Linkage services
- b) Advocacy services
- c) Housing services
- d) Employment services
- e) Transportation services
- f) Medical services
- g) Clothing services
- h) Educational Services (ETV)

\*There is a lifetime cap, per individual not attending a post-secondary educational program, involved in an employment program or involved in other activities which will assist in the youth's transition to adulthood, of \$3000 for direct financial assistance for services.

\*There is a cap of \$5000 for ETV funding, per individual, per year.

Chafee staff with the assistance of the State Office Policy Program staff will review and approve/deny requests for these services. If the service is approved, Chafee staff will determine if a new vendor is needed and if so obtain the W-9. The completed W-9 will be forwarded to the Division of Finance and Administration for processing. Once goods or services are purchased, Chafee staff will be responsible for obtaining and forwarding the invoice to the Division of Finance and Administration for payment processing.

#### **7.4.3. Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV)**

As the result of congressional legislation that re-authorized the Independent Living Program, re-titled Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, funding is being made available to states to assist with the costs of higher education or vocational training for the following three categories of youth as follows:

\* A youth discharged from foster care after the age of 18 years is considered to have aged out of foster care.

Former foster care youth who meet the above criteria are eligible to receive educational assistance up to \$5000 per calendar year. The money may be used to cover the costs of attending college, or vocational training, including all expenses related to a course of study such as computers, special clothing, shoes or boots, books, housing, transportation, and other related educational expenses.

##### **a) Youth adopted from foster care after the age of 16 years;**

The youth's adoption case worker must, when completing the Subsidy Agreement for a youth over the age of 16 years, specify the youth's right to this educational assistance to the degree that funds continue to be available at the time such assistance is needed. The adopted youth may apply for this assistance at any time prior to his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The ETV funding will continue to be available until age 23 for youth who are enrolled and making satisfactory progress in an educational or vocational program on his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. At the time of a request from adoptive parent/youth to access ETV funds the Chafee Program Specialist must review and approve the request, determine if a new vendor number is needed and if so obtain the W9 and request the Division of Finance and Administration open the new vendor in FACTS. The Chafee Community Support Specialist (CCSS) is responsible for enrolling the youth in the Chafee Community Support Services Program and providing continued services to the youth.

**b) Youth who have aged out of foster care;**

The youth's district case worker when discharging a youth over the age of 18 years must advise him/her of the right to this educational assistance and must provide him/her with the ETV brochure and a wallet card with the CSS toll-free number to call to request this educational assistance.

Youth who are in this category may apply for the ETV money at any time from their 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. This assistance may continue until age 23 for youth who are enrolled and making satisfactory progress in an educational or vocational program on his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Referrals for the ETV money are to be made directly to the Division of Children and Adult Services to the attention of the Chafee Community Support Program. The Chafee Program staff will review and approve the request and develop an educational plan with the student. If a new vendor number is needed Chafee ETV staff will obtain the W-9 and forward to the Division of Finance and Administration to request opening of the new provider in FACTS. The CCSS will be responsible for enrolling the youth in the CCSSP.

This policy has no affect on those youth remaining in a foster care placement via an FC-18. These youth must be referred to the CCSSP for continued assistance. Please refer to the Youth Transitioning Policy, [Section G Transition to Adulthood/Discharge Planning](#) for those instructions.

**c) Youth placed in legal guardianship.**

The youth's guardianship case worker, when developing the guardianship agreement, must specify the youth's right to this educational assistance to the degree that funding remains available at the time such assistance is needed. A youth in legal guardianship may apply for the ETV assistance at any time prior to his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The ETV funding may continue until age 23 for youth enrolled and making satisfactory progress on his/her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. An application for ETV funds must include the youth's educational plan. The youth's guardianship caseworker should refer the youth to the Chafee Community Support Program. The Chafee Program Specialist must review and approve the application and determine if a new provider number is needed and if so obtain a W-9 and request the Division of Finance and Administration to open a the new provider. The CCSS is responsible for enrolling the youth in the CCSSP and providing continued services to the youth.

**7.4.4. Eligibility for Chafee Community Support Services**

Chafee Community Support Services are available to youth, who are former foster care recipients and who age out of foster care on or after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or youth transitioning from foster care, but choose to receive continued foster care services under an FC-18 or youth who

remain in the custody and care of the State past their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. These youth remain eligible for Chafee funded services until age 21. ETV Funding can be extended to age 23, in certain circumstances.

The youth has to be able to live independently with some financial assistance, agreeable to in an educational or employment program, semi-motivated to accepting responsibilities, and agreeable to accepting Chafee Community Support Services.

#### **7.4.5. Referral Process for Chafee Community Support Services**

Referrals for the Chafee Community Support Services Program (CCSSP) should occur prior to the youth “aging out” of foster care or at least six months prior to the youth graduating from high school or obtaining their GED, to ensure a continuum of services and to ensure the youth is enrolled properly into a post secondary educational program or transitioned out of care appropriately. Referrals can be made at any time after a youth ages out of foster care until they turn 21 years old. All referrals will be made through the CCSSP Office at the Diamond Building, either by mail, telephone, e-mail or fax. The following should occur prior to a Referral for CCSSP being made:

- a) It should be determined if the youth is likely to remain in foster care until the age of 18 years or older or the youth has already aged out of foster care. This determination should occur within the youth’s MDT;
- b) The youth meets the eligibility requirements of being a former foster care recipient and aged out of foster care/or will age out of foster care;
- c) The youth meets the personal eligibility requirements above and is agreeable to accepting services;
- d) There is current demographic information available on the youth, so they can be contacted and services can be provided to them;
- e) If the youth is planning on attending college or a post-secondary educational program and it is close the [FAFSA](#) deadline, for West Virginia, then the youth must be assisted in completing the FAFSA;
- f) The youth must have a discharge plan prior to exiting foster care developed by the MDT, which includes housing options for the youth. If there is no discharge plan, the worker must document the extenuating circumstances that prevented one from being developed.

#### **7.4.6. Referral Process: To Chafee Community Support Services Program (CCSSP)**

- a) All referrals must be made via mail, telephone, fax, or e-mail to the Chafee Community Support Services Program Office (CCSSP) at the Diamond Building. The referral can be documented on the Chafee Community Support Services Application/Referral form or information may be provided to staff via the telephone. The CCSSP

Application/Referral form is located on the Chafee website at <http://www.cedwvu.org/programs/chafee/>

- b)** The Application/Referral form must be completely filled out, whenever possible, so accurate data can be documented about the youth and CCSS is able to accurately assess the youth and locate them.
- c)** Once the referral is received by the CCSSP Office, the referral will be documented in FACTS as a Request to Receive Services Intake for Chafee Community Support Services.
- d)** All Requests to Receive Service Intake for Chafee Community Support Services will be reviewed by the Chafee Community Support Services Program Manager (CCSSPM) and either screened or assigned for assessment.
- e)** If it can be determined that the Intake does not meet the eligibility requirements, the CCSSPM will screen the Intake, documenting why it has been screened and submitting a letter or e-mail to the referent and/or youth about the denial. The denial letter will also provide other resources available to the youth when needed.
- f)** If the intake will be assigned for assessment, the CCSSPM will assign the intake to the Regional CCSS for assessment. The Request to Receive Intake will be transferred to the workload of the Regional CCSS worker.
- g)** The Regional CCSS worker will review the Request to Receive Intake and follow-up with the youth.
- h)** The Regional CCSS will document all of their contacts in the Intake in the contact screen in FACTS.
- i)** Once the Regional CCSS determines the youth's eligibility for Chafee Community Support Services and the CCSSP involvement needed with the case, the CCSS worker will notify the CCSSPM of status of the Request to Receive Intake.
- j)** If the Request to Receive Intake is going to be accepted, but closed, with services being provided to the youth by the Regional CCSS worker as the primary worker, the Request to Receive Intake will be accepted by the CCSSPM. The Request to Receive Intake will need to be connected to an open case or a closed case and the Regional CCSS will be given the primary assignment on the case. (If case was closed, it will be re-opened).
- k)** If the Request to Receive Intake is going to be accepted, but closed, with some services being provided to the youth by the Regional CCSS worker as a secondary worker, the Request to Receive Intake will be accepted by the CCSSPM. The Request to Receive Intake will need to be connected to an open case and the Regional CCSS will be given the secondary assignment on the case.

- l)** If the Request to Receive Intake is going to be closed by the Regional CCSS, with no further services being provided to the youth, the Request to Receive Intake will be screened, with documentation indicating why the intake has been screened by the CCSSPM. The Request to Receive Intake will need to be connected to an open case or a closed case. (If case was closed, it will have to be re-opened and may need closed again)
- m)** If the regional CCSS determines that an intake does not meet the eligibility criteria after evaluation, they will document their findings in FACTS and submit a letter to the referent and/or youth about the denial. The denial letter will also provide other resources available to the youth when needed.

#### **7.4.7. Case Management/Service Provision**

Youth being served through Chafee Community Support Services/ETV Programs may be living semi-independently in a Transitional Living Placement, at school in a dormitory or in a foster care setting, such as a foster home or group home. These youth may require frequent contact with the Chafee Community Support Specialist for emotional, social, and professional support. They will often need linkage, advocacy, and guidance in making good choices, budgeting assistance, or other daily assistance.

##### **a) Linkage and Advocacy:**

- 1.** During service provision, all documentation must be maintained in the youth's FACTS record. Contacts must be documented on the Contact screens. Letters and other correspondence will be saved to the FACTS File Cabinet.
- 2.** Youth being served by the CCSSP, should be linked to a local community adult mentoring program or youth group for social and emotional support. When requested by youth, youth will be assisted with re-establishing family and pre-custody, non-familial connections as a means of strengthening their support system.
- 3.** Youth being served by the CCSSP, should be linked with community resources that support their efforts toward independence such as but not limited to employment assistance services, housing assistance services, financial assistance services, transportation assistance services, medical assistance services, independent living skills education or asset building support services.
- 4.** If the youth is in college, they should be linked with a college youth group or adult mentoring group.
- 5.** If the youth is in college, they should be given information and/or linked with other support services such as but not limited to tutoring services, student support services, financial aid

services, academic affairs services, career services, and any culturally diverse services/groups.

6. As life circumstances and individual needs vary widely among youth being served by the CCSSP, youth may be linked to a wide arrange of services that support, but do not enable, their own efforts toward self sufficiency and independence.
7. Advocacy to CCSSP youth will be provided as needed to help eliminate barriers to success for these youth. Advocacy will be role modeled for youth with the intent that they learn to become strong self advocates and not as a tool to enable youth from becoming their own best advocates or reinforcing the victim role.

**b) Case Transfer:**

1. If the CCSS worker is the Secondary Assignment worker and needs to be changed to the Primary Assignment worker, the CCSSPM will end date the Secondary Assignment and then transfer the Primary Assignment to the CCSS worker. The Regional CCSS worker or the CCSSPM will notify the child's previous primary DHHR worker and supervisor of the change in assignment.
2. When a youth moves from one educational institution to another, their case may be transferred to the CCSS in the Region that their new educational institution is located.
3. When a youth moves from one area to another for work, to reunite with family, or to establish permanency in their lives, their case may be transferred to the CCSS in the region where they relocate.
4. Temporary suspension of case transfers may be instituted if the youth and/or the CCSS feel that due to the relationship the youth has with the previous worker, it is in the youth's best interest to allow for a slower transition of the case from one region to the next.

**c) Educational Plans/Probationary Periods:**

1. For youth planning a post-secondary education but not currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational program, the primary DHHR worker must make a referral to CCSS six months prior to the youth beginning the post-secondary educational program. If the primary DHHR worker is not given six months notice of youth's desire to attend a post-secondary educational program, the primary DHHR worker must make a referral to CCSS as soon as they become aware of the youth's intent to pursue a post-secondary education. Please note that if CCSS does not have at least six weeks prior notice to the beginning of the youth's planned post-secondary educational program, CCSS

cannot guarantee the youth will be able to begin the program during the planned semester.

2. If the youth is enrolled in a post-secondary educational program, the youth's worker must monitor a youth's progress, attendance, and completion rate during the semester/quarter. Any verification of educational progress will be placed in the youth's FACTS file cabinet.
3. CCSS will be responsible for dispersing and monitoring the youth's Chafee ETV funding. CCSS will also monitor the youth's account summary with the educational institution to ensure prompt payment of educational services. When possible, copies of this summary will be placed in the youth's FACTS record.
4. If the youth is enrolled in a post-secondary education program, the youth's worker must assist the youth with applying for any outside financial aid available to the youth or linking the youth to community resources that help a youth apply for post-secondary educational financial aid.
5. If the youth has been in custody at least one year prior to graduating High School or obtaining their GED, the primary worker will complete a foster care tuition waiver letter and forward this to the post-secondary educational institution's financial aid office. Court orders are not to be sent to the post-secondary educational institutions as verification of foster care status. Court orders may contain information that schools do not need to know and submitting a court order to a post-secondary educational institution could violate the youth's right to privacy as guaranteed by HIPPA. If a worker experiences problems with the post-secondary educational institution, please contact CCSSPM for assistance.
6. For youth planning to change educational tracks within the same educational institution, the CCSS must be notified at least six weeks prior to changing educational plans to ensure program compliance and a smooth educational transition for the youth. If the youth's educational plans include changing educational institutions, CCSS must be notified twelve weeks prior to planned transfer to ensure program compliance and a smooth educational transition for the youth.
7. For youth who fail to meet the completion rate expectation, attendance expectation, and minimum GPA expectation as required by CCSS, the WV Higher Educational Commission, or their educational institution for a semester/quarter, they must be placed on CCSS probation and an educational improvement plan will be developed by the youth and their CCSS for the following semester/quarter. At the end of this improvement period, the plan will be evaluated by the youth and their CCSS

for compliance and a decision will be made by CCSS as to whether the youth will continue with CCSS or will be discharged from the program due to non-compliance and/or failure to meet minimum expectations

8. For youth who fail to successfully complete their improvement period and are discharged from CCSS, these youth may reapply for services if they can provide proof that they successfully completed one full-time semester/quarter on their own and they will begin the next semester/quarter prior to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The youth may be required to comply with a new educational improvement plan as a condition of readmission to CCSS.
  9. For youth who fail to meet minimum expectations and choose to leave CCSS instead of complying with a probation period and educational improvement plan, these youth may reapply for CCSS at a later date but before their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. However these youth will be required as a condition of readmission to CCSS to comply with a probationary period and an educational improvement plan. This educational improvement plan may be assessed for compliance more frequently such as weekly, bi-monthly, monthly, or at midterm. At any time the youth fails to show progress, the youth may be discharged from CCSS for non-compliance.
  10. For youth who fail to meet the requirements of their educational program for two consecutive semesters/quarters, these youth will be suspended from Chafee ETV funding. Youth may reapply for Chafee ETV funding upon successful completion of one semester/quarter and prior to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Youth who fail to meet minimum expectations after their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday will be discharged from CCSS and may not reapply for Chafee ETV funding.
  11. All educational probation plans must be documented and provided to the youth. A copy must be placed in the youth's File Cabinet in FACTS.
- d) Youth's Responsibilities**
1. The youth must agree to abide by the rules and responsibilities outlined in the FC-18 agreement and/or on the Chafee Program enrollment forms.
  2. The youth must maintain contact with their CCSS worker or DHHR worker and provide the worker with access to their educational account and/or any other consent forms needed to assist the youth with a successful transition to adulthood and/or a successful educational experience. Informational access may include but is not limited to the youth's grades, financial account summaries, financial aid award, academic transcripts, and/or school schedules.

3. Should a youth decide to leave an educational program, the youth is responsible for withdrawing appropriately from the educational program. If the youth fails to withdraw appropriately causing the educational facility to add additional charges to the youth's educational account or results in financial aid suspension causing additional expenses, the youth may be responsible for these expenses.
  4. If a youth chooses to accept unnecessary student loans, the youth may be forfeiting Chafee funding. If students choose to accept student loans in excess of the amount necessary to pay basic educational expenses such as tuition/fees and on campus room/board, they may be prevented from accessing Chafee funding should this amount go above the institution's cost of attendance. A youth should consult their CCSS before accepting student loans to insure they have a clear understanding of the cost and benefits of this choice.
  5. The youth is required to inform the CCSS worker of any refunds that they receive from their financial aid awards and additional scholarships/grants during the school year. These refunds may affect a youth's transitional living subsidies or ETV funding.
- e) Payment Process:
1. If payments are to be made to the youth, the CCSS worker must have the youth set up as a transitional living provider in FACTS by completing a W-9 form and FACTS provider form. The worker must use this information to complete the provider record in FACTS. The completed W-9 and FACTS Provider Forms will be submitted to the Bureau's Division of Administration and Finance Office, W-9 Approver.
  2. For youth receiving monthly subsidies, payment requests and invoices must be submitted to the CCSSP Office for processing on a monthly basis.
  3. For youth requiring a payment to a Department approved third party provider, the CCSS must submit a request to the CCSSPM for a billing authorization (BA) to be issued for payment.
  4. For youth requiring a payment to be made to a third party that is not an approved Department provider, the CCSS must obtain a completed W-9 and FACTS provider form, forward these forms to the CCSSPM, request a provider number, and then submit a request to the CCSSPM for a BA to be issued for this payment.

#### 7.4.8. Case Closure

During the end of service provision or if there has been no contact with the youth for a period of 60 days, the regional CCSS worker must take certain actions in order to close a case. Case closure must be done accurately to ensure follow up benefits to youth are generated, to

maintain the integrity of the FACTS client record, and to lend support to follow up services that will assist the youth in maintaining independence and continued success.

- a) If the youth has completed their services with the CCSS or chooses to end the services, the regional CCSS worker will document the closure reasons in the Contact and Summary, Case Closure screens in FACTS. The closure reason should indicate that the youth has completed their service plan, has been uncooperative, has not been able to be located or no longer wishes to receive services. An explanation of closure is necessary such as the youth completed an educational plan or the youth completed a job services plan and is now employed, no services requested, independence achieved, or the youth has not maintained contact and is uncooperative/non-compliant with services.
- b) If the regional CCSS worker determines that the case needs to be closed due to a lack of contact/participation by the youth, they will notify the CCSSPM of their concern and document the reason for closure on the case closure screen in FACTS. **Cases should not remain open for longer than 60 days without contact/participation from the youth.**
- c) If the case is a secondary assignment and it needs to be end-dated due to a lack of contact/participation, the regional CCSS must notify the CCSSPM via e-mail. All contacts concerning the youth's non-participation or the youth's refusal of services must be documented in the case Contacts in FACTS.
- d) The regional CCSS worker must make sure that all services are end dated on the Service Log, in FACTS, before attempting to close the case on the Closure History screen in FACTS. All placements must be end-dated on the Placement screens in FACTS. All custody episodes must be end dated on the Status screens in FACTS before the case can be closed. If there is a younger sibling on the case or if another client is open on the case, regional CCSS must notify CCSSPM via email to close the case.
- e) Once the CCSSPM reviews the case closure reason and determines that the case should be closed, the CCSSPM will approve the closure in FACTS.
- f) If the regional CCSS is a secondary Assignment worker on the case, the CCSSPM will review the case and reasons indicated for closure in the case Contacts Screens and end-date the secondary assignment.