



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

---

*Child Protective Services*

**Extended Foster Care  
Resource Guide**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**..... 1

*Rationale* ..... 1

        Increase Preparedness ..... 1

        Participate in Voluntary Program ..... 1

        Respect Status as Young Adults ..... 1

        Description of Rights and Responsibilities ..... 1

*Preparing for and turning 18*..... 1

*Redetermining Foster Care Eligibility at 18* ..... 1

        Acceptable Documentation ..... 2

        Educational Services: High School, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Programs, Vocational and Technical Schools, Colleges and Universities ..... 2

        Employment..... 2

        Programs or Activities to Promote or Remove Barriers to Employment ..... 2

        Inability to Perform Either Educational or Work Related Activity Because of a Medical Condition ..... 3

        Monitoring Continued Participation ..... 4

*Temporary Absences from Extended Foster Care* ..... 4

        Types of Temporary Absences ..... 4

*Young Adults Receiving Social Security Benefits* ..... 5

*Young Adults in HHSC Guardianship in DFPS Foster Care Placements* ..... 6

*Young Adult Refuses to Sign VEFCO Financial Agreement* ..... 6

*Young Adult with Dependent Children* ..... 6

        Creating Case Related Special Request (CRSR) Case/Stage for Babies of Young Adults in SIL Placements ..... 7

**CASEWORK ACTIVITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**..... 7

    Monthly Face to Face Visits ..... 7

    Service Plan for Young Adults 18 and Older ..... 8

    Medical Consenter Issues and Documentation..... 8

    Young Adult with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability Missing from Extended Foster Care Placement..... 8

*Ongoing Review of Eligibility for Extended Foster Care* ..... 9

*Returning to Extended Foster care After Trial Eligibility Period Ends* ..... 9

**SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)**..... 11

*Rights and Responsibilities of Young Adults While in a SIL Setting* ..... 11

*Types of SIL Settings*..... 11

*Referral, Assesment, and Approval Process for SIL Placements* ..... 12

        Referral for SIL Placement Readiness..... 12

        Prescreening for SIL Placement..... 12

        SIL Application and Assessment..... 12

        Referral to the SIL Coordinator in State Office..... 13

        Referral to and Approval by a DFPS SIL Provider ..... 13

        Young Adult Not Accepted Into a SIL Placement ..... 14

        DFPS Denies a Young Adult’s Application ..... 14

        Review of SIL Determination..... 14

        SIL Provider Denies a Young Adult’s Application..... 14

        Reapplication After SIL Application Is Denied ..... 15

*Initial Placement Process* ..... 15

        IMPACT Process ..... 15

        Notifications..... 15

        Documentation of Young Adults with Dependent Children ..... 15

*Subsequent Placement Process with Same DFPS SIL Provider* ..... 15

*Ongoing Caseworker Duties During SIL Placement* ..... 16

*Discharges from the SIL Program* ..... 16

        Planned SIL Discharge ..... 16

        Change of DFPS SIL Providers..... 17

        Discharge From the SIL Program to a Traditional Extended Foster Care Setting ..... 17

        Transition Plan Review for Discharge From SIL and Extended Foster Care to Independence or Trial Independence..... 17

Emergency Discharge From the SIL Program ..... 18  
Emergency Discharge from the SIL Program to Trial Independence..... 18  
Additional Discharge Actions ..... 19  
*Discharge from Extended Foster Care* .....19  
Planned Discharges from Extended Foster Care ..... 19  
Emergency Discharge from Extended Foster Care..... 20  
Actions to Prevent an Unplanned Discharge..... 20



## **Resource Guides**

The purpose of Resource Guides is to provide information that helps you do your job better. This information includes reference material, procedures, and guidelines that help you complete the tasks you are required to do by policy.

It's important to remember that the information in Resource Guides **does not substitute for policy**. We may sometimes include policy statements, but only to show you the policy to which the information is related. We will highlight any policy that actually appears in the Resource Guide, and will almost always include a link to the actual policy. For example:

***Per [4222.2 Re-Allowing Placement](#):***

If the caseworker learns of a detailed justification for changing the status of and considering placements in a foster family that is on Disallowed Placement status, the caseworker must elevate this consideration through the regional chain of command to the regional director.

The policy in the handbook always takes precedence over what is in the Resource Guide. We try to keep policy and Resource Guides synchronized, but sometimes there is a delay. **If you have questions, always follow the policy in the Policy Handbook.**

Resource Guides provide important information on a range of topics, for the purpose of assisting and guiding staff to:

- make essential decisions
- develop strategies to address various issues
- perform essential procedures
- understand important processes
- identify and apply best practices

The information in the Resource Guides is not policy (except where noted), and the actions and approaches described here are not mandates. You should adapt the way you perform critical tasks to the individual needs and circumstances of the children and families with whom you work.

State office and field staff are working together to identify Resource Guide topics, define the content, and develop the appropriate guides. CPS will regularly post Resource Guides as they are developed, and update them as needed. Check the Resource Guides page, in the CPS Handbook, to see new or revised Guides.

We hope these Guides provide useful information to guide and assist CPS staff in effectively performing their job tasks. These Guides, combined with clear and concise policy in the Handbook, should help staff provide a high level of service to children in Texas.



## EXTENDED FOSTER CARE

See [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older.

### RATIONALE

DFPS managing conservatorship of a child ends on the date of the child's 18th birthday, as he or she becomes an adult under Texas law.

#### Increase Preparedness

Some young adults may not be ready or may not choose to leave foster care at age 18. Other young adults have left care at 18 but have had problems and want to return to continue addressing transition plan goals.

#### Participate in Voluntary Program

Young adults may choose to participate in Extended Foster Care if certain requirements are met and if there is an available placement. A young adult signs the [Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement](#) to authorize DFPS to provide him or her with this program. The Extended Foster Care placements include those listed in [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older, and supervised independent living placements listed in [10460](#) Supervised Independent Living (SIL).

#### Respect Status as Young Adults

Many of the same processes and requirements exist for young adults who remain in foster care past their 18th birthday and for children under the age of 18. However, young adults in Extended Foster Care are adults with different needs and legal rights than younger children. Staff needs to take this into account when providing support and services for these young adults.

#### Description of Rights and Responsibilities

For regular Extended Foster Care placements, see [Form 2541](#) Extended Care: Client Rights and Responsibilities.

### PREPARING FOR AND TURNING 18

#### Within 90 Days of Turning 18

When a 17 year old youth in foster care chooses to stay for Extended Foster Care, follow the policy noted in [10411](#) Within 90 Days Before the Youth's 18th Birthday.

#### As Soon as Possible After the 18th Birthday

For youth staying for Extended Foster Care, follow the policy noted in [10412](#) As Soon as Possible After the 18th Birthday.

### REDETERMINING FOSTER CARE ELIGIBILITY AT 18

See [10420](#) Qualifying for Extended Foster Care.

If a young adult decides to remain for Extended Foster Care, the caseworker completes the necessary paperwork (verification of the young adult's participation in an education or work-related activity and a Foster Care Review for Extended Foster Care eligibility) and submits it to the foster care eligibility specialist for approval. If it is not approved, the young adult's foster care placement and the foster care eligibility ends on the last day of the month of the young adult's 18th birthday.

**Acceptable Documentation**

Caseworkers provide annual verification to the eligibility specialist, ensuring that the young adult meets at least one of the educational and work related criteria for Extended Foster Care assistance. The caseworker indicates the qualifying criterion on the Extended Foster Care review form. The caseworker responds to the determination questions in the Extended Foster Care section of the *Foster Care Review* page in IMPACT and submits the review form to the eligibility specialist through IMPACT. The caseworker also submits documentation to the eligibility specialist to show proof of the young adult's eligibility.

As a requirement for Extended Foster Care eligibility, young adults must agree to maintain documentation of all education or employment related activities. Upon request by the caregiver or the caseworker, the young adult will provide verification of attendance, participation, or enrollment in the selected activity.

Acceptable methods or types of verification vary by Extended Foster Care eligibility criteria and are further described below.

**Educational Services: High School, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) Programs, Vocational and Technical Schools, Colleges and Universities**

Acceptable documentation includes the following:

- Current college transcript that includes the number of hours completed
- Proof of enrollment for the current semester that includes the number of hours enrolled
- Most recent high school report cards
- GED class schedules, testing schedules or final exam results
- Letters of acceptance to a college, vocational or technical school (with a start date), or other qualified program such as GED programs
- Certificates of completion in vocational or technical classes
- Completion of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) (considered equivalent to graduation from high school)
- Proof of online distance learning classes, including attendance and completion criteria
- An approved Educational Training Voucher (ETV) application, if necessary (available from ETV staff)
- Other applicable school related documentation

The young adult must provide the caseworker with documentation no later than 30 days after completion of a school semester, certification completion date, or other educational completion date.

**Employment**

Acceptable forms of documentation to establish that a young adult is working at least 80 hours per month may include the following:

- Copies of weekly or monthly check stubs or pay statements
- Phone verification from the employer, with prior approval from the young adult
- Letters from the employer
- Other documents showing proof of employment

**Programs or Activities to Promote or Remove Barriers to Employment**

Young adults in Extended Foster Care may participate in other programs or services that improve, enhance, or teach job related skills applicable to the workplace or careers. These types of programs and services include, but are not limited to:

- activities and classroom instruction on career awareness, exploration, and preparation such as those provided through the local workforce centers;
- internships, job shadowing, on-the-job training positions and volunteer projects;
- supported employment programs in which:
  - the young adult is provided intensive support accessing and learning job duties; and



- ongoing supports are available to the young adult and employer to maintain the young adult in the job;
- apprenticeship programs;
- adult basic education classes;
- programs such as American YouthWorks, AmeriCorps, or other local young adult initiatives that improve workplace knowledge and skills; or
- other similar job training programs.

Positions for volunteer projects should be beneficial in obtaining essential workplace skills.

The young adult must participate in the activity for a minimum of 15 hours per week. Young adults not enrolled in at least 15 hours of programs or activities to promote or remove barriers to employment must participate in or attend another education or work related activity.

To verify beginning and end dates for programs and activities that promote or remove barriers to employment, caseworkers may use documentation such as:

- written acknowledgement from the instructor or other staff that the youth has satisfactorily completed a program (with dates included);
- classroom schedules;
- activity or project schedules provided by volunteer organizations or internship programs;
- pre- and post-testing schedules; or
- satisfactory completion of predetermined program timeframes.

Other acceptable verification for efforts to remove the barriers to employment may include but are not limited to:

- proof of registration in a Texas Workforce Commission program such as a summer youth employment program;
- proof of registration in Work In Texas or other job search systems;
- proof of attendance at job readiness, job search, career exploration classes, or other classes (verification of attendance should be provided by class instructors); or
- a letter from the program that includes a program description, attendance dates, and an activity curriculum.

For additional information on training and education opportunities for youth, see the Texas Workforce Commission's [Training & Education Opportunities for Students](#) website.

### **Inability to Perform Either Educational or Work Related Activity Because of a Medical Condition**

Acceptable documentation of eligibility criteria may include any of the following:

- A statement from one or more medical doctors documenting the young adult's medical condition, including the activities of daily living that the young adult is incapable of doing as a result of that medical condition
- Determination of a disability from the Social Security Administration
- Determination of intellectual disability, when applicable

There must be sufficient documentation to verify the medical condition, and that the medical condition renders the young adult incapable of participating in any of the Extended Foster Care educational or work related activities. The medical documentation must also indicate which daily living activities the medical condition prevents the young adult from performing. The medical condition may be a mental or physical condition or a combination, provided that it renders the young adult incapable of performing any of the other eligible activities.

Young adults are required to resubmit documentation of a medical disability annually.

**Monitoring Continued Participation**

See [10423](#) Monitoring Continued Participation and Annual Eligibility Review.

The caseworker meets monthly with the youth to ensure that the young adult continues to meet the eligibility requirements. The caseworker documents related participation information in the contact section of the case record.

Also, young adults must immediately inform their caseworkers of any changes that would affect eligibility, such as losing a job, withdrawing from school, or completing a program.

Caseworkers ensure that the young adult completes the transition from one educational or work related activity to another timely, as described in [10422](#) Transitioning Between Education or Work Related Activities.

**TEMPORARY ABSENCES FROM EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**

See [10424](#) Temporary Absences From Extended Foster Care.

**Types of Temporary Absences**

Examples of temporary absences may include:

- a short term hospitalization;
- an arrest for a minor conviction that results in a short stay in a city or county jail facility. An arrest of a more serious nature, including a felony, may cause it to be inappropriate for the young adult to return to the same or other foster home setting. In these situations, the caseworker obtains approval from the program director (PD) for how to proceed;
- a family visit; or
- a vacation.

*Scheduled Absences*

A young adult must notify the caseworker and caregiver for absences that are known in advance, such as scheduled surgeries, planned family trips, or vacations. In other circumstances, the caseworker may need to re-evaluate the placement to ensure that the placement is appropriate.

*Reimbursement to Reserve Space for Return of Young Adult*

In order to reserve space for the young adult's anticipated return to the same placement at a date in the near future, DFPS may reimburse the DFPS-paid placement for up to 14 days in the following circumstances:

- Hospitalization in a psychiatric facility
- Hospitalization in a medical facility
- Unauthorized placement
- Temporary placement or visit in the young adult's own home
- Placement in a locked facility, jail, or juvenile detention center
- Placement for short-term substance abuse treatment

*Criteria for Payment During the Absence of the Young Adult*

The DFPS-paid placement continues to receive payment during a young adult's temporary absence only if each of the following conditions is met:

- The foster caregiver plans to have the young adult return to the same placement at the end of the absence
- The foster caregiver agrees to reserve a space in the placement until the young adult's return for as long as payments are made during the young adult's absence

- DFPS is not making payments on behalf of this same young adult to any other provider during the young adult's absence

#### *Requirements of the Foster Caregiver*

The foster caregiver must be actively engaged in:

- providing active support to the young adult;
- meeting the young adult's concrete needs, such as providing clothing;
- having frequent face-to-face contact with the young adult on a regular basis, such as by being physically present with the young adult at the hospital as required by some medical facilities;
- facilitating family visits, as appropriate; and
- communicating with the facility care team about the young adult's progress and discharge plan.

#### *When Caregivers Are Not Eligible for Reimbursement*

DFPS will not reimburse the foster caregiver for days of care when a young adult resides in the following non-DFPS paid placements:

- Nursing home placement
- Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities Intermediate care facilities (ICF/IDD)
- State supported living centers (SSLC)
- Relative caregiver who is not licensed
- Pre-consummated adoptive placement
- Texas Juvenile Justice Department facility
- Texas state hospitals

See [10520](#) Trial Independence for information about trial independence.

## **YOUNG ADULTS RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS**

A young adult receiving Social Security Administration (SSA) benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance (RSDI), or other monthly benefits designated for the young adult's care and support, must also sign the [Voluntary Extended Foster Care Financial Agreement](#) ("Financial Agreement"), which is an attachment to the VEFCA. The young adult signs the VEFCA Financial Agreement on or after his or her 18th birthday, whereas the VEFCA can be signed before or after the young adult turns 18. The young adult's CPS caseworker sends a copy of the signed Financial Agreement to the foster care eligibility specialist, the regional SSI coordinator and the regional CPS Children's Income Accounting unit.

By signing the Financial Agreement, the young adult agrees to allow DFPS to use his or her monthly benefit for the young adult's cost of care while he or she is in the Extended Foster Care program. The young adult further agrees to allow SSA or the issuing entity to name DFPS as the representative payee for his or her benefit. If SSA or the issuing entity allows the young adult to be his or her own payee, the young adult agrees to turn over his or her monthly benefits to DFPS.

If SSA or the issuing entity names DFPS the payee, the monthly benefit is issued directly to DFPS. When SSA or the issuing entity names the young adult to be his or her own payee, the monthly benefits are sent directly to the young adult. Each month the young adult turns over the benefit by signing the back of the check and sending it to the regional CPS Children's Income Accounting unit. The unit deposits the check into the regional children's income account. If the young adult refuses to turn over the monthly benefit, DFPS terminates his or her foster care eligibility.

## **YOUNG ADULTS IN HHSC GUARDIANSHIP IN DFPS FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS**

If the Probate Court appoints HHSC as guardian of a young adult on or after the 18th birthday and the young adult will continue to reside in the DFPS foster care placement, a representative from HHSC signs [Form 2545](#) DFPS-DADS Guardianship Extended Foster Home Placement Agreement on behalf of the young adult, in the designated signature line. The signed agreement must be given to the Foster Care eligibility specialist who will extend the young adult's eligibility.

Once HHSC is appointed as guardian, the young adult is no longer considered to be in the DFPS Extended Foster Care program, even though the young adult remains in a foster care placement and must continue to meet the eligibility requirements noted on Form 2545 to qualify for Extended Foster Care Assistance. For this reason, and because of the continued oversight of the Probate Court, HHSC handles all case management and planning once an HHSC guardianship is in place. Court hearings will not take place in the family court following HHSC's appointment. The caseworker follows [5600](#) Extend Court's Jurisdiction When a Youth Turns 18 and ensures that DFPS promptly moves for dismissal of the family court's jurisdiction. See [10343.62](#) DFPS Foster Care Placement After HHSC Appointed as Guardian.

For additional information on young adults in HHSC Guardianship with SSA benefits see [1543.1](#) Youth Age 18 or Older in Voluntary Foster Care: Signing Over SSI and RSDI Benefits.

For additional information on HHSC becoming the Guardian for CPS young adults, see:

[10343.2](#) Criteria for HHSC Guardianship Referral

[HHSC Guardianship Services Handbook](#), 2411 Appropriateness for Guardianship

## **YOUNG ADULT REFUSES TO SIGN VEFCA FINANCIAL AGREEMENT**

If the young adult refuses to sign the VEFCA Financial Agreement, the caseworker explains to the young adult that he or she is not eligible for foster care after the month of the youth's 18th birthday. The young adult must understand that DFPS cannot pay for his or her cost of care when the young adult is keeping this income.

If the young adult refuses to sign the agreement, payment for the young adult's foster care placement and foster care Medicaid status is terminated. For young adults turning 18, termination is effective the first day of the next month after the young adult turns 18. If entering Extended Foster Care later, termination is effective the first day of the next month. In these cases, the young adult cannot remain in the foster home or in another foster care placement unless the provider is willing to keep the young adult at no cost to DFPS. The young adult remains eligible for Transitional Medicaid as long as the necessary requirements are met. Transitional Medicaid provides coverage to youth who are age 18 to 21 and who left foster care at age 18 or older.

See [1544](#) Medicaid for Young Adults Who Age Out of Foster Care for additional procedures.

## **YOUNG ADULT WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN**

DFPS may pay the cost of care and provide Medicaid for the dependent children of young adults placed in the Extended Foster Care program, if the young adult resides in the same placement as his or her child. However, Medicaid is not provided for the dependent child when the young adult returns to care in situations discussed in [10520](#) Return for Extended Foster Care.

Young adults who have dependent children with them in care must be responsible for arranging for appropriate care and supervision of the children. This includes but is not limited to:

- child care, as appropriate;

- access to medical and dental appointments;
- access to community resources;
- enrollment and access to local schools, as appropriate.

### **Creating Case Related Special Request (CRSR) Case/Stage for Babies of Young Adults in SIL Placements**

When the caseworker sets up the *CRSR* for the baby, and calls in the intake to SWI, the caseworker should tell SWI to backdate the intake date to the date the baby went to the placement with the young adult. When the intake gets stage progressed, the system assigns a stage progression date that is the start of the *SUB C-PB* stage. The caseworker will need to call in a data correction to have the stage progression/*SUB* stage start date be the same as the date the baby went to the placement with the young adult. The caseworker can then enter the placement start date for the date the baby went into the placement. The caseworker assigns the foster care eligibility specialist to be the secondary worker on the *SUB C-PB* stage. The caseworker asks the eligibility specialist to see what he or she needs to allow the foster care payments to start.

## **CASEWORK ACTIVITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**

### **Casework Activity That Respects Young Adult Status**

Young adults in Extended Foster Care are legal adults. Caseworkers assist the young adult in Extended Foster Care to transition to a more independent and responsible adult role when addressing individual needs. Caseworkers should offer the young adult opportunities to learn appropriate and meaningful independent living skills. Caseworkers and providers should respect the status of young adults in Extended Foster Care and the need for a supportive environment that allows them to practice, improve and enhance their life skills, so that they can experience positive outcomes as they leave care.

Young adults in Extended Foster Care should have greater responsibility for activities, and need to be empowered to manage their activities. This includes:

- initiating caseworker contacts;
- identifying settings and topics for caseworker monthly contacts;
- participating in independent living activities; and
- participating in age appropriate activities.

While casework requirements (such as monthly caseworker contacts, service plans) are the same for the Extended Foster Care population as they are for those in foster care under age 18, the manner of accomplishing these requirements should allow for more flexibility and responsiveness to the young adult's requests.

See [10441](#) Casework Activity.

### **Monthly Face to Face Visits**

See [10423](#) Monitoring Continued Participation and Annual Eligibility Review.

The caseworker may place more responsibility on the young adult to meet the caseworker for visits in a more age appropriate setting. Some young adults can "check in" and meet the caseworker at pre-arranged times instead of the caseworker making an appointment.

As an example, the caseworker might arrange for one or two nights a month to meet with two or three of the Extended Foster Care young adults on his or her caseload. The visits can take place at a restaurant, worker's office, a Transition Center, and so on.

Young adults are responsible for reporting to the CPS caseworker when they apply for or receive other sources of funds from the Department such as the PAL transitional living allowance, PAL aftercare room and board, or the education and training voucher (ETV). Failing to report this may affect the young adult's

eligibility for Extended Foster Care assistance. In addition, the funds may need to be repaid if the young adult simultaneously received Extended Foster Care assistance.

### **Service Plan for Young Adults 18 and Older**

The service plan should:

- address how the young adult will meet his or her needs with support from the caregiver or others, including the caseworker;
- identify tasks that he or she will pursue to address his or her needs;
- reflect the agreement made between DFPS and the young adult to obtain independent living skills;
- identify benchmarks that indicate how both the caseworker and the young adult know when independence can be achieved; and
- support the widest possible latitude for the young adult in participating in experiential life skills, both in and out of the placement setting.

### **Medical Consenter Issues and Documentation**

See [10442](#) Medical Consenter Issues and Documentation.

A young adult is legally entitled to make her or his own medical decisions at age 18, unless HHSC or another individual or entity is appointed by a probate court as their legal guardian. However, the young adult may authorize a backup medical consider to facilitate health care or access the young adult's Health Passport.

Facilitate means that the individual may talk to the young adult's health care providers, help the young adult set up health care appointments, help the young adult understand his or her health care needs, and so on. However, the young adult consents to all medical care. (Also see [11151](#) Young Adults Who Are 18 Years or Older.)

The young adult can only authorize one individual as backup medical consenter, except for married couples. If the young adult authorized two individuals who are not married to help facilitate his or her health care or access his or her Health Passport record, document the person most likely to assist the young adult with health care appointments.

Document a backup medical consenter on the IMPACT *Medical Consent* page, for a youth aged 18 years or older who does not have a court-appointed guardian, only for the purpose of transmitting electronic information to STAR Health to allow the person to:

- access the youth's Health Passport record; or
- discuss the youth's Protected Health Information (PHI) with STAR Health.

A person documented as backup medical consenter in this situation does not have authority to consent to medical care for the young adult.

### **Young Adult with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability Missing from Extended Foster Care Placement**

See:

[10450](#) If the Young Adult Goes Missing

[6460](#) When a Child or Youth is Missing from DFPS Conservatorship

Attempts to locate the young adult include contacting family members and other individuals the young adult knows.

If the young adult is a person with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability (IDD) and the worker believes the young adult has unwillingly or unknowingly left the authorized placement due to his or her IDD, or has been removed by an unauthorized person, the worker should contact local law enforcement. If the worker believes the young adult's health and safety may be in jeopardy, the worker, when making the report to law enforcement, should request that the young adult be included in the Endangered Missing



Persons Alert Network. The local law enforcement officials will work with the Texas Department of Public Safety to decide if the situation meets Alert Network criteria, and will activate the Network if appropriate.

Law enforcement may request medical documentation confirming a young adult's intellectual or developmental disability.

The Endangered Missing Persons Alert Network was developed as a statewide emergency response system for those missing persons with an intellectual disability. The term *intellectual disability* includes a pervasive developmental disorder. The Network is designed to be activated when the disappearance of a missing person with a diagnosed intellectual disability poses a credible threat to his or her health and safety.

### **ONGOING REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**

See [10423](#) Monitoring Continued Participation and Annual Eligibility Review.

Eligibility specialists perform an annual review every 12 months until the young adult is age 21, or 22 if the young adult is in high school or a GED program.

For most young adults in Extended Foster Care, the caseworker begins the review by completing a Foster Care review in IMPACT and submitting it to the foster care eligibility specialist. The caseworker also sends current documentation to the eligibility specialist verifying that the young adult is participating in an activity that qualifies for the Extended Foster Care program, or that the young adult is unable to do so due to a documented medical condition. The caseworker also sends the eligibility specialist copies of the court orders from court review hearings that may have been held for the young adult.

The eligibility specialist reviews the information provided on the IMPACT *Foster Care Assistance Review* form and the submitted documentation that shows which Extended Foster Care eligibility criteria the young adult currently meets.

If the young adult's activity for eligibility has changed since the last review, the caseworker submits documentation to the eligibility worker showing which educational, work, or medical eligibility criteria the young adult meets at the time of submission, and selects the appropriate category on the Foster Care Review Form. The young adult does not have to sign a new [Form 2540](#) Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (VEFCA).

The caseworker does not have to submit a new Foster Care Assistance Review form if, during the year, the young adult switches from one activity to another. However, the caseworker is required to select the new activity and submit the current corresponding documentation to the eligibility specialist on the next annual review.

If the caseworker has obtained documentation that the young adult is meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria for Extended Foster Care, and receives this documentation within the 30-day period before the annual review, the caseworker does not have to obtain new documentation to submit to the eligibility specialist. The caseworker can, however, keep the documentation in the file.

### **RETURNING TO EXTENDED FOSTER CARE AFTER TRIAL ELIGIBILITY PERIOD ENDS**

For a young adult returning to Extended Foster Care after the end of her or his trial independence period and whose case is maintained in a *C-RC* stage, the eligibility specialist cannot complete a Foster Care Review through IMPACT. The eligibility specialist is still required to review the young adult's eligibility annually to verify that the young adult is participating in an activity that qualifies for the Extended Foster Care program.

To renew the young adult's eligibility, the eligibility specialist:

- asks the worker to submit documentation verifying the young adult's participation in an eligible activity at [10421 Eligibility for Extended Foster Care](#);
- records a new eligibility event to reflect the dates of the young adult's continued eligibility and the subsequent annual review; and
- enters in the comments field that the young adult continued to meet the applicable eligibility requirements at [10421 Eligibility for Extended Foster Care](#).



## SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT LIVING (SIL)

See [10460](#) Supervised Independent Living (SIL).

### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUNG ADULTS WHILE IN A SIL SETTING

As participants in the SIL program, young adults have the right to:

- plan and manage their own work, school, social, and personal schedule, including accessing community resources to meet personal needs;
- manage their own finances, including funds received from the SIL provider, and open their own bank accounts;
- choose to participate in activities offered by the provider;
- provide input into how the program can help young adults become more independent and self-sufficient;
- receive assistance with meeting their Transition/Service Plan goals; and
- withdraw from SIL or request an SIL placement change (with good cause).

A participant in the SIL program has the responsibility to:

- comply with the conditions and requirements of the Extended Foster Care program;
- communicate with the CPS caseworker at least monthly; and
- comply with the provider's program rules and regulations.

### TYPES OF SIL SETTINGS

Supervised Independent Living (SIL) settings include the following:

**Apartment setting:** A room or suite of rooms with kitchen facilities that is designed as a residence and generally located in a building occupied by more than one household. An apartment may or may not provide on-site management.

**Non-college dorm setting:** A building containing a number of private or semi-private bedrooms for housing persons who are either employed or are in school and commute to these and other personal and social activities. The setting is similar to a college dorm without the relationship to an institution of higher learning. A non-college dorm may provide on-site management. Example: a general residential operation (GRO) using a housing unit on the GRO property.

**College dorm setting:** A building provided by a college or university containing a number of private or semi-private bedrooms for housing persons who are in school and commute to the school and other personal and social activities. A college dorm may be located on or off campus. College dorms include college cooperatives (co-op) and may provide on-site management.

**Shared housing setting:** A home in which people live cooperatively as an unrelated family. Shared housing may provide individual or shared bedrooms with limits placed on the number of persons sharing a bedroom. Shared housing is rented or owned by a provider and may be similar to an apartment. It is not located on the campus of a general residential operation (GRO). Shared housing may provide onsite management.

**Host home setting:** A rented room or garage apartment in a family's home, with access provided to a kitchen and, preferably, laundry facilities in the home. The young adult agrees to the household rules, but may come and go as needed for employment, school, and other personal or social activities.

**REFERRAL, ASSESMENT, AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR SIL PLACEMENTS**

See [10463](#) Referral, Assessment, and Approval Process for the Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Program.

**Referral for SIL Placement Readiness**

Referrals or requests for supervised independent living (SIL) placements may come from:

- youth in foster care about to turn 18;
- young adults in traditional Extended Foster Care settings;
- young adults returning during a trial independence period;
- young adults returning after a trial independence period has ended but before turning 21; or
- the caseworker, another DFPS staff, or the current caregiver.

While the SIL referral, assessment, and approval process can proceed for an eligible youth who will be 18 by the desired SIL placement start date, only the term young adult is used for the applicant in reference to the SIL program. The youth must be 18 before a SIL placement can be made.

**Prescreening for SIL Placement**

The caseworker must thoroughly screen and assess applicants for a supervised independent living (SIL) setting. The SIL coordinator in state office must approve the placement.

Factors to consider when prescreening a youth or young adult for SIL placement include:

- age, which must be age 18 or older on the desired placement start date;
- level of maturity;
- recent level of achievement in meeting personal and professional goals;
- current behavior; and
- eligibility for the Extended Foster Care program.

**SIL Application and Assessment**

Once a young adult has been prescreened and determined appropriate for supervised independent living (SIL) placement, the caseworker:

- provides the SIL Application ([Form 2605](#)) to the young adult to complete and return to the caseworker;
- contacts the young adult's Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) caseworker to determine what transitional living services the young adult is receiving or has completed, including:
  - participation in PAL life skills training classes (see [10222](#) Life Skills Training);
  - enrollment in the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program or receipt of PAL case management services (not required). See [10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program;
- reviews the SIL application for:
  - completion and legibility;
  - appropriateness of the young adult's responses, considering the young adult's history;
  - the young adult's personal strengths and accomplishments;
  - the young adult's experience in earning and saving money;
  - discussion of progress and accomplishments in developing self-sufficiency and independence during the last six to 12 months while in:
    - conservatorship;
    - traditional Extended Foster Care; or
    - a trial independence period;
- assesses the young adult for:
  - readiness for placement in a less supervised setting;

- ability to become self-sufficient;
- any examples of independent activities and handling situations with minimal supervision;
- status of meeting goals as outlined in both the Transition and Child's Service Plan;
- ability to develop and meet both short and long term goals;
- financial resources available to assist the young adult with any start-up costs (not required); and
- types of SIL settings that would best meet the young adult's placement needs.

For additional factors to consider refer to [Form 2605](#).

The caseworker discusses recommendations with the supervisor, obtains supervisory approval, and submits the request to the SIL coordinator in state office.

#### **Referral to the SIL Coordinator in State Office**

With supervisory approval, the caseworker forwards the supervised independent living (SIL) application ([Form 2605](#)) and [Form 2087EX](#) Alternative Application for Placement of Children in Residential Care to the SIL coordinator in state office for review and consideration.

The SIL coordinator in state office has three business days to review the application before contacting the caseworker to:

- determine whether the young adult is appropriate for placement in an SIL setting; or
- request additional information from the caseworker or the young adult.

After approving the SIL application, the SIL coordinator in state office sends the caseworker the approved SIL application and a list of DFPS SIL providers with types of SIL settings offered in the young adult's preferred geographical region.

Within seven business days of receiving the SIL application approved by state office, the caseworker reviews the list of SIL settings with the young adult and decides which DFPS SIL provider, location, and setting best meets the young adult's needs. The young adult has the option to visit and tour the SIL settings and talk to the SIL provider before any referral is made.

The young adult signs [Form 2606](#), a release requesting to make the referral. Refusing to sign the release may delay or prevent a referral to a SIL provider.

#### **Referral to and Approval by a DFPS SIL Provider**

After the SIL coordinator in state office approves the referral and the young adult completes Form 2606, the caseworker makes the initial contact with the selected DFPS SIL providers to discuss placement options and next steps.

The caseworker submits the required documentation to the provider:

- SIL Referral [Form 2529](#);
- SIL application ([Form 2605](#)); and
- [Form 2087EX](#).

The SIL provider reviews the required documentation and any other requested information and makes an initial determination whether to accept the referral for the requested SIL settings. As part of the determination, the SIL provider may speak with the young adult and may require a face-to-face meeting.

The SIL provider informs the SIL coordinator in state office whether the referral has been accepted.

If the application is accepted, the SIL provider, young adult, and the CPS caseworker confer to:

- finalize the SIL location and setting;
- review the young adult's expectations and goals for the SIL placement;
- review the SIL provider's expectations of the young adult and the written agreement with the young adult;
- address any questions the young adult may have; and
- identify any additional placement information the SIL provider may need.

This discussion may involve a face-to-face meeting and visit to the SIL setting, if this was not done as part of the application and referral process.

The young adult, SIL provider, and caseworker must all agree in order to proceed with the placement. If all are in agreement, they establish placement plans. The young adult then reviews and signs the written agreement developed by the SIL provider.

### **Young Adult Not Accepted Into a SIL Placement**

Not all young adults qualify for a supervised independent living (SIL) placement as determined either by DFPS or by the SIL provider. Reasons for non-acceptance may include but are not limited to:

- the SIL provider is unable to meet the young adult's needs;
- DFPS or the SIL provider determines that the young adult would not be appropriate for a SIL setting at the current time.

### **DFPS Denies a Young Adult's Application**

If the caseworker or supervisor determines the young adult is not appropriate for supervised independent living (SIL) at the time the young adult applies, the caseworker and young adult identify and discuss areas of concern, goals to be addressed, and steps to take.

If the SIL coordinator in state office does not approve the application, the SIL coordinator notifies the caseworker and identifies the reasons why the application was not accepted.

The caseworker reviews the reasons for the denial with the young adult. Together, they discuss why the application was not accepted and what needs to be addressed.

### **Review of SIL Determination**

If the supervised independent living (SIL) coordinator in state office determines that the young adult is not appropriate for placement in a SIL setting and the young adult appeals the decision, the caseworker reviews the non-acceptance with the supervisor and program director. If the decision is to proceed with the appeal, the caseworker contacts the SIL coordinator in state office to request a SIL Determination Review to further discuss why the application was denied.

The review consists of a conference call with the young adult, the caseworker, and supervisor. If the matter cannot be resolved, the CPS Director of Permanency, Family and Youth Services in state office makes the final determination.

If the SIL application continues to be denied, the young adult has the option to remain in the current foster care setting, or leave the Extended Foster Care program and enter into the trial independence period.

### **SIL Provider Denies a Young Adult's Application**

If the DFPS SIL provider denies the young adult's application, after the initial approval by the SIL coordinator in state office has been received, the DFPS SIL provider indicates the denial and reasons on [Form 2529](#) and sends the form to the DFPS caseworker. The caseworker sends a copy of Form 2529 to the SIL coordinator in state office within five business days of denying the young adult's application, with the reasons for the denial described in the letter. If the SIL coordinator disagrees with the denial, the SIL coordinator reviews the issue with the SIL contract manager.

The caseworker contacts the young adult, reviews the denial, and discusses:

- the reasons for the denied application; and
- any steps or actions needed to have the DFPS SIL provider accept the SIL application.

The young adult may request placement with a different SIL provider if the SIL provider did not accept the young adult's SIL application based on factors such as:

- inability to meet the young adult's transportation needs related to employment;
- lack of education resources or other needed community services; or
- no upcoming or known vacancies.

The caseworker contacts the SIL coordinator about another SIL provider. The caseworker contacts the newly selected SIL provider and follows procedures discussed in this Guide.

### **Reapplication After SIL Application Is Denied**

If the young adult requires additional readiness activities for the supervised independent living (SIL) placement, the young adult may reapply every 60 days with an updated SIL application that addresses the issues identified and the steps or actions needed to obtain an SIL placement.

## **INITIAL PLACEMENT PROCESS**

See [10463.1](#) Initial Placement Process.

Once the youth is placed with a supervised independent living (SIL) provider, the caseworker completes all placement paperwork for the SIL provider, which includes the following documents:

- Placement Authorization - SIL ([Form 2085SIL](#))
- Placement Summary Form ([Form 2279](#))
- CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care ([Form 2530](#))

The caseworker verifies that the young adult has:

- a current copy of the Transition Plan and Child's Service Plan;
- personal documents such as:
  - a birth certificate;
  - Texas Identification card;
  - Medicaid card;
  - Health Passport information; and
  - a Social Security card; and
- Transition and Education Portfolios.

### **IMPACT Process**

The caseworker refers to the [SIL IMPACT Job Aid](#) when entering and closing a young adult's SIL placement.

### **Notifications**

Following the initial SIL placement, the caseworker ensures that the young adult notifies family members, other caring adults and involved advocates about the SIL placement and provides contact information.

### **Documentation of Young Adults with Dependent Children**

The Subcare Case-Related Special Request – Public Service (*SUB C-PB*) stages are used to record information about dependent children of young adults in SIL placements, as with other Extended Foster Care placements. See [Young Adult with Dependent Children](#) in this Resource Guide for details.

## **SUBSEQUENT PLACEMENT PROCESS WITH SAME DFPS SIL PROVIDER**

See [10463.2](#) Subsequent Placement Process With the Same DFPS SIL Provider.

A young adult must contact his or her caseworker to request a move to a different supervised independent living (SIL) setting with the same DFPS SIL provider. There must be a valid reason for a move, such as:

- a change in employment or education locations;
- a need for a larger setting to accommodate a young adult with one or more children; or
- a desire for a different type of SIL setting (move from a non-college dorm to an apartment).

If the caseworker, SIL provider and state office SIL coordinator support the young adult's decision to move to a different SIL setting with the SIL provider, the young adult then selects a SIL setting from the available options and obtains approval from the SIL provider caseworker and state office SIL coordinator. Once approval is obtained, the young adult, SIL provider and caseworker make arrangements for the transition. After the move has taken place, the caseworker updates the new placement information in IMPACT as appropriate.

### **ONGOING CASEWORKER DUTIES DURING SIL PLACEMENT**

Casework activity for a SIL placement is the same as for all Extended Foster Care placements. See:

[10441 Casework Activity](#)

[Casework Activity for Young Adults in Extended Foster Care](#) in this Resource Guide

### **DISCHARGES FROM THE SIL PROGRAM**

See [10465 Discharge From the SIL Program](#).

A young adult may be discharged from SIL when the young adult:

- requests a change in SIL providers;
- completes SIL and Extended Foster Care goals and is ready to leave care for trial independence;
- refuses, or is unable to comply with, eligibility to be in Extended Foster Care and leaves for trial independence;
- refuses to comply with the SIL provider rules and regulations;
- ends eligibility for Extended Foster Care; or
- demonstrates a need to be in a traditional Extended Foster Care placement that has more supervision, because of issues such as maturity, behaviors, and safety.

All SIL discharges must be planned, with sufficient time to prepare for the SIL discharge. Unplanned discharges are considered to be emergency SIL discharges. The SIL provider and caseworker take all reasonable steps to prevent emergency discharges from the SIL setting.

#### **Planned SIL Discharge**

The young adult must provide written notice to DFPS and the DFPS supervised independent living (SIL) provider at least 30 days before the young adult's requested discharge date, if:

- the young adult determines that his or her SIL or Extended Foster Care goals have been achieved;
- the SIL setting is no longer in the young adult's best interest, or
- the SIL setting is not meeting the young adult's needs.

The SIL provider must provide written notice to the young adult and DFPS 30 days before the discharge date, if the SIL provider determines that:

- the young adult has achieved his or her SIL or Extended Foster Care goals;
- the SIL setting is no longer in the young adult's best interest; or
- the SIL setting is not meeting the young adult's needs.

DFPS is required to provide written notice to the young adult and SIL provider at least 30 days before the discharge date, if DFPS determines that the SIL setting:

- is no longer in the young adult's best interest; or
- is not meeting the young adult's needs.

The DFPS SIL provider, caseworker, and the young adult work together to ensure, as much as possible, a seamless transition to the young adult's new SIL provider placement, traditional Extended Foster Care placement, or a trial independence arrangement.



### **Change of DFPS SIL Providers**

A young adult may request in writing a change of DFPS supervised independent living (SIL) providers for reasons such as:

- the current SIL setting type is not meeting the needs of the young adult;
- the young adult is moving to a different location or area; or
- the young adult desires a type of SIL setting that the current SIL provider does not have.

Upon receiving the written request, the caseworker has the young adult update the SIL Application ([Form 2605](#)) and follow the process noted in this Resource Guide under [SIL Application and Assessment](#).

The caseworker informs the SIL provider about the efforts to find a new SIL provider.

A change of SIL providers is considered to be a discharge from the current SIL provider.

Upon final acceptance of the SIL application and offer of a SIL placement by the new SIL provider, young adult, and caseworker, the caseworker coordinates the development of the discharge and placement date with the relevant parties and finalizes plans for the transition. The caseworker ensures the change in SIL providers is a smooth transition for the young adult.

The current SIL provider must have at least a 30-day notice of a planned discharge date. The caseworker notifies the SIL coordinator in state office of the discharge and placement date.

Young adults should not expect an immediate or an emergency placement from one SIL provider to another SIL provider. If an emergency discharge must take place, refer to [Emergency Discharge From SIL Program](#) in this Resource Guide.

### **Discharge From the SIL Program to a Traditional Extended Foster Care Setting**

A young adult may be discharged from the supervised independent living (SIL) program to a traditional Extended Foster Care setting for various reasons, such as more structure or readiness activities, the proximity to work or school, or behavioral or safety concerns.

If a planned discharge from the SIL program to a traditional Extended Foster Care placement is in the best interest of the young adult, the caseworker notifies the DFPS SIL provider within three business days of this decision. The caseworker follows procedures for requesting a foster care placement and involves the young adult as much as possible in the process of obtaining the placement. See [4000](#) Placing Children in DFPS Conservatorship.

Once the young adult identifies and approves a traditional Extended Foster Care placement, the caseworker, SIL provider, and young adult agree on the placement change date and begin preparation for the young adult's transition back into a traditional foster care setting. The plan for ending the SIL placement includes receiving personal items, personal documents, and receiving other information as appropriate.

For additional information about Extended Foster Care, see [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older.

### **Transition Plan Review for Discharge From SIL and Extended Foster Care to Independence or Trial Independence**

Within 90 days before the young adult's planned date of discharge from the supervised independent living (SIL) placement and Extended Foster Care, the caseworker schedules a Transition Plan Review with the young adult and DPS SIL provider.

The Transition Plan Review includes topics such as:

- housing and living arrangements;
- transportation;
- budgeting and money management;
- employment;

- contact information for Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) staff;
- contact information for transition centers;
- caring adults contacts;
- aftercare support;
- review of PAL or other Transitional Living Services benefits;
- plans while on a Trial Independence period (if appropriate); and
- current information about Star Health or STAR member healthcare plan.

The caseworker ensures that the young adult has all personal records and documents such as:

- a birth certificate;
- a Social Security card;
- a Texas identification card;
- savings account information;
- a Medicaid card;
- education records and Transition Portfolios; and
- printed medical records from Health Passport.

Trial Independence begins when the young adult leaves the SIL program and is not continuing in Extended Foster Care. For additional information on discharge, see [10470](#) Discharge From Extended Foster Care. For information regarding trial independence refer to [10510](#) Trial Independence.

### **Emergency Discharge From the SIL Program**

If an emergency supervised independent living (SIL) discharge is due to occur or has occurred, the DFPS SIL provider must notify DFPS immediately if possible, but no later than 24 hours after the provider becomes aware of the unplanned discharge.

If the caseworker initiates an emergency discharge because of immediate concerns over the young adult's health and safety, medical, or legal issues, the CPS caseworker notifies the SIL provider within 24 hours of the discharge and provides the reasons for the young adult's emergency discharge.

After receiving notification of a young adult's emergency discharge, the caseworker attempts to make contact within 24 hours with the young adult to discuss the emergency discharge, resolves whether the young adult can move to a traditional Extended Foster Care Setting or will be starting trial independence (or independence, if 21 years of age) and makes arrangements as appropriate to ensure the young adult has all personal belongings and has at least a short term plan for himself or herself.

Unplanned SIL discharges result in a move to a:

- Traditional Extended Foster Care setting (most likely a shelter situation). For additional information see [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older or [4000](#) Placing Children in DFPS Conservatorship; or
- Trial independence setting (if under age 21). For additional information about trial independence, see [10500](#) Trial Independence and Return for Extended Foster Care.

### **Emergency Discharge from the SIL Program to Trial Independence**

See [10472](#) Emergency Discharge From Extended Foster Care.

The supervised independent living (SIL) setting remains open for 14 days after DFPS receives notification of the unplanned discharge to:

- allow the caseworker and the young adult to discuss the discharge; and
- ensure that the young adult is secure and certain of his or her decision to leave Extended Foster Care.

If the young adult does not return to the SIL setting within 14 days, the placement is closed in IMPACT. The caseworker notifies the SIL coordinator in state office about the new SIL placement vacancy.



For information about trial independence, see [10500](#) Trial Independence and Return for Extended Foster Care.

### **Additional Discharge Actions**

The caseworker notifies the SIL coordinator in state office whenever a young adult is discharged from a SIL provider, to ensure that an accurate vacancy record is maintained.

## **DISCHARGE FROM EXTENDED FOSTER CARE**

See [10470](#) Discharge From Extended Foster Care.

All discharges are expected to be planned. The foster caregiver and caseworker take all reasonable steps to prevent an unplanned discharge. For steps that can be taken, see [Actions to Prevent an Unplanned Discharge](#) in this Resource Guide.

### **Planned Discharges from Extended Foster Care**

#### *Transition Plan Review*

Within 90 days before the young adult's planned date of discharge, the caseworker schedules a Transition Plan Review with the young adult and foster caregiver. This meeting must be documented in IMPACT under *Permanency Planning Meetings* as either a Circle of Support or a Transition Plan Meeting.

The Transition Plan Review includes topics such as:

- housing and living arrangements;
- transportation;
- budgeting and money management;
- employment;
- contact information for PAL staff;
- caring adults contacts;
- after-care support;
- review of PAL or other Transitional Living Services benefits;
- plans while on a trial independence period (if appropriate);
- Star Health medical records.

The caseworker ensures that the young adult has all personal records and documents such as:

- a birth certificate;
- a Social Security card;
- a Texas identification card;
- savings account information;
- a Medicaid card;
- education records and Transition Portfolios;
- printed medical records from Health Passport.

Staff follow all policies related to transitioning from care, as though the young adult was going to leave care at age 18, such as the following policies and subitems:

[6252](#) Permanency Planning Meetings for Youth 14 and Over

[6442](#) Personal Documents Provided to Youth

[10130](#) Transition Centers for Youth

[10140](#) Overview of Healthcare Coverage for Youth and Young Adults Who Age Out of Foster Care

[10510](#) Trial Independence

[5612](#) Actions Required by the Caseworker for All Youth Aging Out of DFPS Conservatorship, for addressing trial independence court jurisdiction issues.

**Emergency Discharge from Extended Foster Care**

See [10472](#) Emergency Discharge From Extended Foster Care.

If the discharge must take place, the caseworker uses actions to prevent the emergency discharge and make it a planned discharge if possible. If not, the caseworker finalizes plans for the emergency discharge, makes arrangements, as appropriate, to ensure the young adult has all personal belongings, and discusses trial independence.

If a young adult must leave the current placement immediately, it may be appropriate to place the young adult in a shelter for two to four weeks before the trial independence period starts.

**Actions to Prevent an Unplanned Discharge**

Actions to prevent an unplanned discharge from Extended Foster Care for young adults may include:

- helping the young adult commit to short term goals and develop short term plans;
- reviewing options and consequences with the young adult;
- helping the young adult visualize what will happen as he or she leaves care;
- holding a transition plan meeting to discuss the concerns and how these concerns may be alleviated;
- finding an alternative Extended Foster Care placement. Consult with regional and state office placement staff in the regions and state office as needed;
- requesting a special staffing as needed with subject matter experts in the regions and state office; involve the regional field attorneys as appropriate.