

Temporary Chafee COVID-19 Funds for the Independent Living Program

Youth eligible for the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families' (DCYF) Independent Living (IL) program can now receive additional assistance from their local IL provider.

Temporary Program Changes to IL

The Supporting Foster Youth and Families Through the Pandemic Act (Act) provides temporary flexibilities and assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency. One of the provisions included in the Act is additional funding under the Chafee Program to assist current and former foster youth with critical services and financial needs.

Washington State IL Eligibility Criteria

- Youth was a dependent of Washington State through DCYF or under a tribal child welfare agency with an out-of-home placement for at least 30 days between the ages of 15-18, or
- Youth is now a resident of Washington State and would have been eligible for these supports through their home state but were unable to access them due to no longer living in that state

Youth Ages 15-17

Refer youth to the local IL program and reach out to the regional IL lead to help connect youth to services and funds. Youth can receive assistance with:

- Case management for independent living skills such as looking for employment, budgeting, help with college applications, etc.
- Support funds for school
- Technology
- Employment resources
- Costs associated with normal childhood activities



Youth Ages 18-22

Youth are eligible to receive IL services through the local IL provider. For a list of local providers, go to www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ILContacts.pdf. Participation in IL is voluntary, and if a youth does not want to participate, they are STILL eligible to receive fund assistance. Assistance may include, but is not limited to:

- Independent living skills
- Employment needs such as work clothes
- Living expenses
 - Rent for those not placed in a licensed foster care setting
 - Groceries
 - Utilities
- Technology
 - Cell phones
 - Computer needs
- Medical expenses if not covered through insurance or Medicaid
- Pregnancy and parenting supports





Youth Ages 23-26

Assistance is available to youth ages 23-26 who were eligible for IL services before they turned age 23. These services are time-limited. Youth need to submit their applications on or before Sept. 24, 2021. Services and funds are not available beyond this date. Youth should contact Treehouse (www.treehouseforkids.org) for connections to community resources and direct cash assistance for:

- Employment needs such as work clothes
- Living expenses
 - Rent for those not placed in a licensed foster care setting
 - Groceries
 - Utilities
- Technology
 - Cell phones
 - Computer needs
- Medical expenses if not covered through insurance or Medicaid
- Pregnancy and parenting supports

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q** Are unaccompanied minors eligible for IL?
- A** *Youth must have been a dependent of DCYF and in an out-of-home placement between the ages of 15-18 years old.*
- Q** Are youth who were in other types of dependencies and now in Extended Foster Care (EFC) eligible for IL?
- A** *No, youth need to have been a dependent of DCYF and in an out-of-home placement between the ages 15-18 years old.*
- Q** Are youth under a Child in Need of Services (CHINS), Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA), or Dependency Guardianships eligible for IL?
- A** *No, youth need to have been a dependent of DCYF and in an out-of-home placement for 30 days between the ages 15-18 years old.*
- Q** I was adopted. Am I eligible for IL?
- A** *If the youth met the initial eligibility for IL, they would be eligible until the age of 23 years old. Once a youth is eligible, they remain eligible.*
- Q** I turned age 27 after the additional funds were provided by federal law. Am I eligible to receive assistance because I was initially eligible and age 26 but the agency did not have the ability to provide it to me before my 27th birthday?
- A** *Youth need to have created their application for assistance with Treehouse prior to their 27th birthday.*

Contact your regional IL lead with any questions not listed in this document:

- Region 1: joshua.koutecky@dcyf.wa.gov
- Region 2: monica.jenkins@dcyf.wa.gov
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- Region 4: donna.lafrance@dcyf.wa.gov
- Region 5: laneta.able@dcyf.wa.gov
- Region 6: lori.vanclifford@dcyf.wa.gov
- Headquarters: sherrie.flores@dcyf.wa.gov

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