



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist
Governor

George H. Sheldon
Secretary

DATE: September 15, 2009

TO: Regional Directors

THROUGH: Peter Digre, Assistant Secretary for Operations *manu to*
David L. Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs *David Fairbanks*

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

SUBJECT: Clarification of Due Process for Benefits for Young Adults Formerly in Foster Care

PURPOSE: This memo is to provide clarification about due process requirements for services to young adults formerly in foster care applying for Road to Independence, Aftercare and/or Transitional Support services. This includes any case in which the decision is made to deny, reduce or terminate benefits. For further information, I have attached my memo dated July 28, 2009 entitled, "Services to Young Adults Formerly in Foster Care Spending Plan, Federal Minimum Wage Increase and Technical Assistance for Eligibility Determinations".

BACKGROUND: The spending plan referenced in the memo above is critical to this process. Lead agencies must document the funds available to provide independent living services. It is important to document funds from other sources used to supplement the specific allocation for independent living services. Lead agency's spending plans will be the source document regarding funding availability specified in Section 409.1451(5), Florida Statutes. The spending plan must be updated as new funds are available.

The Family Safety Program Office is aware of the substantial resources (beyond the specific independent living allocation) that lead agencies have contributed to supporting this vulnerable population. Last fiscal year, community-based care agencies used more than 6 million dollars beyond the legislative allocation to meet this need. We encourage continuation of this practice and appreciate your strong leadership in this arena.

Requirements

- The new minimum wage monthly amount must be included as a dollar figure on all correspondence related to applications and appeals for youth formerly in foster care. The maximum amount is \$1,256 per month.
- If the youth is receiving a reduced amount, the maximum monthly amount (\$1,256) must be included on the correspondence.

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

New Funding

As soon as it is available, the Department will provide information regarding the anticipated 6.4 million dollars in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. Permission must be granted from the Legislative Budget Commission to utilize these funds. We appreciate any feedback that you, your staff and/or lead agency staff have to offer regarding allocation methodologies.

Technical Assistance and Contact Information

As described in my July 28 memo on related issues, we are pleased to be able to provide additional resources for technical assistance. We look forward to working with your Regional Family Safety Program Office staff as well as lead agency staff to address questions and concerns regarding services to former foster youth. For your information, attached is the list of contacts identified for each regional office for appeals issues.

Deborah Schroth of Children's Legal Services is available to provide consultation for legal and appeals issues. She can be reached at Deborah_Schroth@dcf.state.fl.us or at 850-524-5815.

Julie Mayo is the State Independent Living Program Specialist and she is available for technical assistance on policy and practice issues. She can be reached at Julie_Mayo@dcf.state.fl.us or at 850-922-0375.

Thank you for your on-going efforts to provide guidance and support to former foster youth.

Attachments

cc: Deborah Schroth, Children's Legal Services
Peggy Sanford, General Counsel's Office

Region Appeals Contacts

Central Region

Stephanie Weis
Department of Children & Families
Family Safety Program Manager
400 W. Robinson, Suite S930
Orlando, FL 32801
Office - (407) 245-1709 x750
Cell - (407) 766-7100
Fax - (407)245-0577

Northwest Region

Melissa Sidoti
Family Safety Program Manager
Northwest Region
1317 Winewood Blvd
Bldg 2, Room 309
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
850-921-3015
cell 850-519-5286

Northeast Region

Susan Bell
Family Safety Program Administrator
5920 Arlington Exy
Jacksonville, FL 32211
(904) 723-2199
cell (904)370-4827
fax (904)727-5518

Southeast Region

Lori M. Scott
Family Services Specialist
1400 West Commercial Boulevard, Room 210M
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
Cell: (954) 812-8166
Fax: (954) 267-4038

Southern Region

Alejandro Villibord, MBA
Program Administrator
Department of Children and Families
401 NW 2nd Ave, N514 Miami FL 33128
305.377.5119
305.377.5245 FAX

Suncoast Region

Lisa Mayrose
Department of Children and Families
SunCoast Family Safety Program Administrator
9393 N. Florida Avenue
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 558-5610
Fax: 813-558-5643

Friday, July 17, 2009