



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 11: Older Youth Services

Section 06: Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood

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POLICY OVERVIEW

The Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood and its Transitional Services Plan component is a comprehensive, written plan that is personalized for each youth. The Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood is used at each meeting with the youth and the Child and Family Team (CFT) to guide the transition planning process and assist the youth in preparing to successfully transition to adulthood.

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PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will ensure a written Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood is developed, which identifies an Independent Living (IL) placement, for all youth in out-of-home placement beginning at 14 years of age and continuing until the youth leaves care. The plan shall be:

1. Youth-focused and developed with the assistance of DCS and members of the youth's CFT, including up to two (2) child representatives;
2. As detailed as the youth elects;
3. An outline of the Older Youth Services (OYS) the youth will receive (see policy 11.01 Older Youth Services);
4. Focused on short-term and long-term achievable and measurable goals;
5. Updated every six (6) months until the youth's case is closed; and
6. Given to the youth at each update (see the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood for more information).

Note: A Transitional Services Plan must be completed 90 days before the youth turns 18 years of age. See the Transitional Services Plan section of the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood. If the youth enters out-of-home placement after 90 days before the youth's 18th birthday, a Transitional Services Plan will be developed within 60 days of the out-of-home placement. Probation Officers are responsible for completing the Transition Plan for probation youth. See policy 2.25 Dual Status for guidance regarding cases involving Dual Status youth.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Review the composition of the current CFT with the youth prior to each meeting to determine the appropriateness of that team continuing as the youth's CFT. The FCM should advise that the youth may select up to two (2) child representatives, and they should be members of the CFT. If it is determined that the existing CFT should not serve

this role, a new CFT will be developed with input from the youth regarding the team's membership;

Note: If DCS determines that the youth is unable to participate effectively in the development of the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood due to a physical, mental, emotional, or intellectual disability, DCS may excuse the youth from the planning process by documenting in the plan the reasons for the youth's inability to participate in the development of the plan.

2. Convene a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting, which may take place during a CFT Meeting or Case Plan Conference (see policies 5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings and 5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan) and includes the youth, beginning at 14 years of age, to develop the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood;
3. The Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood must include information and specific options relating to the following:
 - a. Education and training;
 - b. Employment services and work force supports;
 - c. IL placement;
 - d. Health care, including prevention and treatment services and referral information;
 - e. Health insurance availability and options;
 - f. Local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, including development of lifelong adult relationships and informal continuing supports;
 - g. Identification and development of daily living and problem-solving skills;
 - h. Procedures available under Indiana law for, and the importance of advance directives (see Practice Guidance);
 - i. Availability of local, state, and federal resources including financial assistance, relating to any parts of the plan described above; and
 - j. OYS, which may include any of the following kinds of services that are intended to prepare the youth for self-support and living arrangements that are self-sufficient and not subject to supervision by another individual or institution:
 - i. Arrangements for the youth to participate in CC for a youth who is 17 and six (6) months of age or older, if appropriate,
 - ii. Activities of daily living and social skills training,
 - iii. Opportunities for social, cultural, recreational, or spiritual activities that are designed to expand life experiences in a manner appropriate for the youth, and
 - iv. Matching of a youth on a voluntary basis with caring adults to act as mentors and assist the youth to establish lifelong connections with caring adults.
4. Ensure a referral for OYS is completed for youth at the appropriate age, given the youth's placement (see policy 11.01 Older Youth Services);

Note: Review the Older Youth Services (OYS) Timeline for further guidance.

5. Ensure eligible youth in out-of-home placement as a "ward of another state" are receiving OYS as requested by the sending state of the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) and a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood is prepared following the schedule outlined below and in the Older Youth Services (OYS) Timeline; and

6. Provide the Indiana DCS Bill of Rights for Youth in Care and review the document with youth beginning at age 14 and review at each subsequent Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting.

The FCM or Older Youth Case Manager (OYCM) will:

1. Hold follow-up meetings every six (6) months until case closure to review and update the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood. See below for a list of required items to be discussed at each CFT Meeting and review the Older Youth Services (OYS) Timeline; and
2. Hold a Case Plan Conference with the youth if the youth is unable to or refuses to participate in the CFT process (see policy 5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan).

Note: If the youth is unable to participate, document in the plan the reasons for the youth's inability to participate in the development of the plan. If the youth refuses to participate, document the efforts made to obtain the child's input or participation in the development of the plan.

Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood Schedule

At 14 years of age, the FCM will:

1. Assist the youth in applying for the 21st Century Scholars Program if the youth is not already enrolled (see policy 11.15 Post-Secondary Education);

Note: Ensure youth who enter care after 14 years of age and are in 7th through 12th grade are enrolled in the 21st Century Scholars program.

2. Make a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Services for all youth with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP);
3. Engage the CFT to develop the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood. This initial plan shall:
 - a. Address the youth's current level of IL skills mastery,
 - b. Identify IL skills to work on,
 - c. Set goals in identified areas of need, and
 - d. Determine methods to achieve these goals.

Note: The Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood must be updated at least every six (6) months until case closure.

4. Assist the youth in creating and/or updating a Successful Adulthood Lifebook.

At 16 years of age, the FCM will:

1. Convene a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting to review the initial Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood and update the goals as needed;

Note: Beginning at 16 years of age, the youth must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification Letter, at the time of case closure. When the youth is 16 years of age, if the case has transitioned, a OYCM may take on the responsibilities of reviewing and updating the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood.

2. Make a referral for OYS for youth placed in a DCS licensed foster home, unlicensed relative placements, or non-licensed court approved placements; and

Note: If the youth has been referred to the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities (BDDS), a referral for OYS should be staffed with a member of the Older Youth Initiatives (OYI) Team to determine if a referral for OYS is appropriate.

3. Ensure the youth has and/or is updating a Successful Adulthood Lifebook.

Note: At each subsequent Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting, the FCM or OYCM should ensure the youth has a Successful Adulthood Lifebook and/or ensure it is being updated.

At 17 years of age, the FCM or OYCM will:

1. Convene a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting to focus on goals to be achieved before the youth leaves out-of-home placement, including post-secondary options, employment, and housing;

Note: Beginning at 16 years of age, the youth must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification Letter (SF 56571), at the time of case closure.

2. Invite a member of the OYI or CC Team to attend the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting to present information regarding Older Youth Services (OYS);
3. Provide the youth with information regarding post-secondary financial aid, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), federal aid such as Pell grants, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) Education and Training Voucher (ETV) grant, and the Indiana Commission of Higher Education's Division of Student Financial Aid. See policies 11.10 Education and Training Voucher Program and 11.15 Post-Secondary Education for further information; and

Note: Each Indiana emancipated Senior or the parent, guardian, or custodian of an unemancipated Senior is required to be provided an affirmation link by the Senior's school regarding the intent to file a FAFSA. It is recommended to remind the youth and members of the youth's CFT of the affirmation. The FCM will make a referral to the Education Services Team if the youth would like additional support processing and/or applying the career and college information provided on the affirmation link. All information above should be provided earlier if the youth is applying to colleges before 17 years of age/Senior year or if the youth is pursuing a High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma.

4. Ensure that the youth and the caregiver have signed the Acknowledgement of Receipt of Information about Various Educational Programs. Give the youth and caregiver a copy and place the original in the child's case file and upload in the case management system.

At 17 years of age, a member of the OYI or CC Team will:

1. Attend the youth's Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting/Case Plan Conference to present information regarding OYS; and

Note: Beginning at 16 years of age, the youth must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification Letter, at the time of case closure.

2. Complete the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Youth Outcomes Survey, as applicable (see policy 11.17 National Youth in Transition Database [NYTD]).

At age 17 years and six (6) months, the FCM or OYCM will:

1. Convene a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting to focus on preparing the youth for transitioning to CC (see policy 11.21 Collaborative Care Case Transfers) or transitioning out of out-of-home placement;
2. Continue to assist the youth in identifying the youth's interests, possible career options, post-secondary education possibilities, and employment possibilities; and
3. Make a referral for OYS for a youth whose DCS case will be dismissed at 18 years of age if the youth is placed in a LCPA foster home, group home, residential facility, or at home on a THV.

Note: Beginning at 16 years of age, the youth must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification Letter, at the time of case closure.

Ninety (90) days before the youth's 18th birthday, the FCM or OYCM will:

1. Convene a Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood meeting to complete the Transitional Services Plan portion of the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood;

Note: Beginning at 16 years of age, the youth must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification Letter, at the time of case closure.

2. Ensure the youth has received the Advance Directive packet (available on the Older Youth Initiatives website), is given the chance to watch the video explaining the packet, and is provided information and education regarding the importance of designating a health representative to make health decisions and the importance of executing a health care power of attorney, health care proxy, or other similar document recognized under State law; and

Note: The FCM/ OYCM cannot give legal advice. The FCM/ OYCM shall not be the health care legal representative for any youth known to DCS unless the FCM/ OYCM is given advance approval of this arrangement by the Regional Manager (RM) for FCM or the OYI Manager or designee for OYCMs.

3. Confirm the youth is enrolled in Medicaid.

After the youth turns 18 years of age, the FCM or OYCM will send the Medicaid Enrollment Unit (MEU) an e-mail to confirm the Medicaid case indicates the youth is a ward at the age of 18 so the youth is eligible for Medicaid for Former Indiana Foster Children (MA 15).

The FCM Supervisor or OYCM Supervisor will:

1. Provide regular case staffing to the FCM or OYCM;
2. Ensure the FCM or OYCM has completed the appropriate sections of the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood at the appropriate times, as outlined above; and

3. Assist the FCM or OYCM in completing referrals, as needed.

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RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Advance Directives

“Advance directives” is a term that refers to spoken and written instructions about an individual’s future medical care and treatment.

Case Staffing

Case staffing is a systematic and frequent review of all case information with safety, stability, permanency, and well-being as driving forces for case activities.

Older Youth Services

The purpose of OYS is to:

1. Assist identified youth who are expected to remain in foster care until their 18th birthday or after in making the transition to self-sufficiency;
2. Help identified youth receive the necessary education, training, and services to overcome potential barriers to employment;
3. Help youth prepare for and enter post-secondary education and/or training programs;
4. Provide personal and emotional support for youth aging out of foster care;
5. Assist youth in locating and identifying community resources that will be available to the youth after DCS involvement has ended; and
6. Encourage positive personal growth in older youth through “teachable moments”.

Forms and Tools

- [21st Century Scholars Program](#)
- [Acknowledgement of Receipt of Information about Various Educational Programs \(SF 55743\)](#)
- [Advance Directives packet](#)- Available on the [Older Youth Initiatives](#) website
- [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\) grant](#)
- [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)
- [Foster Care Verification Letter \(SF 56571\)](#)
- [Indiana Commission of Higher Education's Division of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Indiana DCS Bill of Rights for Youth in Care](#)
- [Indiana State Department of Health](#)
- [Older Youth Initiatives](#)
- [Older Youth Services \(OYS\) Timeline](#)
- [Pell grants](#)
- [Transition Plan \(TP072117JDJS\)](#)
- [Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood \(SF 55166\)](#)
- [Vocational Rehabilitation Services](#)

Related Policies

- [2.25 Dual Status](#)
- [5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings](#)
- [5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan](#)
- [11.01 Older Youth Services](#)
- [11.10 Education and Training Voucher Program](#)

- [11.15 Post-Secondary Education](#)
- [11.17 National Youth in Transition Database \(NYTD\)](#)
- [11.21 Collaborative Care Case Transfers](#)

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LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 21-12-6: Twenty-First Century Scholars Program; Tuition Grants](#)
- [IC 31-25-2-21: Transitional services plan; participation by child representatives](#)
- [IC 31-28-5.8-6: Updating case plans; transitional services plan; visitation with family case manager](#)
- [IC 31-34-15-7: Consult with child; selection of child representatives; adviser](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-7: Permanency hearing](#)
- [42 USC 675\(5\)\(H\): Transition Plan for Children Aging Out of Foster Care](#)
- [42 USC 677 John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood](#)

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 11.06

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

Advance Directives

By stating health care choices in an advance directive, this allows family members and physicians to understand the individual's wishes about medical care. Indiana law pays special attention to advance directives.

Advance directives are normally one (1) or more documents that list the individual's health care instructions. An advance directive may name a person of choice to make health care choices for when the individual is unable to make the choices. The individual may also use an advance directive to prevent certain people from making health care decisions on one's behalf. For more information go to the Indiana State Department of Health or Older Youth Initiatives websites.

Child Representatives

The child representatives must be at least 18 years of age, members of the CFT, and may not be a foster parent or FCM. The youth may select one (1) of the child representatives to also be an adviser and, if necessary, advocate for age-appropriate activities. Child representatives are subject to the approval of DCS, and they may be rejected if there is cause to believe that they would not act in the best interest of the child.

Successful Adulthood Lifebook

At 14 years of age, at the CFT Meeting, each youth should begin developing a Successful Adulthood Lifebook. The Successful Adulthood Lifebook should provide information to help the youth become independent and should include space to store important documents as well as other personal items the youth may want to keep. The youth's FCM, therapist, resource parent, OYI Team member, or OYS provider may assist the youth, if necessary, in locating items for completing the Successful Adulthood Lifebook. There is no pre-set format for a Successful Adulthood Lifebook. The Successful Adulthood Lifebook should be individualized and tailored to fit the youth's needs. The Successful Adulthood Lifebook may contain, but is not limited to:

1. Photographs of the youth;
2. Photographs of persons and places that were significant in the youth's life prior to and while being placed in out-of-home placement;
3. Items related to school and extracurricular activities, (e.g., report cards, certificates, artwork, awards);
4. Important documents the youth may need as the youth exits the foster care system (e.g., birth certificate, Social Security card, medical record, vaccination record); and
5. Short summaries of significant events that have occurred in the child's life.

Note: The Successful Adulthood Lifebook is the property of the youth and should remain with the youth through any placement changes.

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