



State of Florida  
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist  
Governor

George H. Sheldon  
Secretary

**DATE:** August 20, 2010

**TO:** Regional Directors

**THROUGH:** *Patricia Badland for Pete Digre*  
Pete Digre, Assistant Secretary for Operations  
David L. Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs

**FROM:** *MDR for Alan*  
Alan Abramowitz, State Director, Office of Family Safety

**SUBJECT:** New Provisions of Law: Transition Plan for Youth Aging Out of Care  
(Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008)

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Share with Partners and Child Protection Staff and Implement

**DUE DATE:** Effective October 1, 2010

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the new policies under the Fostering Connections Act regarding the development of a transition plan during the 90 day period before an older youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The effective date of this provision is October 1, 2010.

**BACKGROUND:** The provisions of the Fostering Connections Act include new policy as well as changes to existing policy with implementation dates that occur over multiple years.

This particular provision of law, effective October 1, 2010, requires case managers to assist and support youth in developing a transition plan as he/she ages out of foster care. Case managers must provide the older youth with assistance and support in developing a transition plan during the 90 day period before the older youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. The youth and, as appropriate, other representative(s) of the youth, must be part of the team creating the transition plan.

The transition plan must:

- be developed at age 17 ½ (during the 90 day period before turning age 18) and must list specific goals and activities to be achieved prior to the young person leaving foster care;
- be personalized at the direction of the young person;
- be as detailed as he or she chooses; and

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- include specific options regarding housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, work force supports, and employment services. Case managers are encouraged to include information relating to resources to ensure the youth is informed and prepared to make healthy decisions about their life.

The case manager is to review the plan with the youth, and the transition plan must be approved and signed by the older youth either 90 days prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, or 90 days prior to the date the young adult leaves care.

Case managers must ensure the transition plan and development process is documented in Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN).

There are other required planning activities and services for older youth in care that are also occurring. Case plans describing the programs and services to help the older youth prepare for transition from foster care to independent living. Services, such as pre-independent living services, include life skills training, educational trips, and conferences. The specific services are determined using a pre-independent living assessment. Annual staffings must be conducted for youth between the ages of 13 and 15 to ensure the case plan includes an appropriate educational and career path based on the young person's abilities and interests. Additionally, permanency hearings determine the services needed to assist the older youth make the transition.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Each CBC and case management organization is to develop local procedures that ensure older youth in care have a transition plan developed accordingly during the 90 day period prior to their turning age 18 and/or exiting care. It is suggested that the procedures include a monthly list from FSFN of young persons as they reach age 17½. This should help with tracking and ensuring the older youth has a transition plan. Please ensure this information and the local procedures are shared with all case management agencies and case management staff for implementation by October 1, 2010.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** For additional information please contact Marci Kirkland at (850) 487-2464 or by email at [Marci\\_Kirkland@dcf.state.fl.us](mailto:Marci_Kirkland@dcf.state.fl.us).

cc: DCF CBC Contract Managers  
Jane Soltis, Chair, Independent Living Services Council