

Older Youth Pandemic Relief



Extension of Foster Care Services



FosterClub

Juvenile
LawCenter
Fighting for the rights
and well-being of youth

 youth law center



Children's Law Center
of California

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Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Summary of the Law and Updates
3. Extended Services Provisions in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021
4. Models of Extended Services
5. Take Action!
6. Q&A

Overview

- Includes all provisions of the Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act
- Young people in/from foster care were CRITICAL to making this come to pass
- Intended to meet the immediate needs of young people during the pandemic and recovery.

Want more? Get these resources at fosterclub.org/oyp

- 1-page Flyer
- Overview of Older Youth Provisions
- Full text of the law
- ACYF-CB-IM-21-05

Updates on Implementation

- **Jan. 15, 2021** Children's Bureau Information Memorandum: ACYF-CB-IM-21-05
- **Currently:** this law is in effect and many of the provisions do not need guidance to move forward, including extended services and re-entry.
- **Coming Soon:** The Children's Bureau will issue guidance in the upcoming weeks.

Poll 1

Is your state
implementing the
extended care provisions?

Poll 2

**Is your state implementing
the re-entry care
provisions?**

Core Principles for Implementation

- Operate your program as pandemic/disaster response program.
- Serve as many eligible youth as possible.
- Make access to support low barrier.
- Provide assistance and funds without conditions.
- Offer as many services and supports as possible.
- Provide multiple opportunities for youth to engage and connect with services and supports.
- Use peers and individuals with lived experience to provide services and supports.
- Partner with community based agencies to increase speed and effectiveness of implementation.

Summary of Provisions

- Extended Services (Moratorium)
- Re-Entry, including an obligation to notify and develop a public awareness campaign
- Chafee
 - Increase of \$400 million w/\$50 million in ETV
 - Eligibility through age 26
 - Lift 30% cap on room and board (“housing”)
- Education & Training Vouchers (ETV)
 - Max award from \$5000-\$12,000
 - Waive the enrollment requirement
 - Waive the requirement to make satisfactory academic progress (SAP)
 - Youth are eligible even if they attend at less than full time status
 - ETV can fund costs outside of the Cost of Attendance (COA)

Extended Services Provision

- Child welfare agencies cannot terminate services or placement for youth in foster care due to age.
 - For young people who would age out under state law, the state must continue to provide placement and services for those youth.
- Young people can remain IV-E eligible even if they are not meeting the federal participation requirements (generally related to school and work)
- States can continue to receive IV-E funds for eligible youth who reach age 21.
- States can use the increase in Chafee funds to fund implementation of this provision for youth who are not IV-E eligible.

Examples: Who is Eligible for Extended Services?

- Robert turns 18 on April 1, 2021, in a state that does not have extended foster care.
- Jaylene turns 18 on September 2, 2021, with no state extended foster care option.
- Justine is in extended foster care in her state. She turns 21 tomorrow.
- Alex is 21 years old and is receiving extended services through a state moratorium, which is set to expire on June 30, 2021.

All of these youth are eligible to continue receiving foster care placements & services until September 30, 2021. They should not be exited from care due to age!

Who is Eligible for Re-Entry?

- States “shall” permit any youth who left foster care due to age during the COVID–19 public health emergency to voluntarily re-enter foster care.
- The COVID-19 public health emergency is defined in the law as January 27, 2020.

Notification Requirement Public Awareness of the Option to Re-enter

- States must notify each youth who was formally discharged from foster care during the COVID–19 public health emergency (beginning January 27, 2020).

Public Awareness Requirement

- States must conduct a public awareness campaign that is directed at youth who:
 - have not attained 22 years of age,
 - aged out of foster care in fiscal year 2020 or fiscal year 2021, and
 - are otherwise eligible to return to foster care.

Examples: Who is Eligible?

- Alia turned 18 on April 1, 2020 and exited care later that month due to age.
- Jason exited care shortly after his 18th birthday on September 30, 2020.
- Lucia was in extended foster care in her state and exited after her 21st birthday on December 2, 2020.
- Max turned 21 on January 15, 2021, but was exited from care because his state had not yet implemented the federal moratorium.

All of these youth are eligible to re-enter care and continue receiving foster care placements & services until September 30, 2021. They should not be exited from care due to age!

Do the Participation Requirements Apply?

- A child may not be found ineligible for federal foster care maintenance payments due to failure to meet participation requirements during the period of the COVID-19 public health crisis (April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021)

Why are Extended Services and Re-entry so Important?

- Young people in and leaving foster care have significant needs related to housing, food, access to basic services and supports that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.
 - Field Center at the University of Pennsylvania,
 - FosterClub
 - Think of Us COVID Data Set
- Without family, strong support, and resources young people are at great risk during the pandemic.
- Continuing placement and services and quickly reconnecting youth provides a crucial life line during a public health emergency.

Poll 3

What challenges is your state facing to provide extended services and living arrangements to youth who reach the maximum age (18 or 21 in most jurisdictions)?

Models for Extended Services

1. Extend jurisdiction, review hearings, case management responsibilities, and attorney appointments as if the youth were under the age of jurisdiction under state law.
2. Provide case management and placement or living arrangements equivalent to the foster care rate through an agreement for services, without continuing or resuming jurisdiction

Example: California

- **April 17, 2020:** Governor Newsom signs executive order allowing youth to remain in care until June 30, 2020 and suspending EFC participation requirements.
- **June 29, 2020:** Governor Newsom signs the state budget, including provisions allowing youth to continue receiving placement and services past age 21 until June 30, 2021.
- **October 23, 2020:** California Department of Social Services issues guidance for continued assistance of young adults in extended foster care upon turning 21.

AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

Attachment:

CONTINUED ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE YOUNG ADULTS

This optional form is to document eligibility for continued assistance for young adults turning 21 years of age on or after April 17, 2021, while in extended foster care. The signature of the young adult is not required for assistance.

was a minor in dependent in extended foster care until turning 21 on or after April 17, 2020:

- Continue to issue assistance payments and support until June 30, 2021.
- Resume assistance payments and support until June 30, 2021, including retroactive payment (except for those young adults who were discontinued after turning 21 years old on or after April 17, 2020).

YOUNG ADULT'S UNDERSTANDINGS:

- Monthly contact with my county case worker is helpful and contact may include face-to-face visits, telephone calls, videoconference, or email.
- It is important for my county case worker to have accurate contact information for me, such as a phone number, address, or email, to provide the assistance payment and any case management support I request.
- I may request assistance from my case worker to help find solutions to safe housing problems.

CASE WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist the young adult by responding to problems reported and help find and refer to services and supports for education, employment, health insurance, and housing needs.
- Maintain monthly contact whenever possible, including but not limited to, face-to-face visits, telephone calls, videoconferencing, or email. Attempt a visit in the young adult's home at least once every six months.
- Assist and help manage difficulties young adults may be experiencing in obtaining stable housing, which may include, but not be limited to, referring the young adult to Housing Navigators or other housing specialists.

YOUNG ADULT'S NAME	CASEWORKER'S NAME	SUPERVISOR'S NAME
YOUNG ADULT'S SIGNATURE NUMBER	CASEWORKER'S SIGNATURE	SUPERVISOR'S PHONE NUMBER
YOUNG ADULT'S PHONE NUMBER	CASEWORKER'S PHONE NUMBER	TRAC AUTHORITY NUMBER
DATE	DATE	TRAC AUTHORITY PHONE NUMBER

Child welfare agencies and eligible youth can enter into a written agreement for extended services.

Example: California's *optional agreement for continued services to eligible young adults who turn 21 in extended foster care*.

Actions to Implement the Extended Services Provisions

- Identify youth who age out between December 27, 2020 and September 30, 2021 and declare that placement and services be continued for those youth.
- Instruct placement and service providers to continue providing placement and services to young people.
- Develop plans to increase placement and services capacity for young people to receive continued services.
- If your state had a moratorium in place before the Consolidated Appropriations Act, consider if any adjustments to the current model should be made in light of the law's new mandates and IV-E flexibilities.

Actions to Take to Implement the Re-Entry Provisions

- Identify the youth who have aged out between April 1, 2020 and the present and notify them about the option to re-enter.
- Develop a youth-friendly process for re-entry.
- Identify sufficient placement options or a means to provide financial assistance to pay for placement.
- Identify re-entry points of contact to assist youth with the process.

Actions Advocates and Youth Can Take Immediately

- Make requests for extended services and re-entry immediately.
- Address extended services at upcoming transition meetings and court hearings.

DID YOU AGE OUT OF CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC?

DO YOU NEED HELP NOW?

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There's a new law that can help!

What is the new law?

The Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) was signed into law in December 2020.



How can this law help young adults who aged out?



The CAA allows Transition Age Youth who aged out of care at age 21 after April 1, 2020 to re-open their case & go back into care. These young adults can remain in care until September 30, 2021. During this time, they can keep working with their providers to develop a plan for housing, employment & education.



What if a young adult hasn't aged out yet, but will soon?



If your case is still open, but you will be turning 21 soon & would like to keep your case open so that you can remain in your foster home or SIL, talk to your caseworker & attorney. You have the right to keep your case open until September 30, 2021.

What if a young adult has questions about whether to keep their case open or re-open their case?

There are people who can help you understand your options & can help you get the services & supports you need even if you decide that you don't need to have an open case!

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Implementation Tools:

fosterclub.com/OYPR

**Webinar recording
will also be posted**

The screenshot shows a web browser window for 'fosterclub.com/OYPR'. The page title is 'Older Youth Pandemic Relief'. The main heading reads 'Helping Older Youth & Young Adults from Foster Care Make it Through the Pandemic'. Below the heading is a group photo of seven diverse young adults wearing face masks. A sidebar on the left has social media sharing icons. The top navigation bar includes links for 'ABOUT US', 'WHAT WE DO', 'BLOG', 'FOSTER CARE', 'RESOURCES', 'STORE', 'GET INVOLVED', 'DONATE', and user account options.

New Federal Legislation provides \$400 million in new funding - delivered through the Chafee Program - to young people age 14 through 26 who have experienced foster care. It also expands eligibility and makes it easier for young people to access services.

Support for Foster Youth & Alumni is On the Way: What's Available or Coming Soon.

Are you a young person between the ages of 14 and 26 who was (or currently is) in foster care? If so, you are eligible for EMERGENCY

[Emergency Cash](#)

Q&A



What's
Next?

- **Save the Date :**
2/24 @ 4:30p ET: NJ's Experience of Providing Direct Financial Assistance to Young People
- Tools & Recordings at **fosterclub.org/oypr**