



# FACT SHEET



## **Extended Foster Care (EFC) Program**

### **Background**

The California Fostering Connections to Success Act was signed into law September 30, 2010 through Assembly Bill (AB) 12 and became effective January 1, 2012. The bill and subsequent legislation allowed foster care for eligible youth to extend beyond age 18 up to age 21. Eligible foster youth are designated as “nonminor dependents” (NMDs). This legislation also recognized the importance of family and permanency for youth by extending payment benefits and transitional support services for eligible youth in the Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP) Program and youth under Non-related Legal Guardianships (NRLGs).

### **EFC Goals and Benefits**

- Foster youth will be able to maintain a safety net of support while experiencing independence in a supervised living environment.
- Provides youth extended time in care to address the effects of trauma, obtain educational and employment training opportunities, and develop permanent connections to supportive adults.
- NMDs can continue participating in the Independent Living Program (ILP) which helps youth gain the knowledge and skills needed for self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood.

### **Eligibility for EFC**

- The youth must be at least 18 years old but under 21 years of age.
- The youth must be subject to a foster care placement order on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, placing them under the care, custody and control of a county child welfare agency, probation department or tribal agency.
- The youth must meet one of the following criteria after reaching age 18:
  1. Working toward completion of high school or equivalent program (e.g. GED);  
or
  2. Enrolled in college, community college or a vocational education program; or
  3. Employed at least 80 hours a month; or
  4. Participating in a program designed to assist in gaining employment; or
  5. Unable to do one of the above requirements because of a documented medical condition.



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- The youth and their Social Worker/Probation Officer must work together to develop a Transitional Independent Living Case Plan (TILCP) which includes the youth's plan for transition to independence.
- Youth must sign an agreement to meet with a social worker/probation officer once a month and work to meet the goals outlined in their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP).
- To receive a foster care payment, the NMD must reside in an eligible placement (see below).
- Remaining in foster care after age 18 is voluntary. Non-minor dependents can exit at age 18 or at any subsequent time before age 21. Youth who exit at age 18 can petition the juvenile court to re-enter foster care at any time before age 21.

## **Placement Options**

Eligible placement options for NMDs include:

- A certified Resource Family Home; the home of a relative or Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM); licensed foster family home; certified foster family agency home; or the home of a non-related legal guardian if the guardianship was established in juvenile court and the youth is still under juvenile court jurisdiction with a foster care placement order.
- A Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) or a group home (youth may remain in a group home after age 19 only if the criteria for a medical condition is met and the placement is a short-term transition to an appropriate system of care).
- A Transitional Housing Placement Program for Nonminor Dependents (THPP-NMD), formerly known as THP+FC. This placement option provides housing and intensive support services. There are three housing models:
  - Host Family where the NMD lives with a caring adult who has been selected and approved by the transitional housing provider
  - Staffed Site where the NMD lives in an apartment, condominium or single family dwelling rented or leased by the housing provider with an employee(s) living on site
  - Remote Site where the NMD lives independently in one of the housing types listed above with regular supervision from the provider.
- A Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP). This placement option allows youth to live independently in a variety of settings. They can live alone or with a roommate(s), while still receiving supervision from a social worker/probation officer. Youth must be determined to be ready for a SILP through the use of a SILP Readiness Assessment and the housing unit must meet health and safety standards



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as determined through a facility inspection. The youth may receive all or part of the foster care payment directly, pursuant to the SILP agreement form (SOC 157A).

## **Extended Benefits for Adopted Youth and Youth who were in Guardianships**

Youth who receive Adoption Assistance Payments (AAP), Kin-Guardianship Assistance Payments (Kin-GAP), or Non-Related Legal Guardianship (NRLG) payments are eligible to continue receiving payments to age 21 if they meet the following requirements.

1. The AAP or Kin-GAP negotiated payment agreement was signed after the youth turned age 16, or;
2. An adopted youth or youth in a Kin-GAP guardianship has a documented disability, or;
3. Youth in a NRLG or a Kin-GAP guardianship with a Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) are automatically eligible for extended benefits to age 21.

Additionally, the youth must participate in the development of their TILCP and meet at least one of the participation criteria listed above.

## **Additional information**

- Youth who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria, who are married and/or custodial parents, have the same rights to participate in foster care after age 18 as all other youth. The infant supplement is available to parenting NMDs.
- Youth who are consumers of Regional Center services can continue to receive dual agency and supplemental rates.
- Youth who meet the eligibility requirements to receive funds from the Social Security Administration instead of a foster care payment are eligible for EFC.

For more information, visit: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Foster-Care/Extended-Foster-Care-AB-12>.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Transition Age Youth Policy Unit at (916) 651-7465 or [TAYPolicy@dss.ca.gov](mailto:TAYPolicy@dss.ca.gov).