



TEXAS
**Department of Family
and Protective Services**

Child Protective Services

Transitional Living Services Resource Guide

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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.

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.

Transitional Living Services

See [10100](#) Overview of Transitional Living Services and its sub-items.

The Transitional Living Services program provides transition planning, services, and benefits to both older youth in foster care and those who have aged out. Transitional Living Services are available to youth age 14 to 23.

The Transitional Living Services program includes:

- Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) (see [10200](#) Preparation for Adult Living);
- Health care coverage for youth and young adults that age out of Foster Care (FFCC) (see [10141](#) The Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Program);
- STAR Health Program;
- Transition center information (see [10130](#) Transition Centers for Youth);
- Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program (see [10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program);
- College tuition and fee waivers for youth who were in DFPS conservatorship, adopted youth, and youth in the Permanency Care Assistance program ([10310](#) College Tuition and Fee Exemption Information);
- Extended Foster Care program (see [10400](#) Extended Foster Care for Youth Who Are Age 18 or Older);
- Supervised Independent Living program (see [10460](#) Supervised Independent Living).
- Trial Independence and Young Adults Returning to Care (see [10500](#) Trial Independence and Return for Extended Foster Care); and
- Preparation for long-term care and support in adulthood for youth with disabilities (see [10340](#) Preparation for Long-Term Care or Support in Adulthood for Youth with Disabilities).

Experiential Life Skills Training for Youth Age 14 and Older

Foster parents and other child care or residential providers are required to include training in independent living skills through practical activities such as meal preparation, use of public transportation, money management, and basic household tasks for youth age 14 and older. This training prepares youth for successful adulthood upon leaving foster care. Providers can access resource guides and other training information at the [DFPS Residential Contracts](#) website.

The youth's experiential learning while in care and PAL activities should complement one another and are discussed and addressed in each core life skill area within the youth's Child's Plan of Service (CPOS).

Transition Centers for Youth

Transition centers provide comprehensive services for foster youth, through a one-stop approach that includes access and referrals to community partners and resources. Services may include employment assistance, training, educational support, and various transitional living services geared specifically to meet the individual needs of current and former foster youth age 15 to 25.

Centers may provide additional services, such as PAL Life Skills training classes, job search and job readiness classes, food and housing assistance, and substance abuse or mental health counseling. Transition centers may also serve as a central clearinghouse where local partners such as Workforce Solutions, local community colleges and universities, or the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) can meet on a regular basis to jointly serve the youth's needs.

Effective transition centers involve local, state, and federal partners. Each brings different strengths and resources and serves a particular role to promote positive outcomes for youth.

Each center is independently operated and supported by partnerships between DFPS and the Texas Workforce Commission.

See the [DFPS - Transition Centers](#) website for transition center locations and contact information. Where centers are available, CPS staff are encouraged to:

- Refer youth for services;
- Meet with the youth at the center to discuss transition planning, other service planning and activities; and
- Support the activities and services the centers provide for the youth.

Healthcare Coverage for Youth and Young Adults Who Age out of Foster Care

See [10140](#) Overview of Healthcare Coverage for Youth and Young Adults Who Age out of Foster Care and its sub-items.

The Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) Program

Texas is required to provide Medicaid coverage to youth and young adults under age 26 who were in foster care and were receiving Medicaid when they aged out of foster care.

42 U.S.C. [§1396a\(a\)\(10\)\(A\)\(i\)\(IX\)](#)

The [Former Foster Care Children](#) (FFCC) program provides healthcare coverage to young adults through age 25.

To be eligible for the program, a youth must:

- Be age 18 through 25;
- Have been in DFPS foster care on his or her 18th birthday or older;
- Have been receiving Medicaid when she or he aged out of DFPS foster care;
- Be a U.S. citizen, or be a qualified alien; for example, by having an I-551 permanent resident card;
- Once a qualified alien turns age 21, he or she must have had his or her legal immigration status for at least five years to qualify for the FFCC;
- There are no income, asset, or education requirements; and
- Eligible young adults receive Medicaid services through one of the following FFCC healthcare programs, based on age:
 - Young adults ages 18 through 20 are automatically enrolled in the STAR Health program; however, they may switch to a STAR member health plan, if they prefer; or
 - Young adult ages 21 through 25 choose the STAR member health plan of their choice.

For current information on the STAR Health Program, see the DFPS [STAR Health](#) website.

Out-of-State Eligibility

A young adult who ages out of DFPS foster care and does not live in Texas is not eligible to receive healthcare coverage from the FFCC program; however, if the young adult returns to Texas to live after aging out of DFPS foster care, he or she may apply for FFCC.

A young adult who ages out of foster care from another state's conservatorship is not eligible for the FFCC, even if he or she lives in Texas.

The Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) Program

If a young adult who is age 18 through 20 was in DFPS foster care, but is not eligible for the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program, she or he may be eligible to receive healthcare through the [Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth](#) (MTFCY) program.

To be eligible to receive healthcare services through the MTFCY program, a young adult must:

- Be age 18 through 20;
- Have been in DFPS foster care on his or her 18th birthday or older;

- Have no other health coverage;
- Meet HHSC's income rules; and
- Be a U.S. citizen, or be a qualified alien; for example, by having an I-551 permanent resident card.

A young adult who ages out of foster care from another state's conservatorship is no longer eligible to receive healthcare services through the MTFCY program; however, if the young adult is already receiving services through MTFCY, the young adult will continue to do so until his or her 21st birthday, or until the young adult no longer meets the eligibility requirements, whichever occurs first.

Applying or Re-Applying for the FFCC and MTFCY Healthcare Programs

A young adult may apply or reapply for either the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program or the

Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program by:

- Submitting one of the following applications (whichever is appropriate, based on the criteria provided on each application):
 - [Form H1010](#) Texas Works Application for Assistance (used to apply for SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid and CHIP); or
 - [Form H1205](#) Texas Streamlined Application (used to apply for Health Coverage only).
- Visiting [Your Texas Benefits](#) website;
- Visiting the [HealthCare.gov](#) website; or
- Calling 2-1-1.

The young adult can print Form H1010 and Form H1205 from the [Your Texas Benefits](#) website after setting up an account.

Phone and Online Support for the FFCC and MTFCY Healthcare Programs

The Your Texas Benefits Website

A young adult may use HHSC's [Your Texas Benefits](#) website to:

- Set up an account;
- Apply for healthcare benefits;
- Renew benefits every year;
- Report changes to his or her case;
- Check on benefit-related issues;

- Check when an interview with a representative is scheduled, see what items may be needed for the interview, and upload the items;
- Order or print a Medicaid card; and
- View the Medicaid services for which a young adult is eligible.

The 2-1-1 Texas System

A young adult may call the 2-1-1 Texas phone system or visit the [2-1-1 Texas](#) website for help with Medicaid-related issues, such as applying for benefits, renewing benefits, or reporting changes to a case.

The 2-1-1 system serves the:

- Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program; and
- Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program.

The 2-1-1 Texas system is used only to re-apply, update, or report changes for the FFCC and MTFCY programs. The system is not used to re-enroll in STAR Health.

The HHSC Mailbox for FFCC and MTFCY Issues

If a young adult is not able to resolve issues related to the FFCC and MTFCY programs through the Texas 2-1-1 phone or online system, youth should notify caseworker or PAL staff so they can help send the inquiry to the [HHSC CBS FFCHE/MTFCY](#) mailbox to request assistance for the young adult.

The STAR Health Program

[STAR Health](#) is a statewide, comprehensive healthcare program designed to better coordinate and improve access to health care for:

- Children and youth in DFPS conservatorship (under age 18).
- Young adults in DFPS extended foster care (ages 18 through either 20 or 21, depending on the case circumstances).
- Young adults who have returned to extended foster care (ages 18 through 20).
- Young adults who were previously in DFPS foster care and now receive Medicaid through the Former Foster Care Children (FFCC) program (ages 18 through 20); and
- Young adults who were previously in DFPS foster care, are living independently, and receive Medicaid through the Medicaid for Transitioning Foster Care Youth (MTFCY) program (ages 18 through 20).

[Superior HealthPlan Network](#) is the current managed care company under contract with HHSC to manage the STAR Health program. For more information, see [STAR Health – A Guide to Medical Services at CPS](#).

Employment Preference for Former Foster Youth

See [10330](#) Employment Preference for Former Foster Youth.

State agencies are required to give an employment preference to former foster youth who were in DFPS permanent managing conservatorship on the day before his or her 18th birthday, if other applicants for the same position do not have a greater qualification. The employment preference ends the day before the young adult turns age 26.

Texas Government Code, [Chapter 672](#)

State agencies include a department, commission, board, office, or other agency in the executive branch of state government created by the state constitution or a state statute, as well as an institution of higher education as defined by Section [61.003](#) of the Texas Education Code.

However, this provision does not apply to:

- The position of private secretary or deputy of an official or department; or
- An individual holding a strictly confidential relation to the employing officer.

Preparation for Adult Living (PAL)

For general information on Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) eligibility and services, see [10200](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) and its sub-items.

PAL Services

Who Provides PAL Services for Youth and Young Adults Who Move to Texas from Another State?

Youth in a Foster Care Placement

If a youth under age 18 in foster care or over age 18 in extended foster care is placed in another state, the state of origin must fund the identified PAL services for that youth. However, DFPS can provide Life Skills training as regional funding permits if:

- A youth (under age 18) is placed in Texas from another state through an interstate compact agreement (ICPC);
- A young adult is placed in a licensed placement; and
- The permanency goal is to age out of the foster care system.

Youth Formerly in Foster Care

If a young adult between the ages of 18 and 21 was formerly in foster care and moves from the state in which he or she aged out of foster care to another state, he or she is eligible for PAL services in the new state.

The state in which the young adult currently resides is responsible for services only if that state already has a program that provides the services the young adult is requesting.

Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Assessment

Refer to [10221](#) Life Skills Assessment.

DFPS utilizes the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) to conduct the independent living skills assessment. The assessment instrument is administered by regional PAL Staff.

It is a self-reporting instrument that gives youth and their caregivers the opportunity to assess the youth's strengths and challenges. It is not a test. The CLSA is a comprehensive assessment with 113 assessment items categorized within 8 areas for skills, knowledge and awareness.

Areas Assessed in the CLSA:

Life Skills	Number of Items	Competencies Assessed
Daily Living	17	Meal planning and preparation, cleaning and food storage, home maintenance and computer and internet basics
Self-Care	17	Healthy physical and emotional development such as personal hygiene, taking care of one's health and pregnancy prevention
Relationships and Communication	18	Developing and sustaining healthy relationships, cultural competency and permanent connections with caring adults
Housing and Money Management	23	Banking and credit, finding and keeping affordable housing, budgeting and living within one's means
Work and Study	20	Basics of employment, legal issues, study skills and time management
Career and Education Planning	9	Planning for career and post-secondary education pertinent to older youth
Looking Forward	8	Youth's level of confidence and internal feelings important to their success

Life Skills	Number of Items	Competencies Assessed
Permanency	20	Connection to trusted adults, community of support, and overall interdependent connections

Once the youth and caregiver (when possible) provide input into the youth's assessment, a scored report is generated. A scored comparison report is only available when the caregiver provides their responses within 30 days of the youth's response. An average score for each life skills area is included in the scored report on a scale of 1-5, with 5 indicating high strength. The remaining assessment results will list all the statements for a particular skill area and the youth's answers.

When the assessment is provided by the Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) contract provider, assessment results are discussed during an interpretation session. The contract provider invites the youth, caregiver and caseworker to the interpretation session. The caregiver, youth and caseworker will receive a copy of the youth's scored report from the PAL contractor and/or PAL staff.

The interpretation session or future discussions about the assessment results should include the following:

- Ask youth to identify their strengths (areas where the scores are closer to a 5);
- Ask youth where they felt unsure and they think they need help (lower average scores);
- Remind youth that they may not have had the opportunity to gain experience in certain areas yet. Have them connect what they are doing now with future goals; and
- Compare the assessment results of the youth and caregiver and discuss with them areas of agreement and difference.

Results from the assessment can be used to set future goals and to plan activities for real life learning experiences. Achieved success and knowledge of a particular skill should be included in the youth's plan of service (see section 6241, Child Plan of Service).

Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Training Curriculum Outline

Refer to [10222](#) Life Skills Training.

The PAL Life Skills training curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the following core elements and topics:

- Health and Safety;

- Housing and Transportation;
- Job Readiness;
- Financial Management;
- Life Decisions and Responsibilities; and
- Personal and Social Relationships.

Health and Safety

Goal

To provide information that will help youth make healthy choices concerning health care, hygiene, nutrition, birth control, sexual responsibility, and substance abuse. Youth will also develop an understanding of how stress and anger affects their lives, the warning signs of violence, and how to access resources within their community when they are in need of help.

Desired Outcomes

- a) Understand their health care rights at age 16.
- b) Understand the importance of personal hygiene.
- c) Understand the importance of healthy eating.
- d) Learn how to find a doctor, make an appointment, and understand their health care options when they leave care.
- e) Develop an understanding of their sexual responsibility and risky behaviors.
- f) Understand all birth control options, how they are used, the pros and cons of use and where to get them.
- g) Develop a better understanding of reproduction and pregnancy risks.
- h) Understand the different types of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and know the signs and dangers of STDs.
- i) Understand how to protect themselves against STDs.
- j) Understand the negative impact substance abuse has on self-sufficiency.
- k) Know the signs of addiction.
- l) Know how stress affects their lives and how to develop positive coping skills.
- m) Understand human trafficking, the traps of the trafficker, and how to stay safe.
- n) Know what services and support are available to victims of human trafficking (including reporting alleged abuse to local law enforcement).

Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

1. Plan, shop for, and prepare a nutritious meal.
2. Create a balanced menu and a shopping list for three days.
3. Make a doctor or dentist appointment for yourself.

4. Develop a list of your current doctors, including their addresses and phone numbers. Also list your medications, their purposes and the name and contact information for your preferred pharmacy.
5. Research local agencies that can help with substance abuse. Call to find out eligibility requirements.
6. Identify three strategies to reduce or eliminate stress. Practice these for a week and evaluate the effectiveness of each strategy.

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline

1. Personal Health Care

- 1.1 Review medical rights of foster youth at age 16.
- 1.2 Identify elements of good personal hygiene.
 - 1.2.1 Discuss importance of bathing, brushing teeth, washing and combing hair, using deodorant, and other personal hygiene habits.
 - 1.2.2 Discuss importance of wearing clean clothes.
- 1.3 Identify elements of good nutrition.
- 1.4 Identify how to take care of personal health needs, mental health needs and services including preventive care, making appointments, Medicaid, and health insurance. Also discuss the right to confidentiality.

2. Sexual Responsibility

- 2.1 Describe various types of STDs, as well as their transmission and prevention.
- 2.2 Tell where, how, and when to be tested for STDs.
- 2.3 List community resources pertaining to STDs.
- 2.4 List and compare different forms of birth control.
- 2.5 Describe basic reproductive anatomy (male and female).
- 2.6 Describe the process of human reproduction.
- 2.7 Discuss the options for being sexually responsible.
- 2.8 Identify your own personal values around sexual responsibility

3. Substance Abuse

- 3.1 List reasons why people may use or abuse drugs.
- 3.2 Describe the short- and long-term effects of drug use and abuse on relationships, self-sufficiency, and jobs.
- 3.3 List the warning signs of addiction.
- 3.4 Discuss where people can get help for substance abuse.

4. Coping and Stress Management

- 4.1 Label signs of stress due to physical, emotional, environmental, and situational events.
- 4.2 Compare positive and negative coping mechanisms.

4.3 Tell the difference between and list positive and negative support systems.

4.4 Describe when, who, and how to ask for help.

Housing and Transportation

Goal

To provide the tools and strategies for youth to plan for, find, and maintain safe, affordable housing and transportation.

Desired Outcomes

- a. Understand the pros and cons of various housing options.
- b. Understand the pros and cons of various transportation options.
- c. Understand the legal responsibilities and consequences of contracting to rent or purchase property.

Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

1. Practice reading apartment classified ads.
2. Talk to someone who lives in an apartment and find out what expenses they have in addition to rent.
3. Select an apartment from an advertisement and prepare a monthly budget that includes all monthly expenditures.
4. Select a destination and use the internet or call to find out the bus route to get there, how long it will take, and how much it will cost.
5. Plan a bus trip and take it.
6. Select a car from the classified ads and make a budget to buy and maintain that car for one year (don't forget gas, insurance, maintenance, and monthly payments).

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline:**1. Finding Housing**

- 1.1 List the characteristics of safe housing.
- 1.2 Describe types of housing options that could be available after care and the qualifications for each (campus housing, military, job corps, rental properties and homeownership).
- 1.3 Compare various apartment sizes and types (studio, efficiency, shared living).
- 1.4 Define boarding houses and rooms for rent.
- 1.5 Describe the transitional living programs available and their benefits.
- 1.6 Explain housing vouchers and how to apply for and use them (Section 8).
- 1.7 Describe the options for the homeless, such as shelters available in the area.
- 1.8 Consider the costs of housing, such as deposits, utilities, and insurance.
- 1.9 Compare the costs of renting vs. owning, as well as benefits of each.
- 1.10 Define commonly used abbreviations in apartment advertising.
- 1.11 Practice reading apartment classified advertisements.
- 1.12 Compare the effect of various apartment selections on personal budgets.
- 1.13 Describe the role of apartment locator services.

2. Rentals, Leases, and Contracts

- 2.1 Review the questions asked on an apartment application and discuss issues such as background checks, rental history, and credit.
- 2.2 Complete a sample apartment application.
- 2.3 Review a tenant lease and discuss tenant rights and responsibilities. Describe the effects of breaking that lease, paying rent late, and damage to the unit.
- 2.4 Describe the legal ramifications of a signed lease.
- 2.5 Review an apartment inspection form (move in/move out).
- 2.6 Describe the negative effects of breaking a lease.
- 2.7 Explain the reasons you may be evicted.

3. Roommates and Shared Living

- 3.1 Describe the pros and cons of having a roommate.
- 3.2 Review a roommate agreement and describe the benefits of having a roommate agreement.
- 3.3 Consider options for sharing household duties and bill paying with a roommate.
- 3.4 List regular housekeeping duties and consider whom you can contact for needed repairs in your housing.
- 3.5 List precautions you should take so that you and your belongings stay safe.

4. Getting Around

- 4.1 List the types, costs, and benefits of public transportation available in your area.
- 4.2 Use a bus schedule to map out a route and determine the cost of taking that route.
- 4.3 Describe steps to obtain a driver's license and the responsibilities included with one.
- 4.4 Describe legal requirements for insurance coverage for drivers and the consequences of not carrying insurance.
- 4.5 List steps to buying a car.
- 4.6 List the ways to research the cost, reliability, dealer reputation, safety information, and warranty on a vehicle.
- 4.7 Compare the options of paying cash or financing a vehicle.
- 4.8 List basic maintenance items on a vehicle.
- 4.9 Compare kinds of insurance for a vehicle and the costs (higher for young adults).

Job Readiness**Goal**

To assist youth in attaining their full career potential by helping them consider, assess, and plan their education and employment goals and by supporting their ability to execute their plan.

Desired Outcomes

- a. A decision to complete high school or get a GED.
- b. Understand the role education plays in future economic success.
- c. Understand options for higher education and vocational training.
- d. Understand self-marketing (current transferable skills, relevance of a professional resume, and the importance of an interview).
- e. Know how to find and keep a job (including job search and job shadowing/internships).
- f. Recognize and develop a career plan (how to set goals, who to include, how to use all Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services, and how to follow through).

Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

- 1. Explore local pay scales for jobs or careers of interest.
- 2. Find out what your school offers in terms of assistance or resources for help for classes, schedules, and planning for graduation.
- 3. Create a typical weekly schedule for a student who also works (include homework, writing papers, work schedule, extra-curricular activities, and leisure activities).
- 4. Research two careers of interest to you and describe a typical work day, the skills required and what you will learn on the job, and the expected starting pay and opportunities for advancement to better paying positions.

5. Create a resume and a cover letter.
6. Obtain an application for a real job and complete it.
7. Practice a mock job interview.
8. Take a tour of a college campus.

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline:

1. Link between Education and Employment

- 1.1 Define a livable wage job.
- 1.2 Compare the effect that the level of formal education or trade education has on starting salary scale and lifetime earning ability.

2. Education – Finishing High School

- 2.1 Describe the positive effects and negative effects of completing or not completing high school education with a GED or diploma.
- 2.2 Describe steps to accomplishing an individual's educational goal of graduation or GED completion and how to overcome barriers to achieving that goal.
- 2.3 Describe when, where, and who to go to for help in reaching educational goals (tutors, teachers, and study skills classes.)
- 2.4 Discuss issues that keep students from meeting all of their time commitments, and tools to help manage time.

3. Career Planning

- 3.1 Assess strengths using career interest inventory, personality profiler, and aptitude indicator.
Determine three career options that are reasonable and obtainable based on assessments.
- 3.2 Define transferable job skills and their value in getting a job. (Skills you get from different roles you play in life - such as athlete, volunteer, artist, friend, family member, co-worker - and how to bring this up in a resume or interview).
- 3.3 Describe the value a job, volunteer work, or internships has on gaining experience or building transferable job skills.
- 3.4 Define and compare college, vocational school, or trade school education.
- 3.5 Describe alternative job skill training(WIA or on-the-job).
- 3.6 Learn where to find workforce: resources, programs, and centers in your area.

4. Job Readiness

- 4.1 Define elements of a resume and cover letter.
- 4.2 Describe and research ways to search for a job (friends or relatives, newspaper ads, applying directly to an employer, temporary agencies, internet research, government agencies, and school placement center).

- 4.3 Review basic instructions on how to complete job applications; complete and critique a practice application.
- 4.4 Participate in a mock interview in class and give and receive feedback to improve interview skills.
- 4.5 Describe how to follow up after interviews and the importance of writing thank you notes.
- 4.6 Describe benefits of pre-employment options such as job shadowing, internships, and mentors.
- 4.7 Describe ways to keep a job, ways to lose a job, and how to best deal with issues that may arise in the workplace.
- 4.8 Describe the best way to leave a job or to change jobs in many circumstances.
- 4.9 Describe dress code as it pertains to various jobs.

5. Higher Education

- 5.1 Research higher education options, including College for All Texans (online).
- 5.2 Practice completing the Texas Common Application (online or printed).
- 5.3 Define the various higher education entrance tests (SAT, ACT, TASP, AP).
- 5.4 Define orientation at a place of higher education.
- 5.5 Describe student housing available for higher education.
- 5.6 Describe the different forms of financial aid available: (tuition exemption, ETV, FAFSA, other) and qualifications for each.

Financial Management

Goal

To provide the tools and information that will help youth develop financial literacy skills that will lead to financial responsibility and independence.

Desired Outcomes

- a. Understand banking, including use of online banking. Instruct youth in opening checking and savings accounts and balancing their accounts.
- b. Understand the effects of good and bad credit. Learn how to obtain and interpret a credit score to include protecting, repairing and improving their credit.
- c. Understand financial responsibility (bills). Assist youth in creating a monthly budget accounting for reasonable rent, utilities, telephone service, internet service and other common monthly expenses.
- d. Distinguish between wants and needs.
- e. Develop experience in creating and developing and maintaining a budget.
- f. Develop experience reading a paystub and learning why funds are withheld.
- g. Understand how and when to file an income tax return.
- h. Learn how to balance a checkbook.

- i. Understand the pros and cons of using credit cards, ATM, and debit cards.
 - j. List ways to protect against identity theft.
 - k. Obtain information on financing a motor vehicle and related expenses, including information about types of financing available for the purchase of a motor vehicle and the risks of subprime and buy-here-pay-here motor vehicle loans.
-
- l. Discuss civic engagement, including the process for registering to vote.
-
- m. Learn what documents the youth is required to receive prior to being discharged from foster care and how these documents may be used. Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

1. Open a checking or savings account.
2. Make a budget for a week and track expenses.
3. List expenses when moving out on your own and create a plan for covering expenses.
4. Research identity or credit theft.
5. Research check cashing stores and fees.
6. Obtain your credit report and review it for accuracy.
7. Complete a financial management training offered by a bank.

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline**1. Banking**

- 1.1 List steps in opening a checking or savings account, to include online banking.
- 1.2 Compare debit cards, check cards, and credit cards and discuss responsible use.
- 1.3 Identify parts of a check.
- 1.4 Practice writing a check.
- 1.5 Describe the consequences of bouncing a check.
- 1.6 Describe how to make a deposit.
- 1.7 Identify steps to balance a checkbook.
- 1.8 Identify how and where to cash a check.
- 1.9 Identify financial management trainings offered by banks.

2. Pay Stub

- 2.1 Discuss differences between hourly and salaried employees.
- 2.2 Identify parts of a pay stub (hours worked, wages, gross and net pay, taxes, insurance deductions, benefits).
- 2.3 Describe the safest plan for signing and depositing your check.
- 2.4 Discuss how and when to file income tax returns.

3. Budgeting

- 3.1 Learn how to prioritize expenditures by comparing wants and needs.
- 3.2 Describe the importance of having and maintaining a budget.
- 3.3 Learn how to create a budget.

3.4 Discuss benefits and ways to save money.

3.5 Discuss earning enough to cover costs of living (full time versus part time, more than one job, or higher wages).

4. Credit

4.1 Describe uses for credit cards.

4.2 Describe interest rates and discuss advantages of low interest versus high interest.

- 4.3 Identify the actions that lead to bad credit (late payments, non-payments, breaking a lease, and health debt) and the effects of bad credit on credit scores.
- 4.4 Identify the actions that lead to good credit and the benefits of good credit.
- 4.5 Discuss ways credit companies target young adults.
- 4.6 Discuss scams and identity theft, how to avoid them and/or report them and potential consequences.
- 4.7 Define credit scores/ratings and discuss importance of scores.
- 4.8 List ways to get your credit report.
- 4.9 Review your credit report to locate important information.
- 4.10 Describe the process for disputing items on a credit report.

Life Decisions and Responsibilities

Goal

To provide a forum for youth to consider the many responsibilities and decisions they will be making as they move toward independent living.

Desired Outcomes

- a) Understand the legal rights and responsibilities of being an adult.
- b) Understand how and why certain documents are important and must be secured.
- c) Be aware of community resources and how to access them.
- d) Develop a preliminary transition planning document.
- e) Create a list of caring adults and community supporters.
- f) Understand the risks and benefits of using social media.

Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2):

- 1. Take a trip to the government offices that issue duplicate birth certificates or ID cards and find out the process for application.
- 2. Research online where to go in your county to get a driver's license and what is required to get a learner's permit. (Visit the Texas Department of Public Safety's website for information.)
- 3. Tour your regional transition center or call to find out what services are available to you.
- 4. Tour your local workforce center or call to find out what services are available to you.
- 5. Visit, call or research online social service providers that offer transitional housing or emergency shelter.
- 6. Create a weeklong schedule for yourself that includes school, work, home duties, church, or volunteer commitments.

7. Find out who the candidates are/were for a local, state, or national election and describe their main campaign promises.

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline

1. Legal Rights, Responsibilities and Civic Engagement

(Use *Now You Are 18*, published by Texas Bar Auxiliary)

- 1.1 Describe the steps to registering to vote and the importance of doing so. List where or how to find out where to go to vote.
- 1.2 List the characteristics of a good citizen.
- 1.3 Define and tell the importance of jury duty.
- 1.4 Tell the requirements for and steps to register for the selective service, as well as the rationale for doing so.
- 1.5 Describe the legal requirements and responsibilities of signing various contracts and other legal documents, such as car loans and apartment leases.

2. Legal Documents, Records, and Roots

- 2.1 List reasons why a birth certificate is important and tell how to get a copy.
- 2.2 List reasons why a Social Security card is important and tell how to receive a duplicate copy.
- 2.3 Explain how to qualify and earn a driver's license, as well as the effects and responsibilities of being a licensed driver.
- 2.4 Explain what a state ID is, how to get it and compare this to a driver's license.

See [6452](#) Personal Documents Provided to Youth

3. Community Resources and Awareness

- 3.1 List and describe the services your regional transition center offers.
- 3.2 List and describe the services your workforce center offers and your eligibility for those services.
- 3.3 List and describe the social service agencies and the resources offered in your community (including human and labor trafficking and LGBTQ organizations and resources) and how to access these services.
- 3.4 Examine examples of referral forms and release of information forms and discuss why these are needed.
- 3.5 List things to ask when calling a community resource.
- 3.6 List and define information and referral services (211), hotlines, and help lines in your area.
- 3.7 List DFPS benefits, tell the requirements to access them, who to contact to access them and the amount of money you may request and how and why these funds may be used.
- 3.8 Describe the qualification process and steps to applying for public assistance such as TANF and SNAP Employment & Training or public housing.

4. Life Decisions

- 4.1 Consider which educational path is a good match for your desired goals.
- 4.2 Compare jobs and career paths that will help you reach your desired goals.
- 4.3 Consider the many effects of significant relationships on desired goals (both positive and negative).
- 4.4 Consider the many effects of becoming a parent on desired goals (both positive and negative).
- 4.5 List the characteristics of quality childcare and the steps to locating it in your area.
- 4.6 Consider the risks (sexting, online predators, cyber-bullying, sharing personal information) and benefits of using social media, including the potential long term consequences some online activities may have on obtaining employment
- 4.7 Consider the potential consequences of criminal activity before and after leaving foster care on desired goals, which may result in potential loss of DFPS services or benefits, fewer placement options, limited employment or housing options, and U.S. military exclusion.

5. Organizational Skills

- 5.1 Explore tools for time management and keeping track of multiple responsibilities and obligations.
- 5.2 List ways to organize and safeguard important documents.
- 5.3 Describe ways and reasons to keep personal information secure.

6. Your Child's Plan of Service (CPOS)

- 6.1 Describe the process of setting goals and making action plans.
- 6.2 Discuss transition planning options (Circles of Support and permanency conferences).
- 6.3 Review the Child's Plan of Service document.
- 6.4 Discuss goals during each core element.
- 6.5 Discuss family connections and the options for and risks involved in reconnecting.

Personal and Social Relationships

Goal

To facilitate training that will promote positive peer relationships, develop appropriate communications skills, help youth to develop a sense of culture and respect for others, and build positive self-esteem.

Desired Outcomes

- a) Practice developing and experiencing positive peer relationships.
- b) Be aware of appropriate communication skills.
- c) Develop respect for culture and ethnic diversity.
- d) Understand self-esteem and personal strengths.

- e) Know the warning signs of violence.
- f) Understand what domestic violence resources are available and how to access them when needing help.

Minimum hours required in class: 5

Reinforcement Homework Activities (select at least 2)

1. Have a discussion with someone of a different culture or ethnicity and find out what is unique to him or her.
2. Describe similarities and differences between your culture or ethnicity and another person's and how these can affect your relationship.
3. List five positive self-talk statements and practice them for one week.
4. Teach a conflict resolution skill to a caretaker, peer, or sibling and discuss situations where it would work well.
5. Practice using new conflict resolution skills to resolve a conflict.

Minimum Standards Curriculum Outline

1. Interpersonal Relationships

- 1.1 List different relationships at home, school, and work and the skills needed to interact effectively in those relationships.
- 1.2 Discuss and identify personal boundaries and the importance of respect for personal space.
- 1.3 Identify characteristics of and practice forming positive relationships.
- 1.4 Describe the characteristics of a healthy partner relationship and the importance of making healthy choices.

2. Communication

- 2.1 Explain the importance of communication in relationships.
- 2.2 Identify how people communicate (verbal vs. non-verbal) and learn to recognize messages that non-verbal communication sends.
- 2.3 Identify the characteristics of active listening. Practice active listening.
- 2.4 Compare formal language, informal language, and slang and describe the appropriate situations for each.
- 2.5 Identify ways to express thoughts, ideas, anger, emotions, and opinions in a healthy manner.
- 2.6 List and practice conflict resolution strategies.

3. Culture

- 3.1 Define and discuss cultural and ethnic diversity.
- 3.2 Discuss ways and reasons to respect cultural differences.

4. Self-Esteem

- 4.1 Define self-esteem.
- 4.2 Identify traits of healthy self-esteem.
- 4.3 Identify the effects of positive self-talk vs. negative self-talk.
- 4.4 Identify ways to build positive self-esteem.

5. Anger Management

- 5.1 Explain when anger can be a healthy emotion.
- 5.2 Define the term de-escalation.
- 5.3 Tell examples of appropriately and inappropriately expressed anger.
- 5.4 List the warning signs of violence toward oneself and of violence toward others.
- 5.5 List resources for getting help with violence.

6. Paperwork

- 6.1 Take the ACLSA and participate in a discussion of how it can help build an action plan for improving life skills.
- 6.2 Participate in a discussion about DFPS benefits for eligible and qualifying transitioning youth, how those benefits may be accessed and what they may be used for.
- 6.3 Participate in the formation of class expectations and rules (group norms).
- 6.4 Agree on group norms.

Life Skills Independent Study Guide

Per [10223](#) *Life Skills Independent Study Guide*:

PAL staff must pre-approve requests for a youth and caregiver to use the Life Skills Independent Study Guide instead of attending Life Skills training. PAL staff must also approve credit for completing any or all of the six core areas of PAL life skills using the guide.

Below are reasons PAL staff may approve the independent study guide:

- A youth is a danger to him or herself or others;
- A youth's medical condition prevents formal training class attendance;
- No formal training classes will be provided before a youth's planned discharge from foster care; and
- Funding is not available for youth who are in non-paid substitute care.

PAL Life Skills Training Refusal

Per [10222](#) Life Skills Training:

PAL staff will make efforts to offer youth the opportunity to participate in PAL Life Skills training. If a youth decides to decline these services, PAL staff or caseworker will ask youth to sign the refusal letter Form 2546 and explain the consequences of not participating in the training.

If a youth refuses to sign the letter, then PAL staff or caseworker will note the date they spoke to the youth and when the youth declined, on the youth signature line.

For youth age 17 and older in care who refuse to participate in training (including youth in Extended Care), PAL Staff should contact the youth every three months from the refusal date to offer the opportunity to participate in PAL Life Skills Training.

Optional PAL Services

See:

[10220](#) Required Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Services.

[10230](#) Optional Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Services.

Before using available funds for optional PAL services, staff fully explores other funding options and determines that no other options exist. If funds are available, and it is determined that one or some of these services will meet the individual youth or young adult's needs, PAL staff may provide or arrange for any of the following optional services to be provided to eligible youth or young adults:

- Group and individual counseling to address issues of separation, preparation for placement, emancipation, and interpersonal relationships;
- Specialized camps to promote self-esteem, resourcefulness, and other strengths and skills necessary for a successful adulthood (activities may include ropes courses, canoeing, expressive arts, swimming, nature hikes, drama skits and journal writing);
- Incentives for youth to attend PAL Life Skills training sessions at a fee that does not exceed \$5 per session;
- Snacks at PAL training sessions;
- Vocational assessments, training, and supplies;
- Preparatory classes and testing fees for a General Educational Development (GED) Test or for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT);
- Fees for tutoring, college application, and other special educational services and supplies.
- Fees for summer school (as needed for a youth to progress in school);
- Graduation expenses (examples: caps, gowns, senior rings);

- Tuition, fees, and books for college or vocational school, not provided by the Tuition Fee Waiver or Education and Training Voucher and not to exceed a maximum amount of \$1,000;
- Driver's education course fees, Texas Driver's License (TDL) or Personal Identification Certificate issued by Texas Department of Public Safety unless waived;
- Support and coordination of the mentor program and activities to assist youth in preparing for adulthood (activities may include financial literacy, college enrollment, or relationship development);
- Modified or customized equipment such as communication devices or adaptive devices;
- Independent living supplies and household supplies, such as alarm clocks, luggage, first aid kits, calculators, sheets, towels, and cooking utensils for youth who are moving to an independent living setting;
- Emergency personal needs such as eyeglasses that are needed for employment, housing, or education purposes; and
- PAL age-appropriate activities and training for youth who are ages 14 and 15. Activities may include regional conferences or college tours.

Payment Limits for the PAL Transitional Living Allowance

Refer to [10242](#) Payment Limits for the PAL Transitional Living Allowance.

The maximum allowance amount for eligible young adults should not exceed the following criteria:

Maximum Total Allowance	...for a young adult who...
\$500	enters the Job Corps or a branch of the United States armed forces.
\$500	is in or is moving to a supervised or semi-supervised living arrangement in which another source funds room and board expenses. The funds may be used for independent living needs or adaptive equipment or devices as needed.
\$1,000	is moving into a living situation that requires the youth to pay rent or contribute financially toward rent. The amount of the participant's rent or contribution must be evidenced by a written agreement between the participant and the landlord.

Maximum Total Allowance	...for a young adult who...
\$1,000	is attending school or college or is receiving vocational or pre-vocational training services other than Job Corps or a branch of the United States armed forces.

PAL Aftercare Room and Board

See [10250](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Aftercare Room and Board.

PAL Aftercare Room and Board Limitations While Receiving ETV

If a young adult is in the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program, the ETV program must provide funds for room and board primary expenses before any PAL Aftercare Room and Board funds are used. PAL funds are not considered as a source of income for the ETV program, since young adults are not guaranteed to receive these funds.

See the following:

[10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

[Expenses Covered by ETV](#) in this Resource Guide.

PAL Aftercare Room and Board Limitations While in Extended Foster Care

While a young adult is in an extended foster care placement, he or she is not eligible for Aftercare Room and Board assistance, since these services are paid for through the Extended Foster Care program.

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

Allowable Expenditures and Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board

Refer to [10254](#) Allowable Expenditures and Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board. Only allowable expenditures may be paid. These are:

- Rent deposits.
- Rent payments.
- Utility deposits.
- Utility payments (electric, gas, water, phone).
- Food.

- Residential housing deposits or payments at college (there cannot be duplication of funds from another source, such as ETV funds, as described in *Expenses Covered by ETV* in this Resource Guide, and in [10240](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Transitional Living Allowance (TLA).
- Financial compensation up to \$350 per month to host homes (see [10256](#) Host Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment).

Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board

Refer to [10255](#) Payment Limits for PAL Aftercare Room and Board.

Gradual Decrease of PAL Aftercare Payments

The case manager works with the young adult on budgeting and financial management, to reduce her or his dependency on the PAL Aftercare Room and Board assistance once the assistance is no longer available. The amount of monthly PAL Aftercare Room and Board payments decreases as the young adult increasingly takes on more financial responsibility.

Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment

Refer to [10256](#) Host Home for PAL Aftercare Room and Board Payment.

Individuals providing a host home may include a former foster parent, a former teacher, a church member or a relative. The term host home does not include the young adult's parent's home.

The individual providing the host home serves as the young adult's life coach and mentor. The individual providing the host home and the young adult mutually agree upon rules and expectations while the young adult is living in the home. Host home payments must not exceed \$350 per month.

Planning How Long the Youth Should Stay in the Host Home

The individual providing the host home and the young adult must discuss the time frame for the young adult to stay with the host. They should take into consideration that early depletion of the \$3000 cap may not be in the young adult's best interest, since the young adult may need future financial assistance before reaching age 21.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

See [10260](#) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Data Entry and its sub-items.

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) gives flexible funding to states to assist youth and young adults in transitioning to a successful adulthood. The law also requires the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to:

- Develop a data collection system to track the independent living services provided to youth and young adults; and
- Develop outcomes that measure states' success in preparing youth and young adults for their transition to a successful adulthood.

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) data collection system was created to meet this requirement.

NYTD has federal standards for data reporting. If Texas does not meet these standards, it may be assessed a penalty from one to five percent of the annual State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) allotment for the reporting period for which data was supposed to be submitted. This allotment does not include Education Training Vouchers (ETV) funds. The standards include the following:

- Meet the file submission and data standards;
- Meet the standard for the participation rate for youth in foster care and for discharged youth or young adults;
- Provide full or partial outcome survey information on all young adults ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population or sample, or indicate why the survey information was not obtainable;
- Have participation in the outcomes survey from at least 60 percent of young adults, ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population, who are no longer in foster care; and
- Have participation in the outcomes survey from at least 80 percent of young adults, ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population, who are still in foster care.

Key NYTD Terms

Term	Definition
Served population	Any youth or young adult who received even one NYTD-defined independent living service paid for or provided by DFPS during the reporting period.
Survey (baseline) population	Any youth who was in foster care at some point during the 45 days after his or her 17th birthday for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 or every third FFY following FFY 2011, such as 2014, 2017, 2020. Foster care is defined in 45 CFR 1355.20 .

Term	Definition
Follow-up (selected) population	Young adults ages 19 and 21 who participated in the outcomes survey as part of the baseline population. In Texas, the follow-up population is determined by a random selection of young adults who, as a part of the baseline population, participated in the outcomes survey.
Reporting period	Each year is made up of two six-month reporting periods based on the federal fiscal year. The first reporting period (A) is from October 1st to March 31st and the second reporting period (B) is from April 1st to September 30th.
NYTD baseline year	The initial baseline year started October 1, 2010. Subsequent baseline years are every three years thereafter.

National Youth in Transition (NYTD) Independent Living Services

For the purposes of NYTD, an independent living service falls within one of the categories of service as specified in [45 CFR 1356.83](#) (g)(20) thru (33), that are paid for or provided by the State Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) agency, regardless of the manner in which it is delivered.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Survey

PAL staff are designated as proxy for the youth or young adult when they enter the youth or young adult's responses into the survey. See Completing a NYTD Survey for a Youth – Instructions, in this guide.

The survey may be completed by:

- Mailing a paper survey to the youth or young adult to complete;
- The youth or young adult completing the survey in the PAL office or any other location; and
- Phoning the youth or young adult and completing the survey over the phone ME Reporting Status.

Outcome Reporting Status

See [10264.2](#) Outcome Reporting Status

If data is not entered timely, the reporting status in the system ~~becomes~~ will show as “LATE.” PAL staff is required to select one of the following *Outcome Reporting Status* options to explain why the survey was not completed:

- Youth Declined;
- Parent Declined;
- Youth Incapacitated;
- Youth Incarcerated;
- Runway/Missing; or
- Unable to Locate/Invite.

Designating a National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Primary Contact

If a youth completes a baseline survey at age 17, the youth needs a designated NYTD contact. Having a designated NYTD contact ensures that DFPS has a way to contact the youth in the future, to take the follow-up survey if he or she is part of the random selection. At the time of the NYTD follow-up survey, the young adult may be out of care and contacted through the NYTD Designated Contact person listed in IMPACT.

Impact Data and Information Alerts

Federal law requires states to collect and report the information needed on each eligible youth or young adult for the NYTD survey, using what is defined as a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). In Texas, IMPACT fits that definition. An alert system in IMPACT notifies PAL staff when they need to update information on the youth or young adult for NYTD purposes.

The federal government has standards regarding an error rate for the states to be in compliance with the NYTD survey. On the IMPACT *NYTD List* page, if there are errors that need to be corrected, a double dash (= equal sign) appears in the column in the child’s row under *Data or Information*.

Data and Information Alerts indicate errors that PAL staff, and possibly the conservatorship caseworker, need to correct.

Information (Info) Alerts

Information (Info) alerts are about the youth or young adult's contact information. These messages may be:

- Youth or young adult does not have a designated individual for purposes of future contact;
- Youth or young adult does not have a current primary telephone number;
- Youth or young adult does not have a current mailing address; or
- Youth or young adult does not have a current primary email address.

Data Alerts

Data alerts are messages that information about the youth or young adult is out of date or not in the system. These messages may be:

- Education record is more than 12 months old;
- Education record is missing;
- Youth or young adult survey status is late and there is not an outcome reporting status;
- Date of birth is missing;
- Youth or young adult's sex is missing or is recorded as unknown;
- Youth or young adult's race is missing; or
- Youth or young adult's ethnicity is missing.

Special Populations

Reporting NYTD Services on Youth from a Different State (ICPC)

DFPS reports to NYTD any independent living services that DFPS provides to youth who move to Texas from another state. DFPS reports the youth or young adult's basic demographics and characteristics along with the services he or she received.

If IMPACT gives a data error on a youth or young adult from out-of-state, the PAL contract provider may be able to provide the information needed to fix the data error.

If PAL staff cannot obtain the information to fix the data error, staff emails the PAL program specialist in state office and includes:

- The youth or young adult's name;
- Date of birth;

- The state where the youth or young adult is from;and
- The missing required information.

It is possible for a single youth or young adult to be in more than one state's served population. If two states serve the same youth or young adult during the same reporting period, both states report on all the relevant data elements for the particular youth or young adult, including basic demographics, characteristics, and independent living services received.

Reporting on Youth in Placement with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

DFPS is required to survey youth or young adults who would not otherwise be provided a PAL service because they are in a Title IV-E placement (receiving Title IV-E foster care maintenance payments) with Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) or county juvenile probation department.

To meet the survey requirement during a baseline year, a TJJD youth is assigned a PAL stage if the youth is age 17 - and does not currently have a PAL stage. There are an estimated 50-60 youth who fall into this category during a baseline survey year.

All of the youth appear under the *Region* drop down list when staff selects *State Office* on the IMPACT NYTD *List* page but are assigned to the lead PAL staff in the county where the most recent legal action was taken regarding the youth or young adult's status.

Completing a NYTD Survey for a Youth – Instructions

Using the NYTD List Page

Pre-Condition	From the NYTD list page
Step 1:	Change the display to those that you need (all, region or just assigned to you)
Step 2:	Change the population type to Survey
Step 3:	Click to remove the Display Urgent checkmark
Step 4:	Click the Status hyperlink to display the NYTD page
Step 5:	Click the Type hyperlink (Base) to display the survey
Step 6:	On the survey, type the date or select it from the calendar icon
Step 7:	Select a Method

Pre-Condition	From the NYTD list page
Step 8:	Type the amount to time spent in the Interview Length box
Step 9:	Check the Special Accommodation box if applicable
Step 10:	Click on answers for each question
Step 11:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the survey is complete, click Submit Completed Survey • If the survey is NOT complete, click Save and Return Later
Note:	See printing instructions if you want to print the survey.

Using Your Workload

Pre-Condition	From your workload
Step 1:	Click the stage name hyperlink.
Step 2:	Click the NYTD second level tab.
Step 3:	Click the Type hyperlink (Base) to display the survey.
Step 4:	On the survey, type the date or select it from the calendar icon.
Step 5:	Select a method.
Step 6:	Type the amount of time spent in the Interview Length box.
Step 7:	Check the Special Accommodation box if applicable.
Step 8:	Click on answers for each question.
Step 9:	If the survey is complete, click Submit Completed Survey.
Notes:	See printing instructions if you want to print the survey.

Overview of NTTD Program Timeline

SERVED				2nd FOLLOW-UP		BASELINE		Reporting Periods
						(1A)	17 year olds	10/01/10
						(1B)	Report	03/31/11
							Fix	04/01/11
							Report	09/30/11
							Fix	10/01/11
							Report	03/31/12
							Fix	04/01/12
							Report	09/30/12
							Fix	10/01/12
						(1A)	19 year olds	03/30/13
						(1B)	Report	04/01/13
							Fix	09/30/13
							Report	10/01/13
							Fix	03/31/14
						(2A)	17 year olds	04/01/14
						(2B)	Report	09/30/14
							Fix	10/01/14
							Report	03/31/15
							Fix	04/01/15
						(1A)	21 year olds	09/30/15
						(1B)	Report	10/01/15
							Fix	03/31/16
							Report	04/01/16
							Fix	09/30/16
						(2A)	19 year olds	10/01/16
						(2B)	Report	03/31/17
							Fix	04/01/17
							Report	09/30/17
							Fix	10/01/17
						(3A)	17 year olds	03/31/18
						(3B)	Report	04/01/18
							Fix	09/30/18
							Report	10/01/18
							Fix	03/31/19
						(3A)	19 year olds	04/01/19
						(3B)	Report	09/30/19
							Fix	10/01/19
							Report	03/31/20
							Fix	
						(4A)	17 year olds	

1st NYTD Baseline: Turning 17 October 2010 – April 2011
 Following in their 19th and 21st year 2012/2013 & 2014/2015

2nd NYTD Baseline: Turning 17 October 2013-April 2014
 Following in their 19th and 21st year 2015/2016 & 2017/2018

Group 3 and so on

Post-Secondary Education Programs

College Tuition and Fee Exemption

See [10310](#) College Tuition and Fee Exemption Information.

The college tuition and fee exemption program is a state law that exempts payment of tuition and fees at state supported colleges or universities for foster youth currently or formerly in DFPS conservatorship and for those adopted from DFPS.

Refer to the [College Tuition and Fee Waiver website](#) for more information about the College Tuition Exemption, including eligibility criteria.

Each state-supported educational institution is responsible for applying the College Tuition and Fee Exemption, and each institution has its own appeals processes that the student must follow if a college denies the tuition or fee exemption.

The [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) ensures that each Texas state-supported educational institution is in compliance with the college tuition and fee exemption requirements.

This exemption covers fees required for educational purposes but does not cover items such as parking or other optional fees.

Both the college tuition and fee exemption and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds are used to determine need for the cost of attendance (COA) at state-supported higher education institutions.

Temporary Housing Assistance between Academic Terms

See [10312](#) Temporary Housing Assistance Between Academic Terms.

Texas's public higher education institutions are required to assist young adults formerly in DFPS conservatorship in locating temporary housing between academic terms (such as summer and Christmas holiday breaks). PAL staff may inform youth and young adults of this housing assistance during PAL life skills training classes.

Eligible Young Adults

Young adults eligible for temporary housing assistance must have been in DFPS conservatorship before the student's:

- 18th birthday; or
- Date of legal emancipation.

Additional Requirements

The young adult must:

- Be a full-time student in the semester preceding the housing need;
- Be registered or have started the required enrollment actions as a full-time student for the immediate next semester period following the housing accommodation;
- Lack other reasonable temporary housing alternatives; and
- Request the housing assistance.

How Schools Can Help with Summer and Christmas Breaks

The school may assist students with making housing arrangements by providing a list of available housing resources within the community or by referring students to other resources or community partners that offer housing assistance.

If the student demonstrates a financial need, the school may open up student housing such as dormitories, university-owned apartments or other campus housing, or provide a stipend to cover reasonable costs for temporary housing. Schools aren't required to provide these options, so the housing choices provided to the student will vary depending on the specific school's practice.

If a student receives a stipend for housing assistance, this does not prohibit the student from receiving additional stipends in one or more later academic periods. If a student receives a stipend for housing assistance, it will not affect her or his ability to apply for or receive funds from the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program, or to receive other similar academic assistance.

Institutions of Higher Education are defined in the Education Code [§61.003](#) as public and include:

- Technical institutes;
- Junior colleges;
- Four year or senior colleges or universities;
- Medical or dental school units; and
- State colleges.

Where to Request Housing Assistance

Campus offices vary at each school of higher education. Examples of campus offices where students may inquire about housing assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Financial aid offices;
- Student affairs offices;
- Admissions offices;
- Housing and residential living offices; and

- Student ombudsperson.

Young adults are also encouraged to research each school's website to locate the appropriate campus housing office.

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

See [10320](#) Overview of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program and its sub-items.

The federal Chafee ETV program provides financial assistance to youth and young adults in post-secondary and vocational or technical programs. Eligible youth or young adults may receive up to \$5,000 per year but can only participate in the program for 5 years, e.g. up to 15 semesters, either consecutive or not consecutive.

The ETV program is federally funded, and all federal law and policy must be followed.

42 U.S.C. [§677](#)

40 TAC [§700.1613](#)

Interested youth and young adults can apply to the ETV program at the Baptist Child and Family Services ([BCFS](#)) [Texas Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\) Program](#) website.

Eligibility

Students in DFPS Care or Formerly in DFPS Care Who Are Eligible for the ETV Program

Refer to the DFPS [Education and Training Voucher \(ETV\)](#) website for ETV eligibility criteria.

Others who are Eligible for the ETV Program

Texas Juvenile Justice and Probation

A student may be eligible, if he or she:

- Was in the custody of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD), or under the jurisdiction of a local juvenile probation department;
- Was in a Title IV-E placement and receiving Title IV-E payments the day before the student turned age 18.

The DFPS Federal/State Support unit must confirm that the student was in a Title IV-E placement and that the student's care was paid for with Title IV-E funds.

Tribal Students

See [10322](#) Staff Responsible for the ETV Program, under Tribal Students.

Scholastic Eligibility Criteria for the ETV Program

In addition to meeting the general criteria for the ETV Program, students must be enrolled in an institution of higher education and meet one of the following criteria:

- The student has either earned a high school diploma or the equivalent of a high school diploma, or is exempt from compulsory school attendance, according to Texas Education Code [§25.086\(a\)\(6\)\(A\)](#).
OR
- The student is enrolled in a dual-credit course or other course at an institution of higher education for which the student will earn both a high school diploma and college credit.

Participation in the ETV program means that a student has applied for and been approved for the ETV program.

Eligibility for the ETV Program Based on Citizenship and Immigration

See 10323.1 Citizenship and Immigration.

Undocumented students are not eligible for the ETV program because the program is federally funded and considered to be a federal public benefit.

Once a student obtains the status of lawful permanent resident, or another qualified alien status as defined by 8 U.S.C. §1641, he or she may apply for the ETV program, if the student:

- Is still under age- 23; and
- Otherwise, qualifies for the ETV program.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policies

Once a student turns 21, the student must meet the school's SAP policy for Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) for federal financial aid (such as Pell grants).

A school's SAP policies may include that the student:

- Maintain a certain grade point average;
- Meet a pace/completion rate; and
- Be within a maximum amount of attempted hours as determined by the school.

The student is responsible for knowing the school's SAP policy. This information may be found on the school's website or acquired from the school's registrar's office.

If a student is not meeting his or her school's SAP policy, the student is not eligible for ETV; however, once the student complies with the school's policy, the student can reapply for ETV, if the student complies before turning 21.

Although the ETV application is for the school year, ETV staff may request additional supporting documents before making an ETV payment **each** school term or semester. ETV staff requests these supporting documents to ensure that the school considers the student to be in compliance with the school's SAP policies and therefore eligible for Title IV-E HEA funds.

If the school has denied Title IV-E HEA funds to the student and the student is appealing to the school, ETV staff determines if the student will receive ETV funds after the school makes a decision on the student's appeal.

If the student's federal financial aid is reinstated, the student can reapply for ETV funds, if the student still meets all other ETV participation requirements.

Minimum Credit Hours for the ETV Program

To be eligible for the ETV program, a student must take:

- A *minimum* of six semester hours in college; or
- The vocational equivalent of six hours during the school term.

Students attending college during the summer may split the required six semester hours between two summer sessions.

If the student is enrolled in a dual-credit course or other course for the purpose of earning a joint high school diploma and college credit, the required six semester hours may be waived as long as the student is attending high school full time.

Students must comply with a school's financial aid probations or warnings to continue to qualify for the ETV program.

Financial Aid Probation or Warnings for Students in the ETV Program Under Age 21

A student who is under age 21 may continue to qualify for the ETV program while on financial aid probation or after receiving a financial aid warning, if the student:

- Is still attending school; and
- Is complying with the school's policies on financial aid probation or financial aid warnings.

This allows the student to improve his or her grade-point average (GPA) while still receiving ETV services.

Age 21 or Older

To receive ETV funds, a student who is age 21 or older must be in compliance with his or her school's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) policy for Title IV HEA federal financial aid (such as Pell grants).

If the school's policy allows a student who is on financial aid probation or warning to continue receiving Title IV HEA funds, the student may receive ETV funds; however, ETV staff may request additional documentation to ensure that the student is in compliance with the school's policies.

Moving to Another State to Attend School While Participating in the ETV Program

A student may move to another state and still be eligible for the ETV program funded by DFPS, if:

- The student was already receiving ETV funds while living in Texas; and
- The student's sole purpose for moving out of state is to attend school.

Schools That Students Must Attend to Qualify for the ETV Program

Students receiving ETV funding are allowed to use the funding to attend an accredited or pre-accredited, nonprofit, private or public institution of higher education that:

- Offers a bachelor's degree, or not less than a two-year program that provides credit toward a degree or certification;
- Offers not less than a one-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation; or
- Exists for at least two years and provides training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

20 U.S.C. [§§1001, 1002](#)

An institution is granted pre-accreditation status, if an accrediting agency or association recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education receives satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet accreditation standards within a reasonable time.

The [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) is the accrediting agency in Texas.

Enrolling in Correspondence, Distance Education, or Continuing Education Courses

If a correspondence course, distance education course, or continuing education course is offered by one of the institutions of higher education described in [Schools That Students Must Attend to Qualify for the ETV Program](#) (in this Resource Guide), the student interested in the course must contact ETV staff for approval before applying.

Contacting ETV staff beforehand ensures that the courses are part of the student's academic degree or certificate program. Some schools may not include these courses in their costs of attendance. If the courses are not included in the costs of attendance, ETV funds cannot be used to pay for the courses.

Applying for the ETV Program

See [10324](#) Applying for the ETV Program.

Before applying to the ETV program, the student submits a [Free Application for Federal Assistance \(FAFSA\)](#) to determine which federal student aid programs the student may be eligible for. Students must submit a renewal FAFSA each year that they enroll in school.

Students or staff may call 1-877-268-4063 to talk to ETV staff for information or assistance.

A student is not required to submit a FAFSA if he or she is enrolled in a dual-credit college course at an institution of higher education for which the student will earn both a high school diploma and college credit.

Students may also be eligible for other state and federal grants and scholarships. See [My Texas Future](#).

Required Supporting Documents

At a minimum, the student must submit with the application:

- A copy of [Form 1016](#) DFPS Verification of ETV Eligibility signed by the appropriate staff person, as explained in the form (see [10322](#) Staff Responsible for the ETV Program – Assistance with the ETV Application), or, when applicable, a signed copy of [Form 1810](#) College Tuition and Fee Waiver Letter;
- A copy of a current financial aid award letter or packet (or a denial letter, if applicable), or a billing statement from a vocational training program;
- A printout of the class schedule for the current semester or academic term (fall, spring, or summer); and
- Verification from the school showing that the student is enrolled in the minimum number of required credit hours and the student's classification.

Submitting Other Documents after Being Approved for the ETV Program

Once a student is approved for the ETV program, additional documents are required, including:

- The Consent for Release of Information form, signed and dated by the student;
 - A Participant Agreement signed and dated by the student;
 - A payment form, and supporting documents, if applicable (as explained in About the Payment Form, directly below); and
 - A current budget worksheet (as explained in About the Budget Worksheet, below).
- The student can obtain these forms from ETV contractor staff.

About the Payment Form

A student completes a payment form provided by ETV staff to indicate whether to send the ETV funds to:

- A specific vendor (such as a landlord, utility company, or bookstore); or
- Directly to the student.

If the student directs ETV staff to send the funds to a vendor, the student must:

- Include supporting documentation with the payment form (such as a lease agreement, utility bill, or bookstore invoice); and
- Complete and sign the [Consent for Release of Information](#) for the ETV program.

For expenses that are paid directly to a vendor, first- and second-year students must submit supporting documentation with the payment form.

See [10326.3](#) When Students Are Paid ETV Funds.

Students are not required to submit or keep receipts for purchases.

About the Budget Worksheet

All students are required to submit a budget worksheet:

- After the initial ETV application is approved; and
- After submitting an updated application.

A budget worksheet explains the reasonable estimated or projected basic living or school expenses that the student is allowed to incur during each school term. An estimated expense on the budget worksheet is considered reasonable if it is fairly close to the expense amount established by the school's cost-of-attendance policy.

The student must submit a completed and signed ETV application (initial or updated) with the budget worksheet and other required documentation. Failure to submit the completed application may result in:

- The student's participation in the ETV program being delayed or denied; or
- Delayed disbursement of ETV checks to either the student or the specified vendors.

Continued Eligibility Requirements after Initial ETV Qualification

To remain eligible for the ETV program, a student must provide ETV staff with the documents listed in [10325](#) Continued Eligibility Requirements after Initial ETV Qualification.

Students under age 21 who are on financial aid probation or have received a financial aid warning may continue to receive ETV funds if they:

- Attend school at least six hours per semester; or
- Meets the school's policies concerning financial aid probation or financial aid warnings, whichever is appropriate.

If a student drops out of school or is placed on academic suspension and cannot attend or re-enroll in school for the period of time determined by the school, ETV funds stop until the student:

- Re-enrolls and is accepted by the school;
- Submits a new or updated ETV application and other documentation; or
- Is approved to participate in the ETV program.

Determining and Disbursing ETV Funds

See [10326](#) Determining and Disbursing ETV Funds.

The School's Determination of Financial Aid

Before ETV staff determines the amount of ETV funds the student can receive, the school must first determine how much financial aid the student will receive. The institution takes into consideration available scholarships, Pell grants, and other factors. Loans will not be factored into ETV awards starting Spring of 2026.

Ordinarily, one such factor considered by the institution is the expected family contribution (EFC). The EFC is a measure of a family's financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by law.

Schools use the EFC to help determine eligibility for federal student aid and financial aid awards; however, students who were or are in foster care after age 13 are considered independent students and do not have to provide information on family income. Instead, the student proves that he or she was in state foster care by submitting to the school either:

- [Form 1810](#) The College Tuition and Fee Waiver Letter.

- A signed letter from a caseworker or Preparation for Adult Learning (PAL) worker on DFPS letterhead that includes the student's Social Security number and the dates that the student was in DFPS foster care.

Once the school determines the amount of financial aid a student will receive, the school sends the student a financial award letter or package that details the amounts and sources of the aid.

The student submits the most recent financial award letter with the initial or updated ETV application every academic year that the student applies for ETV.

Cost of Attendance and DFPS's Determination of the Amount of ETV Funds

Under federal law, DFPS is allowed to award ETV funds that cover only the cost of attendance (COA); that is, the estimated cost of a student's educational expenses for the period of enrollment as determined by the school the student is attending.

COA varies by school and includes:

- The tuition and fees charged by the institution; and
- Allowances for books, room and board, and other living expenses, based on the average cost of living in the area.

COAs at many post-secondary institutions are updated and posted annually on College for All Texans, the website for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (on the Home Page, select a student type, and then select [College Costs](#)). COAs are also posted on each university's or college's website.

When a student applies for the ETV program, DFPS factors in all of the funding sources identified on his or her financial aid letter or package (such as Pell grants, scholarships, and the tuition costs not covered by the state tuition fee waiver) to determine whether the COA at the student's school will be covered.

If a student's funding sources cover the full COA, DFPS does not award ETV funds. If the student's COA is not fully paid or covered by the other funding sources, DFPS awards an ETV grant to pay for the remaining COA, up to \$5,000 per year.

PAL Program Funds

DFPS does not use the funds a student may receive from the PAL program, such as Aftercare Room and Board funds and the PAL Transitional Living Allowance, to determine the amount of the ETV grant.

ETV funds are used before PAL funds can be used, if the student is eligible and ETV funds are available.

Disbursing ETV Funds

ETV staff divides the ETV amount that the student receives by the number of school terms that the student will be attending for the next 12 months. The student indicates the number of school terms on the ETV application or re-application.

For example, if a student who is attending college is eligible for the full ETV award of \$5,000, ETV may issue half of the award (\$2,500) for the fall semester and issue the other \$2,500 for the spring semester.

Summer semester enrollments may be split between the two semesters, if the required six semester hours are being met.

Schools offer programs with many kinds of academic calendars that differ from the traditional fall-spring school year. Generally, a school term is a specific period of time in which classes are scheduled to begin and end.

Students Who Turn 23

A student may remain eligible for the program until he or she turns age 23.

If a student turns age 23 during a college semester or a vocational school term, ETV staff prorates any school-related cost that spans the full semester or term, such as the costs of tuition or room and board prorated.

ETV staff does not prorate expense items included in the COA that are purchased and used before the student turns age 23, such as books and supplies. ETV staff considers these a one-time purchase.

Expenses Covered By ETV

ETV funds may pay the following expenses, if they are included in the costs of attendance (COA) and are reasonable.

ETV Expenses

- **Housing** - Housing includes dormitories, apartments, shared housing, or other housing. Housing costs may include mortgage payments, if the student owns the home and provides evidence of home ownership in his or her supporting documents.
- **Utilities**- Utility costs associated with the student's housing include water, electricity, gas, phone, and Internet connections.
- **Room and board**- Room and board includes host homes or single-room rentals that may or may not include meals and utilities, such as hotels or inns.
- **Personal living expenses**- Personal living expenses may include food, personal hygiene products, a low-cost cell phone, or cleaning products.

- Tuition and fees, if not already covered by the state college tuition and fee waiver.
- Books and school supplies (including the cost to rent or buy a computer, printer, and software).
- Dependent care or childcare.
- Transportation (see Transportation Expenses Covered by ETV Funding).
- Disability-related services and equipment.
- Medical insurance offered by the school.
- Other costs, as allowed by the school.

Other costs may include any expenses applicable to daily living and school attendance that do not apply to the other identified categories.

Transportation Expenses Covered by ETV Funding

ETV funds may be used to pay for reasonable transportation expenses, as defined by the student's institution of higher education.

Reasonable transportation expenses may include:

- Bus fare;
- Taxi fare;
- The cost of gas;
- Campus parking fees;
- The purchase of a bicycle; or
- The expenses of operating or maintaining a vehicle that the student already owns and uses to transport the student to and from school and home.

ETV staff may limit the amount that a student may spend on certain costs of operating or maintaining a vehicle and may request additional information or documentation from the student or the school before allowing the expense to be covered.

Students may not use ETV funds to buy a vehicle.

Expenses Not Covered by the Costs of Attendance (COA)

Certain costs are not included in a university's or college's costs of attendance (COA), such as the cost to buy specialized software needed for an engineering class.

In such cases, the student may contact the institution's financial aid office to discuss having the COA adjusted to reflect any additional expenses that were not previously covered at the time of enrollment. If an institution approves an increase in the COA and if the full amount of the ETV (\$5,000) was not initially awarded at the time of enrollment, the student may request that ETV staff adjust the COA.

The school must provide the student with written justification for an increase in the COA or provide a new financial aid letter reflecting the revised COA.

Other Educational Resources

For a complete list of Texas institutions of higher education and for information on other state and federal grants and scholarships, see [My Texas Future](#).

The ETV program may also assist students who are interested in attending a career school or college, even if the program's duration is less than 12 months. For more information about career schools, see <https://www.twc.texas.gov/partners/career-schools-colleges-resources> [Career Schools & Colleges](#), on the Texas Workforce Commission site.

For a list of accredited schools and programs, see the U.S. Department of Education's [Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#).