


**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201**

DATE: December 1, 2014

POLICY #: SSA-CW # 15-14

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Assistant Directors, Local Departments of Social Services

FROM: 
Deborah Ramelmeier, Acting Executive Director
Social Services Administration

RE: Annual Notice of Benefits for Youth in Out-of-Home Placement

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Out of Home Placement Services

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Out of Home Placement Services

ACTION REQUIRED OF: All Child Welfare Services Staff

REQUIRED ACTION: Instructions for Distribution of the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure

ACTION DUE DATE: December 15, 2014

CONTACT PERSON: Jill Taylor, LCSW-C
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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy directive is to outline instructional guidelines for distributing the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure for all youth ages 13 to 21 in an Out-of-Home Placement. The Annual Notice of Benefits brochure will ensure that youth, in out-of-home placement, annually receive information regarding benefits that the youth may be eligible for upon leaving out-of-home placement.

BACKGROUND:

Effective October 1, 2014, Family Law Article Section 5-525 (k) of the Annotated Code of Maryland requires the Social Services Administration to provide a child at least 13 years old information regarding benefits available to the child on leaving out-of-home care. In compliance with this law, the Social Services Administration created the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure. The brochure identifies benefits and services youth may be eligible to receive if they leave out-of-home placement between the ages of 13 and 21. The brochure will be provided to the youth annually to maintain compliance with the law.

GOALS:

- To formally ensure all youth, from ages 13 to 21, in out-of-home placement have information about benefits they may be eligible to receive upon leaving out-of-home placement.

Eligibility Requirements:

The Annual Notice of Benefits brochure shall be provided to all youth who are at least 13 years old in an Out-of-Home Placement regardless of permanency plan goal(s) or living arrangement type. This includes youth under a Voluntary Placement Agreement.

Protocol for Distribution of Annual Notice of Benefits brochure:

- Youth shall receive the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure once a year between the months of October 1st and September 30th during at least one of their Permanency Planning or Review Hearings.
- At the time of the youth's Permanency Planning or Review Hearing, caseworkers or representatives from the Local Department of Social Services shall provide the brochure to the youth during or prior to the court hearing. Prior to the court hearing means immediately before going into the court room.
- Since court proceedings are different in every jurisdiction, caseworkers shall request the assistance of the legal counsel representing the Local Department of Social Services to determine the most appropriate time to inform the court on the record that the youth received the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure.
- Caseworkers shall document that the brochure was provided to the youth in MD CHESSIE.

Documentation in MD CHESSIE:

1. All Permanency Planning or Review hearings shall be documented in the Court folder under the Family or Client Case Record in MD CHESSIE.
2. After opening the Court Folder, click on “Court Hearing,” and select “New.”
3. After selecting “New,” then complete all highlighted fields within the Hearing Details Tab: (See Figure 1 Below)

The screenshot shows the 'Hearing Details' form in MD CHESSIE. The form is divided into several sections. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Hearing Details' (selected) and 'Court Order'. Below the tabs, there are two dropdown menus: 'Client Name' and 'Court Case No', both highlighted in yellow. Below these are two 'Select' buttons: 'Parties' and '* Hearing Type', both highlighted in yellow. Below the 'Parties' button is a text box for '* Hearing Date' with the value '00/00/0000'. Below the '* Hearing Date' is a checkbox for 'No Further Involvement with Court'. Below the 'No Further Involvement with Court' checkbox are two dropdown menus: '* State of Jurisdiction' (value: Maryland) and '* County of Jurisdiction' (value: Cecil), both highlighted in yellow. Below the '* State of Jurisdiction' dropdown is a text box for 'Master's Name'. Below the '* County of Jurisdiction' dropdown is a text box for 'Judge's Name'. Below the 'Master's Name' text box is a dropdown menu for '* Hearing Status', highlighted in yellow. Below the 'Judge's Name' text box is a dropdown menu for 'Next Hearing Type', highlighted in yellow. Below the '* Hearing Status' dropdown is a text box for 'Next Hearing Date' with the value '00/00/0000'. Below the 'Next Hearing Type' dropdown is a text box for 'Next Hearing Time' with the value '00:00 AM'. Below the 'Next Hearing Date' text box is a checkbox for 'Exception/Appeal Filed'. Below the 'Next Hearing Time' text box is a text box for 'Comments' with the value 'Youth received the Annual Notice of Benefits brochure.' Below the 'Comments' text box is an 'Edit' button. At the bottom of the form are three links: 'Exception/Appeal', 'Court Case Number', and 'Collaterals'.

** Figure 1*

4. Within the “Comments” box of the Hearing Details tab, caseworkers shall type the following statement, “Youth received an Annual Notice of Benefits brochure.”
5. Save & Exit.

Aftercare Services

Two Types of Aftercare Services:

Short-Term Independent Living Aftercare Services:

Eligibility

For youth that left foster care after their 18th birthday and have not reached the age of 21 or; youth that have exited foster care via adoption or guardianship after their 16th birthday

Types of Services:

- Financial Assistance;
- Life Skills Classes;
- Temporary Assistance with utilities, room, and board;
- Counseling;
- Educational Services;
- Employment Assistance;
- Medical Assistance;
- Other appropriate services to assist with self-sufficiency.

Enhanced Aftercare Services:

Eligibility

Only for Maryland foster youth that left foster care after their 18th birthday and have not reached the age of 20 and 6 months

Types of Services:

- Enter into a Voluntary Placement Service Agreement
- Placement Services
- Case Management
- Monthly Visitation with Case Management
- Service Planning



Maryland Youth
Launching Initiatives
For Empowerment!

Web Links

Use: www.MDConnectMYLIFE.org
for updates, news, and information on
everything (including):

To get the link to your Free Application for
Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

To Learn **MORE** about these services and
Advocacy Events

Find your local **Department of Social Services**

Stay in touch with us and your local **Independent
Living Coordinator(s)**

Information regarding **Summer Youth Employment
Programs** in your area

Use: www.MDgo4it.org for additional
information and to apply for the **Maryland Tuition
Waiver**.

Use: www.statevoucher.org for additional
information and to apply to receive the **Education
Training Voucher**.



Maryland Department of Human Resources
Social Services Administration

311 W. Saratoga Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
www.dhr.maryland.gov

ARE YOU LEAVING FOSTER CARE?

Here's what you Need to Know:



Benefits for Youth -
Ages 13 to 21
Leaving Foster Care

I'm Leaving Foster Care, What Benefits Am I Eligible For?

Youth leave foster care when they have achieved permanency. Permanency can be achieved in various ways through adoption, guardianship, reunification, or self-sufficiency. This brochure highlights some benefits and resources that you are eligible to receive when you leave foster care at various stages. Take a look at what we've identified:

Youth: Ages 13-15

- A foster youth may be eligible for the **Maryland Tuition Waiver** if the youth was in foster care at the time the youth graduated from high school or completed a GED program or who after age 13 was adopted or placed into guardianship.

Youth: Ages 16-17

- A foster youth may be eligible for the **Maryland Tuition Waiver** if the youth was in foster care at the time the youth graduated from high school or completed a GED program or who after age 13 was adopted or placed into guardianship.
- The **Education Training Voucher (ETV)** provides financial assistance to youth for their educational/vocational expenses. This service is for youth who were adopted or in guardianship.
- And if you **EXIT** to Adoption or Guardianship, then you may be eligible for **Short-Term Independent Living Aftercare Services**.

Youth: Ages 18-21

- A foster youth may be eligible for the **Maryland Tuition Waiver** if the youth was in foster care at the time the youth graduated from high school or completed a GED program or who after age 13 was adopted or placed into guardianship. The waiver applies to public universities and colleges within the state of Maryland.
- **Education Training Voucher (ETV)** provides financial assistance to youth for their educational/vocational expenses, and applies to youth that have left foster care after 18 but have not reached the age 21;
- **Medical Insurance Coverage** until 26 years old;
- **Eligible for Independent Living Aftercare Services or Enhanced Aftercare Voluntary Placement Service Agreement.**
- **Housing Services:**
AIRS/Empire Homes: Transitional Housing Program for young adults 18-21.
Website: <http://www.airshome.org>



Hope Forward Inc.

"Connects transitioning and former foster youth ages 17-25 to housing, employment, educational and mental health resources and supportive individuals and networks."

Website: <http://www.hope-forward.org/>

Hotlines:

- Maryland Youth Crisis Line: 1-800-422-0009
- Maryland Non-Emergency Line: 3-1-1
- To Find MD Resources: 2-1-1 or 1-800-332-6347
- Suicide Hotline: 301-864-7130
- Homeless Hotline: 1-888-731-0999
- Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-332-6347
- Youth Helpline: 1-800-555-1345
- National Runaway Switchboard: 1-800-RUNAWAY

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