



ALLIANCE
for **CHILDREN'S**
RIGHTS

Transition-Age Foster Youth: Rights & Services

Outline

- Who We Serve and How
- An Introduction to Extended Foster Care
- Other Legal Advocacy
- Independent Living Program
- Know Before You Go

Who we serve

- Current and former foster and probation youth ages 18-24



Our Work

- Legal Advocacy
- Transition Support
 - Housing, Education, Employment
- Training and Outreach
- Policy

Legal Advocacy

- Re-Entry into Extended Foster Care
- Clearing Juvenile Tickets
- Identity Theft
- Credit and Collections
- Combatting Consumer Fraud
- Contracts and Lease Review
- Access to ILP (Independent Living Program) Services
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

EXTENDED FOSTER CARE (AB 12)

California's Fostering Connections to Success Act

Extended Foster Care (AB 12)

- First enacted statewide in 2010
- Extended foster care eligibility from age 18 to age 21
- Youth who participate in extended foster care are eligible for:
 - Monthly benefits
 - Housing
 - Transitional support

Goals of Extended Foster Care

- Help youth establish lifelong connections to caring adults before transitioning to full independence
- Promotes self-sufficiency for foster youth
- Work proactively with youth in developing and reaching their independent living goals
- Allow youth to gain real life experience with independence and allow them to learn from their mistakes
- Provide a safety net for the most vulnerable youth so they can be successful as independent adults

Eligibility Requirements for EFC (AB 12)

- Extended benefits available to foster/probation youth who
 - Have an open court case at age 18 (i.e. order for FC placement)
 - OR – be eligible under AB2454 – disrupted adoption/guardianship after age 18
 - Satisfy one participation requirement
 - Sign a mutual agreement
 - Agree to meet with Social Worker/Probation Officer
 - Agree to work on transitional independent living skills
 - Live in a licensed or approved setting
 - Have 6 month court review hearings

Placement at age 18

- A youth's placement when s/he turns 18 is critical to eligibility for extended foster care
- Eligible placements include: foster family home, group home, transitional housing program, or any other placement that is the result of a suitable placement order (including family members)
- Ineligible placements include: home of biological parent, juvenile detention, or closed case

Am I eligible for extended foster care?

- If I was in a group home on my 18th birthday?
- If I was living with my grandmother under suitable placement order from the court on my 18th birthday?
- If I was living with my mom on my 18th birthday?

Important Term - NMD

- NMD = Non Minor Dependent
- Youth who meets eligibility requirements for extended foster care (AB 12)
- “Dependent” because they still have open dependency or probation cases
- Over 18 – so they are not minors

What must a NMD do to receive financial benefits?

One of the following:

1. Be enrolled in high school or equivalent program
2. Be enrolled in college/vocational school
3. Work at least 80 hours/month
4. Participate in a program/activity that helps you find a job or removes barriers to employment
5. Be unable to do one of the above because of a medical or mental health condition

OTHER TYPES OF PERMANENCY OPTIONS FOR NON-MINORS

How did EFC affect permanency paths and benefits?

- Non-Related Legal Guardian can continue to receive AFDC-FC benefits until the youth is 21 -- it does not matter when guardianship was established
- Relative Legal Guardian receiving KinGAP benefits can continue to receive until youth is 21 if:
 - Kin-GAP payments commenced when youth was age 16 or older
OR
 - Youth has verified disability
- Adoptive parents can continue to receive AAP benefits until the youth is 21 if:
 - AAP payments commenced when youth was age 16 or older **OR**
 - Youth has verified disability

AB 2454

- Beginning on January 1, 2015, AB 2454 went into effect. **Welfare and Institutions Code Section 388.1 was amended to provide that youth are eligible to re-enter foster care if:**
 - He or she is a nonminor former dependent, as defined in subdivision (aa) of Section 11400, who **received aid after attaining 18 years of age** under Kin-GAP *pursuant to Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 11360) or Article 4.7 (commencing with Section 11385) of Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 9, or pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 11405, and*
 - **whose former guardian or guardians no longer provide ongoing support to, and no longer receive aid** on behalf of, the nonminor after the nonminor attained 18 years of age, but before age 21...
 - (4) He or she is a nonminor who **received adoption assistance payments after attaining 18 years of age** *pursuant to Chapter 2.1 (commencing with Section 16115) of Part 4 of Division 9* and his or her **adoptive parent or parents no longer provide ongoing support to, and no longer receive benefits** on behalf of, the nonminor after the nonminor attained 18 years of age, but before he or she attains 21 years of age. (emphasis added)

Am I eligible for extended funding?

- If I was placed in a legal guardianship with my aunt after I turned 17 and the case is now closed?
- If I was placed in a legal guardianship with my neighbor when I was 8 and the case is now closed?
- If I was adopted after I turned 16 and my adoptive parent has passed away?
- If I was placed in a legal guardianship after I turned 16 and my legal guardian kicked me out?

What if that youth who is eligible wants to re-enter after closing their case?

- May re-enter *unlimited times* if under 21
- Re-entry is intended to be *accessible and easy*
- How to re-enter:
 - Call the hotline
 - Dependency — 800.540.4000
 - Probation — 213.351.0243
 - Youth can also file for re-entry at court

Non-Minor Dependent Court

- April 2016: Specialized court created in LA County for all non-minor dependents (youth in extended foster care)
- One law firm (with attorneys and case managers) represent all youth
- One judge hears all cases

PLACEMENT OPTIONS FOR NMDS

Placement settings

- **Traditional placement options still available to NMDs:**
 - Foster Home:
 - Approved home of relative or extended family member
 - Home of a Nonrelated Legal Guardian
 - Foster Family Home
 - Group Home (with limitations)
- **2 Placement Options just for NMDs:**
 - THP+ Foster Care
 - Supervised Independent Living (SILP)

THP+FC

- Transitional Housing Program + Foster Care
- Supportive housing model
- Scattered site, single site, host family
- Placements are limited

SILP overview

Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) settings may include but not limited to:

- Apartment
- Renting a room within a house
- Shared roommate settings
- Dorms

Two-step approval process: social worker must determine that youth is ready to live independently and that the living situation is safe

OTHER LEGAL ADVOCACY

Forms of Legal Advocacy

- Administrative Complaints
 - Credit and Collections Issues
 - Identity Theft
- Administrative Advocacy
 - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
 - Student Debt (e.g., for-profit colleges)
- State Court Litigation
 - Sub-prime Auto Lending
 - Other Unfair/Deceptive Business Practices
- Juvenile Court
 - Dismissing Tickets
 - Sealing Records

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM SERVICES

What is the Independent Living Program (ILP)?

- Program administered by DCFS to support youth as they transition out of care
- Existed prior to extension of foster care to age 21
- Goals:
 - Stability
 - Economic Well-Being
 - Social and Emotional Well-Being
 - Education and Work Force Readiness

Eligibility for ILP

- Were/are in foster care (including Probation youth in suitable placement) at any time from their 16th to their 19th birthday.
- Were/are 16 years of age up to 18 years of age and in receipt of the KinGAP assistance.
- Were/are in a non-related legal guardianship with dependency court jurisdiction terminated after the age of 8.
- **Youth are eligible for ILP services up to age 21**

ILP Supports for Education

- Senior Expenses: cap/gown, senior prom ticket, graduation invitations, yearbook/senior photographs, etc.
- High School Graduation Incentives
- Tuition Assistance: college/university or vocational training
- Books, Supplies, Fees
- Clothing for school
- Transportation
- Laptop, Printer, & Computer Classes

Other ILP Supports

- Supportive Housing Program
- Rental Assistance
- Move-in/Security Deposit Costs
- Appliances
- Emergency Food Assistance
- Medical Expenses

NOTE: These services are not all available to all ILP youth.

HOW DO I ACCESS ILP SUPPORT?

Accessing ILP Funds

1. Identify Your ILP Coordinator

- If you don't know who your ILP coordinator is, contact your CSW/PO or ILP:

<https://www.ilponline.org/ContactILP/>

2. Discuss Your Needs with Your ILP Coordinator

- If you don't have a one, your CSW/PO or ILP coordinator will help you complete a Transitional Independent Living Plan

3. Review Request for Funds Checklist to make sure you submit correct documentation

- You will need to have **original receipts**

4. Make Copies of Request and Supporting Documentation

3. Submit Request for Reimbursement

4. Follow up with ILP Coordinator

Practice Tips

1. ILP is **NOT** an entitlement
2. Confirm eligibility for reimbursement **before** you spend
3. Keep all original receipts and make copies
4. Reimbursements typically take at least 60 days
5. Be your own best advocate!

Addressing Problems with ILP

1. DCFS Ombudsman Office
 - Phone: (213) 351-5720
 - Email: pinquiries@dcfs.lacounty.gov
2. California Foster Care Ombudsman Office
 - Phone: 1-877-846-1602
 - Email: fosteryouthhelp@dss.ca.gov
3. Alliance for Children's Rights
 - Phone: (213) 368-6010 – ask for Intake

ILP Housing Program

- Eligibility: Ages 18-21 with **Closed** Foster Care Case
- Transitional Housing Program
 - You will most likely have 1 or 2 roommates
- ILP Coordinator can assist with application

ILP vs. EFC

- ILP provides many different supports and services to youth to assist them as they transition OUT of care
 - While ILP services can be accessed by youth once they are 16, some of these services are only available once their case is closed (e.g., rental assistance)
- EFC is only available if a youth remains IN care
 - Youth has to agree to have an open court case and continue meeting with a social worker

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO™

<http://knowb4ugo.org/>



QUESTIONS?

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