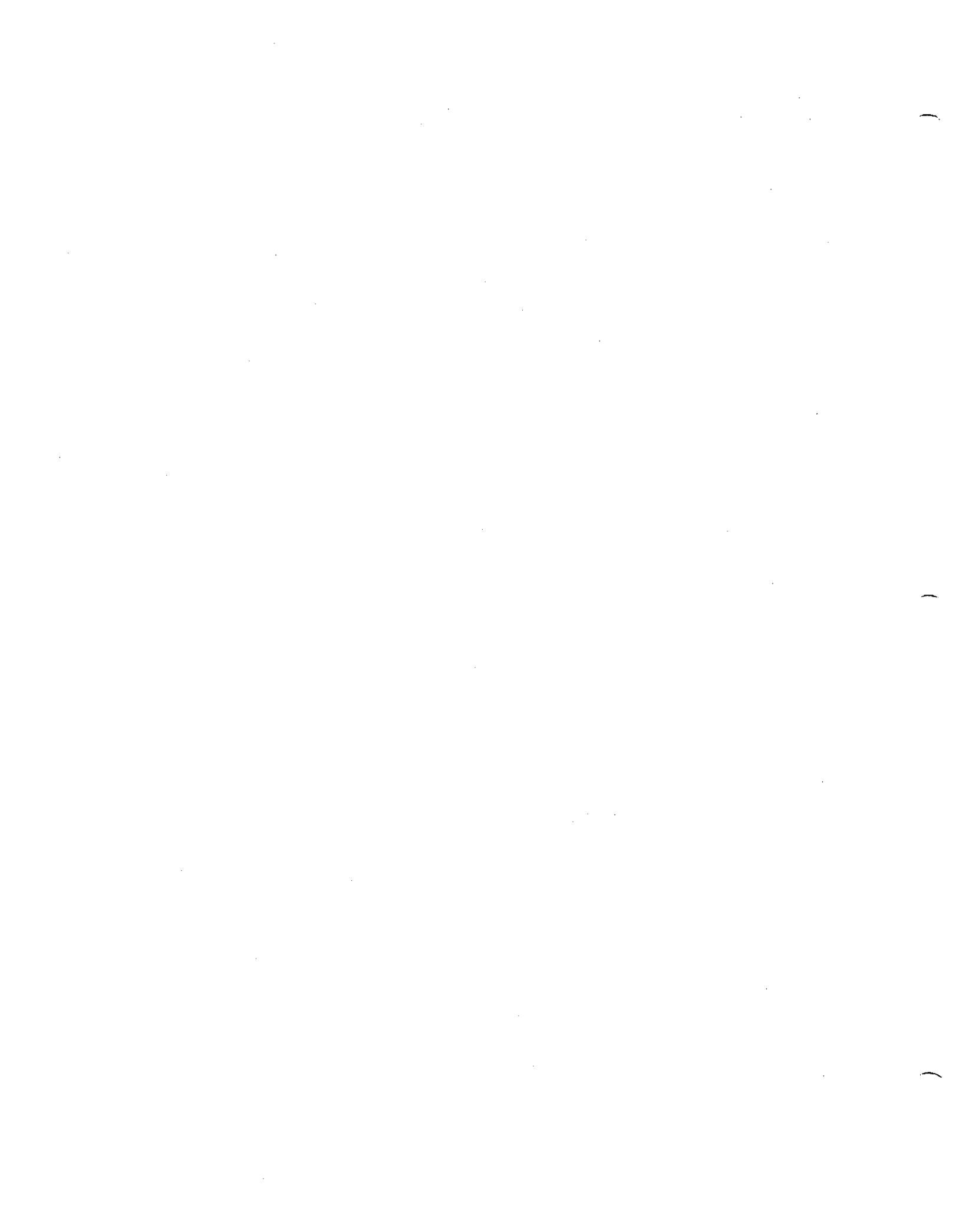


**Older Youth/Transition
To Independent Living**



CRITICAL ADVOCACY TOOLS FOR ATTORNEYS HELPING FOSTER YOUTH CLIENTS ACHIEVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES DURING AND AFTER PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD

By Julia Hillel Larsen, CLC Staff Attorney

INTRODUCTION

Older youth in foster care face many more challenges and are expected to make it on their own at a much younger age without the safety net of family than adolescents living at home struggling with life's changes as they prepare for adulthood. Attorneys for older youth in foster care must ardently advocate for their clients as they transition into adulthood by ensuring they are educated and prepared to face the many fundamental issues that are crucial to their client's wellbeing as adults. Older foster youth have the ability to thrive in life, if they continually and comprehensively gain the essential life skills, knowledge and needed connections with support systems before they age out of the system.

Research shows that foster children who transitioned from out-of-home placements in the foster care system compared to their peers in the general population are significantly *more likely* to be homeless, involved in the criminal justice system, incarcerated, parent at a young age, have unwanted pregnancies, unemployed or making substantially below the poverty level; have *higher rates of* physical, developmental and mental health problems and drug or alcohol abuse (with less mental health counseling, less substance abuse treatment and more intake of psychotropic drugs); and are *less likely* to have any form of health insurance, have a positive relationship with a caring adult, be involved in their community, graduate from high school or pursue postsecondary education.¹ *Prevent your client from being a part of these devastating statistics by effectively advocating for your client who can achieve a future filled with promise and success.*

APPLICABLE LAWS FOR FOSTER CARE YOUTH PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN (ILP) AT AGE 16 - see sample attached as Appendix A

Children age 16 and older who are in long term foster care or whose parents had their parental rights terminated and remain in foster care are entitled to an independent living plan.² The independent living plan should not necessarily be limited to the objectives listed in the statute³

¹ Mark E. Courtney et al., Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 23 and 24, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (2010).

² Minn. Stat. § 260C.212, subd. 1 (c) (11) (2012).

³ *Id.*

- (i) educational, vocational, or employment planning;
- (ii) health care planning and medical coverage;
- (iii) transportation including, where appropriate, assisting the child in obtaining a driver's license;
- (iv) money management, including the responsibility of the agency to ensure that the youth annually receives, at no cost to the youth, a consumer report as defined under section 13C.001 and assistance in interpreting and resolving any inaccuracies in the report;
- (v) planning for housing;
- (vi) social and recreational skills; and
- (vii) establishing and maintaining connections with the child's family and community; and

and should also address steps needed to accomplish short and long-term goals. Attorneys should ensure the ILP is reviewed and updated by the county social worker every six months. Attorneys must review and examine specific progress of each ILP goal monthly, so that barriers to achieving any of the goals are relayed to the county social worker or addressed during the court review hearings.

An attorney must counsel their client to participate in the creation of their ILP. Attorneys may request the meeting to develop the ILP at a review hearing before the youth's 16th birthday. The youth is entitled to have his attorney present for the ILP development meeting and can request time to review the ILP with his attorney before signing it. Think about what would make your client feel invested in the ILP and make sure that your client's strengths are identified at the ILP development meeting, so that your client starts working on goals that he is interested in working on.

At review hearings of a youth age 16 years or older the Court must examine the youth's progress toward his independent living goals, especially as the youth prepares to leave foster care, at which time the Court must make findings as to what the child has accomplished on his stated goals.⁴

FOSTER CARE BENEFITS AND COURT JURISDICTION TO AGE 21 – see attached Statute, Minnesota Juvenile Code § 260C.451 as Appendix B

Notice of Continued Foster Care Benefits to Youth until Age 21

The social services agency must advise any youth in foster care, parent or legal guardian of the youth (if any) and foster parents within 6 months prior to the youth's 18th birthday of the availability of foster care benefits up to age 21.⁵ Documentation of such notice must be provided to the court. Make sure your client is fully aware, well before your client turns 18, of the right to remain in foster care beyond age 18, the eligibility requirements and the benefits that come with continuing in care. Advise your client that in order to be eligible to continue in care he cannot be on run or in an unauthorized placement when he turns 18 or he risks the case being dismissed before he can elect to continue in care.⁶

(12) for a child in voluntary foster care for treatment under chapter 260D, diagnostic and assessment information, specific services relating to meeting the mental health care needs of the child, and treatment outcomes.

⁴ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(d) and (e) (2012).

The Court shall make finding regarding progress toward or accomplishment of the following goals: Consistent with the requirements of the independent living plan, the court shall review progress toward or accomplishment of the following goals:

- (i) the child has obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent;
- (ii) the child has completed a driver's education course or has demonstrated the ability to use public transportation in the child's community;
- (iii) the child is employed or enrolled in postsecondary education;
- (iv) the child has applied for and obtained postsecondary education financial aid for which the child is eligible;
- (v) the child has health care coverage and health care providers to meet the child's physical and mental health needs;
- (vi) the child has applied for and obtained disability income assistance for which the child is eligible;
- (vii) the child has obtained affordable housing with necessary supports, which does not include a homeless shelter;
- (viii) the child has saved sufficient funds to pay for the first month's rent and a damage deposit;
- (ix) the child has an alternative affordable housing plan, which does not include a homeless shelter, if the original housing plan is unworkable;
- (x) the child, if male, has registered for the Selective Service; and
- (xi) the child has a permanent connection to a caring adult.

⁵ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 1 (2012); Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(e)(1) (2012).

⁶ Youth who were on run can request re-entry to foster care, see Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 6 (b) (2) (2012).

Election of Foster Youth to Leave Foster Care after Age 18 – Transition Plan – see attached sample Transition Plan as Appendix C

If a foster youth elects to decline extended foster care, the social services agency is required to develop and implement a personalized transition plan with the youth 90 days immediately prior to the youth's discharge from foster care.⁷ "The transition plan must be as detailed as the child may elect and include specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, and work force supports and employment services."⁸ The agency shall ensure that the youth receives, at no cost to the youth, a copy of the youth's consumer credit report as well as assistance in interpreting and resolving any inaccuracies in the report.⁹ The agency must also provide the youth with appropriate contact information if the youth needs help dealing with a crisis situation.¹⁰ The transition plan must also include advice on the importance of designating an adult to make health care treatment decisions for the youth if the youth is not able. This includes information on how to execute a health care directive, as well as the option to execute such document.¹¹ Please see page 10, under the "Health Care" section of this paper for further details on health care directives.

Eligibility for Extended Foster Care Benefits

Youth are eligible to remain in foster care between the ages 18 and 21, if they elect to do so and are in care immediately prior to their 18th birthday unless:

- 1) the child can safely return home;
- 2) the child is in placement pursuant to the agency's duties under section 256B.092 and Minnesota Rules, parts 9525.0004 to 9525.0016, to meet the child's needs due to a developmental disability or related condition, and the child will be served as an adult under section 256.B.092 and Minnesota Rules, parts 9525.0004 to 9525.0016; or
- 3) the child can be adopted or have permanent legal and physical custody transferred to a relative prior to the child's 18th birthday.

Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 3.

AND

The youth must meet one of the following conditions to continue in or return and remain in care until age 21. The child must be:

- 1) Completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;¹²
or
- 2) Enrolled in an institution providing postsecondary or vocational education; or

⁷ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(f) (2012).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.* Helping Youth Transition From Out-of-Home Placement: Best Practice Guide, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Child Safety and Permanency Division, 28 (March 2012) [hereinafter "DHS-Transition Guide"] citing The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act [P.L. 111-148] and Minn. Stat. § 145C.

¹² The agency must consider a youth enrolled in school, but on a semester, summer or other break, to be enrolled in school for purposes of this statute.

- 3) Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment; or
- 4) Employed for at least 80 hours per month; or
- 5) Incapable of doing any of the activities described in (1–4) above due to a medical condition.

Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 3a.

Fulfillment of eligibility requirements is documented by the county social worker. Policies differ in each county as to how much leeway is given to youth who wish to remain in extended foster care, but are having difficulty consistently meeting the eligibility requirements. It is extremely important for attorneys to stay in frequent contact with their clients to ensure they are meeting the eligibility requirements and/or are getting the proper support from their county social workers so that they continue to be eligible for extended foster care.

The court can continue court jurisdiction up until age 19 without the youth's consent, if the court finds that is in the youth's best interest.¹³

Extended Foster Care Benefits

A foster youth qualifying to stay in foster care past the age of 18 will get payment for a foster care placement setting, such as family foster homes, foster care with relatives, group homes and emergency shelters, or for a supervised living setting, such as "apartments, dorms, host homes or other innovative ideas that meet the youth's need for supervision and support as they move towards independence."¹⁴ The choice of setting is based on the youth's best interest and an individual determination of the youth's needs.¹⁵ Foster payments are paid to the foster parents, child placement agency or child care institution. For youth living independently, there may be no direct caregiver, and in those situations the agency may pay all or part of the foster care maintenance directly to the youth.¹⁶

In most counties, a youth electing to continue in care will get a new county social worker that specifically works with foster youth ages 18-21. In some counties, a foster youth continuing in care will get a Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) worker at age 16 and a new county social worker at age 18. In other counties, the SELF worker assists the county social worker with certain issues that are funded by SELF funds. The county social worker must have at least monthly in-person visits with the youth.¹⁷ If your client has a mental health caseworker, determine if that service will continue.

Please advise your client to meet every month in person with his county social worker and of his duty to stay in touch with his county social worker. Tell your client to contact you immediately if he stops receiving his extended foster care benefits. CLC has sample motions

¹³Minn. Stat. § 260C.193 (c). The court must find that it is in the youth's best interest in order to: 1) protect the safety or health of the individual; 2) accomplish additional planning for independent living or for the transition out of foster care; or 3) support the individual's completion of high school or high school equivalency program. *Id.*

¹⁴ DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 26.

¹⁵ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 5 (2012).

¹⁶ DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 27.

¹⁷ Fostering Connections Guidance and Changes to Foster Care for Youth Ages 18-21 Bulletin, Minnesota Department of Human Services, 72 (Sept. 3, 2010).

for attorneys who need to file motions to compel the county to continue extended foster care benefits.

A youth in foster care immediately prior to their 18th birthday can request an updated ILP and out-of-home placement plan.¹⁸ At the request of the youth in foster care, the county social services agency must update these case plans and make reasonable efforts to provide continued services and foster care for the youth including services necessary to implement the goals of ILP.¹⁹ The social services agency must create individual case plans for extended care related to the youth's vocational, educational, social and maturational needs.²⁰

There are several programs that provide further help and services to foster care youth ages 18-21. We highly recommend that attorneys speak to their clients about the programs available and, if the client agrees, make a referral to such programs. For a current list of these programs within a particular county, please contact CLC.

At court review hearings, the attorney for a foster youth continuing in care should request from the social services agency an updated out-of-home placement plan and/or ILP, as well as progress reports on the goals within the ILP and transitional goals.²¹ If the county does not honor the request, raise the omission at the hearing and request the report be supplemented with updates and that a copy of the updated report be provided to all parties.

Juvenile Court Jurisdiction over Youth in Foster Care until Age 21 and Required In-Court Review Hearings

For youth in foster care beyond age 18, court jurisdiction is continued and in-Court review hearings are required at least every twelve months.²² The definition of "child" in the juvenile code includes youth age 21 who remain in foster care.²³ For all other purposes other than extended foster care, youth in foster care beyond age 18 are considered adults.²⁴

For youth continuing in foster care, court jurisdiction beyond the youth's 18th birthday can be obtained by a court order that terminates legal custody or guardianship of the youth, but continues court jurisdiction and placement under the legal responsibility of the county or tribal agency.²⁵ Prior to the termination of custody with the agency, court jurisdiction can also be continued by the youth signing a voluntary agreement, which must include a statement indicating the youth continues in foster care placement under the responsibility of the county or tribe.²⁶ For youth who re-enter foster care after age 18, legal responsibility must be established by the youth signing a voluntary placement agreement with the responsible agency.²⁷

Court jurisdiction over a youth in foster care cannot be terminated "without giving the child notice of any motion or proposed order to dismiss jurisdiction and an opportunity to be heard on

¹⁸ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 2 (2012); Minn. Stat. § 260C.212, subd. 1 (2012) (explains and defines an out-of-home placement plan).

¹⁹ *Id.* ("The agency shall provide continued services and foster care for the child including those services that are necessary to implement the independent living plan.") *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(a) and (d) (2012).

²² Minn. Stat. § 260C.229(c) (2012); Minn. Stat. § 260C.193, subd. 6 (2012).

²³ Minn. Stat. § 260C.007 subd. 4 (2012).

²⁴ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451 subd. 7 (2012).

²⁵ *Id.*; DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 24.

²⁶ Minn. Stat. § 260C.229 (2012); DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 24.

²⁷ *Id.*; Minn. Stat. § 260C.451 subd. 6 (2012). See sample Voluntary Placement Agreement attached as Appendix D.

the appropriateness of the dismissal,” as well as information about the youth’s appeal rights.²⁸ If court jurisdiction is dismissed, your client can appeal this decision.²⁹ If the child asks to leave foster care or actually leaves, the court may terminate jurisdiction.³⁰ A foster youth over the age of 18 is entitled to a 30 day (from the date the notice is sent) written notice that foster care will terminate.³¹ This notice must be sent to the child, the child’s attorney, the foster care provider, the child’s guardian ad litem, and the court.³² The child or the child’s guardian ad litem may file a motion asking the court to review the agency’s determination within 15 days of receiving the termination notice and the child shall not be discharged from care until the motion is heard.³³

Attorneys may ask the court to schedule in-court review hearings more often than every twelve months if their client wishes for more court oversight to ensure the social services agency is providing them with needed support and services. At the review hearings, the Court must review whether or not the social services agency has made reasonable efforts to “ensure that foster care is the best legal arrangement for the youth, or whether there is another legal option that would better meet the needs of the youth for a life-long family; assist the youth in building life-long relationships with family, siblings, and other caring, safe and supportive adults and plan with a youth to utilize supports and services that develop an appropriate set of skills necessary for successful independence after foster care.”³⁴

Returning to Foster Care Between Ages 18 and 21

State wards who previously left foster care can return to foster care placement anytime between ages 18-21.³⁵ For youth who were non-state wards when they left foster care, the provision of additional foster care benefits between ages 18 and 21 depends on whether the county has funds available,³⁶ and if the youth:

- 1) was in foster care for the six consecutive months prior to the person’s 18th birthday and was not discharged home, adopted, or received into a relative’s home under a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody under section 260C.515, subd. 4:
OR
- 2) was discharged from foster care while on runaway status after age 15.

Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 6 (b).

A voluntary placement plan agreement should be created for youth re-entering foster care after age 18.³⁷ The responsible county files a motion for re-entry, with the voluntary placement plan and out-of-home placement plan attached, asking the court to re-assume juvenile court jurisdiction within 30 days of the voluntary agreement.³⁸ The court must determine that the re-

²⁸ Minn. Stat. § 260C.193, subd. 6(a) (2012).

²⁹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(e)(1) (2012); Minn. Stat. § 256.045 (2012).

³⁰ Minn. Stat. § 260C.193, subd. 6.

³¹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451, subd. 8 (2012).

³² *Id.*

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 24; Minn. Stat. § 260C.203.

³⁵ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451 subd. 6(a) (2012).

³⁶ *Id.* at subd. 6(b). Currently, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties allow non-state wards who left foster care to return at anytime for extended foster care benefits. CLC’s policy is to keep all files open until the client turns 21. A CLC attorney will remain the client’s lawyer as long as they are in foster care, including if they return to foster care after having left foster care, and will continue to help advocate for the services and benefits to which they are entitled.

³⁷ Minn. Stat. § 260C.229(a) (2012); Minn. Stat. § 260C.451 subd. 6(a) (2012).

³⁸ Minn. Stat. § 260C.229(b)(2012).

entry placement is in the youth's best interest within 30 days from when the voluntary placement agreement is signed.³⁹ In-Court review hearings must be held within 30 days of the filing of the motion and at least every 12 months from the date the youth re-enters foster care.⁴⁰

Children's Law Center (CLC) is served with the re-entry motion papers. Once CLC receives the re-entry motion we contact the former foster youth's previous volunteer attorney and tell them the date of the new hearing. *It is imperative that attorneys contact their clients immediately to ensure they will be present at the re-entry hearing, discuss whether they are currently meeting the eligibility requirements to re-enter and remain in extended care and any other issues that will need to be addressed at the hearing. Since the youth will most likely not have another in-court hearing for another 12 months from the date of the re-entry hearing, meeting with your client and your client's appearance at the re-entry hearing are crucial. It may be the only opportunity to ask for a new case plan, a specific living arrangement and any needed services.*⁴¹

Foster Youth Continuing in Care Under Tribal Jurisdiction

Certain tribes with funding agreements with the state or local social service agency must provide for youth who remain in foster care beyond age 18.⁴² Counties that assume financial responsibility for foster children who are Indian children under tribal jurisdiction are responsible for the foster care placement costs and benefits for these tribal youth in extended foster care.⁴³ Those youth who were under tribal care when they left care can return to extended care according to the tribe's code and practice.⁴⁴

CRITICAL ISSUES TO EXAMINE WITH YOUR CLIENT PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

Comprehensive Independent Living Preparation

Youth who experience a more comprehensive independent living preparation, stay in foster care for extended 18-21 benefits, have targeted programming on various issues, such as education and employment, and have concrete resources and connections when they leave care have much improved outcomes as adults.⁴⁵ Studies show foster youth are much more likely to succeed as adults if they are connected with caring adults while and after they are transitioning into adulthood.⁴⁶ Last, there is no better positive outcome determination for older youth in foster care than the fact that youth who are involved in the process of planning their futures fare much better than youth who are not involved in the entire process.⁴⁷

³⁹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.229(c) (2012).

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ It is not common practice for the social worker for a youth re-entering care to ask and arrange for the youth to be present at the re-entry hearing.

⁴² DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 25. Funding agreements refer to tribes that have a Title VI-E agreement with the state or local social services agency. *Id.*

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ *Id.* at 27.

⁴⁵ Improving Outcomes For Older Youth In Foster Care, Casey Family Programs, 5-6, http://www.casey.org/resources/publications/pdf/WhitePaper_ImprovingOutcomesOlderYouth_FR.pdf (last visited May 7, 2012).

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 4-5.

⁴⁷ Improving Outcomes For Youth In Transition, The University of Iowa School of Social Work, (Sept. 2009).

The following are basic issues that older youth in foster care must address through the help of their county social worker and other caring adults. As an attorney for a foster youth transitioning out of care, it is critical that you frequently engage your client in discussions about his future, review and examine his progress on his goals, and determine if he is getting proper support from the social services agency to be successful in his independent living goals.

The following section is intended to guide attorneys through topic discussions with their clients to assess if they are successfully gaining the skills they need to become self-sufficient, healthy adults.

Youth in Transition Conference (YTC)

Encourage your client to have a Youth in Transition Conference which is “a youth driven, strength based process to assist youth in moving forward.”⁴⁸ The youth brings the people he identifies as his support system⁴⁹ to identify his personal goals. The group then creates strategies to help the youth achieve his goals.⁵⁰

Education

Make sure an adult is connected to the school on behalf of the youth

The county social worker is required to ensure that your client is provided with a plan that ensures educational stability and continuity.⁵¹ The county social worker and caregivers must communicate with the youth’s school and monitor your client’s educational progress and goals.⁵² The county social worker is required to collect all educational records for the youth including records from all previous placements and schools.⁵³ Attorneys can help identify an advocate for the youth at their school, ensure that their client attends regularly and is asking for help, if needed, and encourage extracurricular activities.

Tracking progress towards graduation

Continually request updated school information for your client from your client’s county social worker, foster parent and school. Monitor your client’s status on standardized tests and credits. To graduate from high school, students must meet certain district standards, pass basic math, reading, writing and science tests, and complete a set number of credits. Make sure clients understand that they can get test fees waived and can retake tests if they are not happy with their scores. Ensure your client’s county social worker is monitoring your client’s progress on these tests and is properly tracking your client’s credits needed to graduate. Confirm that credits from residential treatment schools have been properly translated and calculated into the youth’s record.

Attorneys can request a “credit check sheet” from a client’s county social worker or the school to

⁴⁸ FGDM PROMISING PRACTICE: Youth in Transition Conferences, Minnesota Department of Human Services, http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=dhs16_142433 (last visited May 6, 2012).

⁴⁹ CLC attorneys, guardian ad litem, probation officers, religious leaders, extended family and friends, therapists and school personnel are examples of who youth might invite to a YTC. *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ DHS-Transition Guide, supra, note 11, at 5.

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

ensure a client is on track to graduate. If your client is behind, a credit recovery plan needs to be identified. Request tutoring for subjects in which your client is having difficulty and test preparation classes for standardized tests, if needed. Encourage your client to get a high school diploma rather than a GED, but if your client insists on a GED then arrange for GED preparation services, if needed.

Counsel your client about post-secondary schooling

Talking to your client early about higher education is crucial. Explain the available funding sources to your client. Funding sources include a tuition waiver for state wards if they choose to attend a Minnesota state college or university, scholarships, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).⁵⁴ Discuss prerequisites and an understanding of the needed steps to apply to post secondary schooling. Offer assistance with the application process including help with recommendations, essays, transcripts, deadlines, school tours, obtaining application fee waivers and financial aid forms. Make sure your client is taking post secondary entrance exams and request tutoring, if needed. Don't assume that professionals working with your client are aware of all the resources, financial and otherwise, available.

Vocational and Employment Planning

Ensure your client is getting exposure to vocational interest assessments and job training offered through their high school or other programs.⁵⁵ Talk to your client about what they enjoy, identify their strengths, short and long-term employment goals, and encourage them to explore various career paths. See if you can arrange for your client to shadow a professional in an area of employment he is interested in. Discuss if your client has completed job applications, has a resume and cover letter. Ask your client if he knows what a job interview is like and if he has the appropriate clothes for interviewing. Find out if your client has learned ways to locate employment opportunities.

Encourage your client to explore internships and work through job placement agencies to improve employment outcomes.⁵⁶ If your client has a job, ensure that he attends work on time and discuss any problems he is having.

Transportation

Talk to your client about whether or not he has had the opportunity to learn about public transportation. The county can provide youth with bus cards and attorneys often ask county social workers on behalf of their clients for passes, if a client is not getting them. Ensure your client is attending a driver's education course and has opportunities to practice driving.⁵⁷ If your client has a driver's license ensure that the county social worker is talking to the foster parents about driving privileges and financial responsibilities pertaining to the car such as insurance coverage.⁵⁸ Ask the county to provide your client with a bike if they are having trouble getting around.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.* at 5.

⁵⁶ *Id.* See also, Children's Bureau Express, Spotlight on Aging Out of Foster Care, Improving Outcomes for Youth in Care, Vol. 13, No. 2 (March 2012).

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 7.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ *Id.*

Health Care

Ensure all physical, dental, vision, hearing, mental health and substance abuse screenings have been arranged by your client's county social worker before your client ages out of the system.⁶⁰ Your client must be educated about safety, domestic violence, a healthy well-balanced diet, cigarette, alcohol or drug use, mental health needs and issues, how to deal with a mental health crisis, reasons to seek therapy, constructive ways of dealing with stress, over-the-counter medications, how to deal with a cold or flu and, most importantly, sexual decision-making such as pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases.⁶¹

Foster youth need to know the names and numbers of their dentist, medical doctor and therapist as well as how to make and keep an appointment before they age out of the system.⁶² County social workers are also responsible for helping foster youth consolidate and update medical records.⁶³ Identify one adult to oversee your client's medical care to ensure communication among his health care providers and those responsible for prescribing and administering medications. Ensure that your client has signed a new release of information so that the person in charge of his medical needs can access the needed information. Talk to your client about any medications he is prescribed and ensure that he understands the side effects and risks of the medications, as well as how to fill his prescriptions.⁶⁴ Do not assume your client's county social worker has successfully covered all of these crucial topics. Talk to your client and assess whether more work needs to be done in getting your client appropriate medical services or educating your client about any of these medical issues for the future.

Health Care Directives

Foster youth must be given specific information about how to execute a health care directive.⁶⁵ It is the obligation of the county social worker to provide this information to a foster youth and to help the youth execute a health care directive.⁶⁶ Discuss this with your client and if it is not in place then move to compel the county to provide education on this topic as well as assistance in executing a health care directive. In Minnesota, health care directives are governed by Minn. Stat., Chapter 145C. A suggested form is available when looking at Minn. Stat. § 145C.16. Click on the link below to view a suggested form used to create a health care directive in Minnesota.

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=145C.16>

Health care directives should be completed and signed when the client is 18 since the county is no longer the youth's legal guardian. The county can start educating the foster youth about a health care directive before the youth is 18, however, the youth can't actually sign a health care directive until he turns 18.

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ *Id.* at 7-8.

⁶² *Id.* at 8.

⁶³ *Id.* at 8.

⁶⁴ *Id.* at 8.

⁶⁵ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(f) (2012).

⁶⁶ *Id.*

Health Insurance

Youth in foster care are eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) until they are 21.⁶⁷ Foster youth who leave care at age 18 are automatically eligible for MinnesotaCare (MC) without monthly premiums or annual renewal requirements until age 21. For those youth continuing in care, the county social worker must ensure continued coverage applications have been completed and submitted by the time your client turns 18. The youth's county social worker is responsible for ensuring that your client has MA and understands how to apply or renew health insurance such as MA or MC.⁶⁸ Talk with your client to ensure they have health insurance, have always had insurance while in care and have been taught how to get health insurance once they transition out of care.

It is crucial to identify if your client has outstanding medical bills before they turn 21. You may have to make a motion to compel the county to pay outstanding medical bills if the child's county social worker failed to get or maintain coverage for your client while he was in care.

Disability Income Assistance

If your client is disabled, consult with his county social worker to ascertain whether he qualifies for adult services.⁶⁹ If you suspect your client is disabled, but has not been assessed properly, ask that the county re-assess your client for disabilities. Make sure your disabled client understands how to apply for SSI, apply for disability insurance and access housing for disabled populations.⁷⁰ A youth who qualifies for adult disability services under Minn. Stat. § 256B.092 will not be able to continue in foster care.⁷¹ Make sure that your client is definitely enrolled in an adult program before you agree to your client's foster care case being dismissed. Disabled youth are now entitled to apply for a Special Needs Basic Care Health Plan which is a managed care plan, through MA, for people with disabilities in Minnesota.

Housing

Find out where your client plans on living when he ages out of care. This plan should include how your client will budget, get furniture, access community supports, transportation and where your client would go if the housing plan falls through. Make sure your client's county social worker is aware of the plan and is providing proper support so that his ILP housing goal is successful. Your client's county social worker must work with your client to ensure he has a safe, affordable place to live when he leaves foster care.⁷² Ensure that your client has an understanding of housing issues and resources and can calculate the total costs of each housing option.⁷³ Confirm that your client has knowledge of his rights and responsibilities as a tenant, as well as an understanding of a lease.⁷⁴

Depending on where your client is living now, he should either be getting opportunities to practice the skills needed to live on his own, or receiving support from his county social worker

⁶⁷ DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 27. Youth in foster care are eligible if they are Title IV-E eligible. If youth are not Title IV-E eligible they must meet other eligibility criteria to qualify for MA such as be under age 21, pregnant or disabled. *Id.*

⁶⁸ *Id.* at 7.

⁶⁹ *Id.* at 13.

⁷⁰ *Id.* at 13.

⁷¹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.451 subd. 3, (2) (2012).

⁷² DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 9. Living in a homeless shelter upon leaving foster care is not an acceptable plan. *Id.*

⁷³ *Id.*

⁷⁴ *Id.*

to live on his own. Your client may need training to learn life skills such as grocery shopping, cooking meals, housekeeping, maintaining healthy relationships with roommates and handling emergencies such as a fire or gas leak.⁷⁵

Money Management

One of the most important skills an older foster youth must learn is how to manage money.⁷⁶ Your client's county social worker must ensure that your client is learning money management skills.⁷⁷ Your client must practice creating a monthly budget, learn how to open a checking and savings account and understand how much money is typically required to lease an apartment (first and last months rent and a security deposit).⁷⁸ Discuss money management with your client and identify if your client knows how to pay bills, write checks, read a paycheck stub, complete tax forms, use a debit card and understands how to develop a realistic short and long-term budget.⁷⁹

Credit Check to Avoid Identity Theft

Youth in out-of-home care are at a much higher risk of being victims of identity theft since their confidential information can be easily accessed by staff at multiple agencies. Your client must also understand the concept of credit and the importance of a good credit record.⁸⁰ All foster care youth ages 16 and older are entitled to receive an annual copy of their consumer credit reports at no cost, until they leave foster care.⁸¹ Foster youth are also entitled to receive assistance interpreting the report and resolving any inaccuracies in the report during the transition period.⁸² In addition, counsel your client on how to restrict access to their personal information.⁸³ Any identity theft discovered by your client should be addressed before he leaves care.

For more information on this topic please see the CLC Practice Point on this issue at <http://www.clcmn.org/media/foster-youth-identity-theft/>.

Expungement

It is crucial that you have a discussion with your client about the advantages of expunging any delinquent record before he ages out of foster care. Explain to your client that if he was arrested, charged or convicted as a juvenile, expungment is vital to his future because a record can make it difficult to enroll in school, find a job and rent an apartment. Explain that expungement may allow the court to seal his record, so that no one can see it ever existed. Get your client's permission to request copies of your client's delinquency court records. The expungement process takes about 5 months. After you explain this process to your client, please contact CLC to obtain more detailed information on expungement, sample letters to request expungement of arrest records in writing and referrals to various organizations that help youth with the

⁷⁵ *Id.*

⁷⁶ *Id.* at 10.

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ *Id.*

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ *Id.*

⁸¹ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(f); Minn. Stat. § 260C.212 subd. 1, (c), (11) (iv)

⁸² *Id.*

⁸³ Don't carry all your personal information with you and keep the information in a safe place. Contact your social worker if your purse, wallet or phone goes missing. Shred or rip up mail and place all out-going mail in a mailbox. Be wary when giving out your personal information, especially if the person requesting it contacted you first. CLC Practice Point entitled Identity Theft and Your Client at <http://www.clcmn.org/media/foster-youth-identity-theft/> (last visited June 7, 2012).

expungement process.

For more information on this topic please see the CLC Practice Point on this issue at <http://www.clcmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/Practice-Point-June-2011.pdf>.

Permanent Connections

In 2010, over one third of CLC's clients aged out of the child protection system without being adopted or finding a permanent home. Children who leave foster care without a supportive permanent connection in their lives fare much worse.⁸⁴ Therefore, it is extremely important to reach permanency for older foster youth, as opposed to simply preparing the child to live independently. While preparing your older client to transition to living independently, it is imperative to find at least one stable permanent connection in your client's life. You can request that the county social worker conduct a relative search.

Sometimes adults give older children the option of saying that they don't want a permanent family. When this happens, the youth may feel that they are not loveable, that no one would want them, that there is no hope for the youth's future and that the youth is not important enough for anyone to search for a family for the youth.⁸⁵ It is important to explain to older clients that they deserve and need the support and certainty of a family.⁸⁶

While a formal permanent connection such as adoption or transfer of legal custody is often most beneficial, informal permanent connections can also be very useful.⁸⁷ One way to explore informal permanent connections is through a "Permanency Pact."⁸⁸ A Permanency Pact between a supportive adult and a foster child is a commitment to a long-term supportive relationship and often identifies the type of support needed or offered, such as a home for the holidays, a place to do laundry or an emergency place to stay.

Other ways to help your client find a permanent and caring adult are to help your client get family history information needed to create a life book and identify and connect with siblings and other birth family members if they can maintain safe relationships with them.⁸⁹ Ensure that your client has a person to contact if they are sick or having an emergency and that your client has updated contact information for this person.

Social and Recreational Skills

In addition to a permanent connection with a caring adult, ensure your client is engaging in positive relationships and is building a positive sense of self. Acknowledge your support of your client's identity, including gender identity and sexual orientation, and help your client develop his racial and ethnic identity.⁹⁰ Attorneys can help Native American clients make important

⁸⁴ See, The Children's Aid Society, *Aging Out of Foster Care: Youth Aging Out of Foster Care Face Poverty, Homelessness and the Criminal Justice System*, 2, <http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/files/upload-docs/FosterCare.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2011).

⁸⁵ Sue Hoag Badeau, *Casey Family Programs, Permanency Values Training: Who Wouldn't Want a Family?* (2009).

⁸⁶ See Jen Braun, *Ampersand Families, American RadioWorks, Why Bother?* (Nov. 2007).

⁸⁷ If your older client wants to be adopted, ask the court to refer his case to a Public-Private Adoption Initiative (PPAI) such as Ampersand Families which recruits and supports permanent families for older youth.

⁸⁸ CLC has samples of permanency pacts. Please contact our office to get a copy of one. If you are having trouble talking to your client about permanency please refer to our Practice Point on Permanency which can be found at <http://www.clcmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/Practice-Point-13-Feb-2011.pdf>.

⁸⁹ DHS-Transition Guide, *supra*, note 11, at 12.

⁹⁰ *Id.* at 11.

connections to their tribes by contacting tribal representatives and inquiring about tribal mentors. Asking your client's county social worker to connect your client with a mentor is a great way to offer your client extra support and a positive sense of self.⁹¹

Ensure that your client has an understanding of how to register to vote and for the selective service.⁹²

Vital Documents

Youth preparing to leave foster care need to have their vital documents,⁹³ such as identification documents which include their social security card, a certified copy of their birth certificate and a driver's license or state identification card. Any youth who has immigration issues will need his green card and/or visa. If you suspect there is an unaddressed immigration issue, contact CLC.

Foster youth must be given their medical and dental records, their health insurance cards and a contact list of their health care providers when they leave foster care. When leaving care, foster youth are also entitled to have a complete set of school records including a detailed list of school providers and grade level performance.

If your client is Native American and an enrolled member of a tribe, make sure that he has received his tribal identification card before leaving care. Contact your client's county social worker to determine if the enrollment process has properly occurred.

Be certain that your client has information about his siblings before he leaves foster care. Attorneys can ask the social services agency to search for and provide foster youth with information about siblings.

It is your client's county social worker's duty to provide your client with all of these vital documents and it is your job as your client's advocate to ensure that your client is receiving all of these vital documents in a timely manner.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES TO TALK TO YOUR CLIENT ABOUT WHILE THEY ARE TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

Many unforeseen issues come up when youth prepare for adulthood. If your client has an issue that was not covered above, please call CLC for help and/or referrals. The following is a list of some issues that have come up for some of our clients preparing for adulthood. Please discuss these issues with your client to identify if your client needs further help or a referral is needed. CLC has substantive information on these issues, as well as referrals for CLC clients to get the help they need on certain topics while they are transitioning out of care.

- Landlord and Tenant law
- Disability or SSI benefits

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹² *Id.* at 12.

⁹³ Minn. Stat. § 260C.203(c)(3) (2012).

- A Youth's Rights when Interacting with the Police
- Criminal Law
- Continued Mental Health Case Management Services
- Emancipation
- Immigration
- Funding Sources
 - Federal - Title IV-E
 - Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) for post secondary Education
 - The Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) Program
 - The Forgotten Children's Fund
 - Camrick Fund

CONCLUSION

Having monthly conversations with your client to discuss the status of his independent living goals enables you to promptly identify problems, make changes or implement new and creative ideas that may otherwise be barriers to his success. It is important to prevent failures and address relevant issues in and outside of court with all the parties before the youth ages out of care. If your client is not receiving appropriate and required support from the county to achieve a healthy future, bring a motion to compel the social services agency to properly address and continually support your client's transitioning goals and preparation for adulthood. Contact CLC for a sample motion.

APPENDIX A

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Independent Living Plan

Youth's name:	Social Worker:	Date of plan:								
<p>What assessments were used to develop the plan? <i>Check all that apply</i></p> <table> <tr> <td>Ansell Casey Life Skills</td> <td>Chemical Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Educational</td> <td>Other, specify: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vocational</td> <td>Other, specify: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mental Health</td> <td>Other, specify: _____</td> </tr> </table>			Ansell Casey Life Skills	Chemical Health	Educational	Other, specify: _____	Vocational	Other, specify: _____	Mental Health	Other, specify: _____
Ansell Casey Life Skills	Chemical Health									
Educational	Other, specify: _____									
Vocational	Other, specify: _____									
Mental Health	Other, specify: _____									
<p>Identify individuals involved in the developing/reviewing the plan:</p>										

Agency advised all parties of the availability of benefits of the foster care program up to age 21 according to Minnesota Statutes section 260C.451, Subdivision 1: Yes No Not applicable

All required parties received the notice: Youth Parents or legal guardians Foster parent or care provider

The plan should identify the youth's needs as they prepare to leave foster care, including addressing the progress toward or accomplishment of the items identified in Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.212, subdivision 1 (c) (11) Independent Living Plan and section 260C.212, subdivision 7 Administrative or court review of placements

1. Educational, vocational or employment planning:
- Obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent
 - Engaging in career/employment planning and/or is employed
 - Planning to or has enrolled in a post-secondary educational or training program (college, vocational/technical school, trade school) and is applying for or has obtained financial aid for which they are eligible, including the Education and Training Voucher program.

What has the youth identified as their educational, vocational or employment needs and goals?

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth's comments/feedback:

2. Transportation:
- Enrolled in or completed a driver's education course and/or received a driver's license, or has demonstrated the ability to use public transportation in their community.

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:

3. Health care planning and medical coverage

- The youth has health care coverage and providers to meet physical, dental and mental health needs, and has an understanding of physical, dental and mental health needs and services.

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?

Provider:
For each step, who will assist the youth

Time frame

Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:

4. Planning for Housing:

- Exploring safe, stable and affordable housing with necessary supports, which does not include a homeless shelter
- Identifying an alternative affordable housing plan, which does not include a homeless shelter, if the original housing plan is unworkable
- Saving sufficient funds to pay for first month's rent and a damage deposit

Where would the youth like to live upon discharge from foster care?

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make

Provider:
For each

Time frame

Progress: At plan reviews, identify the

progress toward these goals?	step, who will assist the youth		progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal
Youth comments/feedback:			
5. Money management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working part-time or interested in seeking part-time employment • Learning to manage and budget income by opening and maintaining checking/savings accounts. • Becoming knowledgeable about credit and bank cards, developing good credit history, etc. 			
What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?			
What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?	Provider: For each step, identify who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal
Youth comments/feedback:			

6. Social and recreational skills

- Involved in school, extracurricular, cultural and/or religious activities.
- Developing or pursuing interests or hobbies at home and in the community.

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?	Provider: For each step, identify who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:

7. Establishing and maintaining connections:

- The youth has a lifelong connect to at least one caring adult, including discussing the opportunity for adoption.
- The youth has established connections with their family and community.

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish these goals?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward these goals?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:

8. Disability Income Assistance

- Applying for or obtained disability income assistance for which the youth is eligible.

What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish this goal?

What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent/caregiver for the youth to make progress toward this goal?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2) Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:

9. Vital Documents that must be obtained prior to discharge according to Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.212, subdivisions 7 (d) (3) and 4 (e)

Social security card	Medical records	
Birth certificate	Dental records	
State identification card or driver's license	Green card or school visa	
Contact information for the youth's siblings, if they are in	School records	

foster care			
Contact list of the youth's medical, dental and mental health providers	If male, has registered for the Selective Service		
Youth's social and medical history			
What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish this goal?			
What steps need to be taken to obtain and store the documents?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2) Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal
Youth comments/feedback:			
10. Additional goal:			
What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish this goal?			
What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent for the youth to make progress toward this goal?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal

Youth comments/feedback:			
11. Additional goal:			
What strengths and abilities does the youth have to make progress toward or accomplish this goal?			
What specific steps need to be taken by the youth, social worker and foster parent for the youth to make progress toward this goal?	Provider: For each step, who will assist the youth	Time frame	Progress: At plan reviews, identify the progress of each step: (1). Accomplished, (2). Making progress, continuing, (3). Revised, (4). Refuses to work towards goal
1.			
2.			
3.			
Youth comments/feedback:			
The plan should be signed by the youth and social worker. The youth and foster parent or care giver should be given a copy of the plan.			
Youth:			Date:
Social Worker:			Date:

Appendix B
Minnesota Juvenile Code

260C.451 FOSTER CARE BENEFITS PAST AGE 18.

Subdivision 1. Notification.

Six months prior to the child's 18th birthday, the responsible social services agency shall provide written notice on a form prescribed by the commissioner of human services to any child in foster care under this chapter who cannot reasonably be expected to return home or have another legally permanent family by the age of 18, the child's parents or legal guardian, if any, the child's guardian ad litem, and the child's foster parents of the availability of foster care up to age 21, when the child is eligible under subdivisions 3 and 3a.

Subd. 2. Independent living plan.

Upon the request of any child in foster care immediately prior to the child's 18th birthday and who is in foster care at the time of the request, the responsible social services agency shall, in conjunction with the child and other appropriate parties, update the independent living plan required under section 260C.212, subdivision 1, paragraph (c), clause (11), related to the child's employment, vocational, educational, social, or maturational needs. The agency shall provide continued services and foster care for the child including those services that are necessary to implement the independent living plan.

Subd. 3. Eligibility to continue in foster care.

A child in foster care immediately prior to the child's 18th birthday may continue in foster care past age 18 unless:

- (1) the child can safely return home;
- (2) the child is in placement pursuant to the agency's duties under section 256B.092 and Minnesota Rules, parts 9525.0004 to 9525.0016, to meet the child's needs due to a developmental disability or related condition, and the child will be served as an adult under section 256B.092 and Minnesota Rules, parts 9525.0004 to 9525.0016; or
- (3) the child can be adopted or have permanent legal and physical custody transferred to a relative prior to the child's 18th birthday.

Subd. 3a. Eligibility criteria.

The child must meet at least one of the following conditions to be considered eligible to continue in or return to foster care and remain there to age 21. The child must be:

- (1) completing secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential;
- (2) enrolled in an institution that provides postsecondary or vocational education;

- (3) participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment;
- (4) employed for at least 80 hours per month; or
- (5) incapable of doing any of the activities described in clauses (1) to (4) due to a medical condition.

Subd. 4. Foster care benefits.

For children between the ages of 18 and 21, "foster care benefits" means payment for those foster care settings defined in section 260C.007, subdivision 18. Additionally, foster care benefits means payment for a supervised setting, approved by the responsible social services agency, in which a child may live independently.

Subd. 5. Foster care setting.

The particular foster care setting, including supervised settings, shall be selected by the agency and the child based on the best interest of the child consistent with section 260C.212, subdivision 2. Supervision in approved settings must be determined by an individual determination of the child's needs by the responsible social services agency and consistent with section 260C.212, subdivision 4a.

Subd. 6. Reentering foster care and accessing services after age 18.

(a) Upon request of an individual between the ages of 18 and 21 who had been under the guardianship of the commissioner and who has left foster care without being adopted, the responsible social services agency which had been the commissioner's agent for purposes of the guardianship shall develop with the individual a plan to increase the individual's ability to live safely and independently using the plan requirements of section 260C.212, subdivision 1, paragraph (b), clause (11), and to assist the individual to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria in subdivision 4 if the individual wants to reenter foster care. The agency shall provide foster care as required to implement the plan. The agency shall enter into a voluntary placement agreement under section 260C.229 with the individual if the plan includes foster care.

(b) Individuals who had not been under the guardianship of the commissioner of human services prior to age 18 and are between the ages of 18 and 21 may ask to reenter foster care after age 18 and, to the extent funds are available, the responsible social services agency that had responsibility for planning for the individual before discharge from foster care may provide foster care or other services to the individual for the purpose of increasing the individual's ability to live safely and independently and to meet the eligibility criteria in subdivision 3a, if the individual:

(1) was in foster care for the six consecutive months prior to the person's 18th birthday and was not discharged home, adopted, or received into a relative's home under a transfer of permanent legal and physical custody under section 260C.515, subdivision 4; or

(2) was discharged from foster care while on runaway status after age 15.

(c) In conjunction with a qualifying and eligible individual under paragraph (b) and other appropriate persons, the responsible social services agency shall develop a specific plan related to that individual's vocational, educational, social, or maturational needs and, to the extent funds are available, provide foster care as required to implement the plan. The agency shall enter into a voluntary placement agreement with the individual if the plan includes foster care.

(d) Youth who left foster care while under guardianship of the commissioner of human services retain eligibility for foster care for placement at any time between the ages of 18 and 21.

Subd. 7. Jurisdiction.

Individuals in foster care pursuant to this section are adults for all purposes except the continued provision of foster care. Any order establishing guardianship under section 260C.325, any legal custody order under section 260C.201, subdivision 1, and any order for legal custody associated with an order for permanent custody under section 260C.515, subdivision 5, terminates on the child's 18th birthday. The responsible social services agency has legal responsibility for the individual's placement and care when the matter continues under court jurisdiction pursuant to section 260C.193 or when the individual and the responsible agency execute a voluntary placement agreement pursuant to section 260C.229.

Subd. 8. Notice of termination of foster care.

When a child in foster care between the ages of 18 and 21 ceases to meet one of the eligibility criteria of subdivision 3a, the responsible social services agency shall give the child written notice that foster care will terminate 30 days from the date the notice is sent. The child or the child's guardian ad litem may file a motion asking the court to review the agency's determination within 15 days of receiving the notice. The child shall not be discharged from foster care until the motion is heard. The agency shall work with the child to transition out of foster care as required under section 260C.203, paragraph (e). The written notice of termination of benefits shall be on a form prescribed by the commissioner and shall also give notice of the right to have the agency's determination reviewed by the court in the proceeding where the court conducts the reviews required under section 260C.203, 260C.317, or 260C.515, subdivision 5 or 6. A copy of the termination notice shall be sent to the child and the child's attorney, if any, the foster care provider, the child's guardian ad litem, and the court. The agency is not responsible for paying foster care benefits for any period of time after the child actually leaves foster care.

History:

1999 c 139 art 3 s 48; 2010 c 269 art 3 s 9; 2010 c 301 art 3 s 9; 2012 c 216 art 4 s 24



Minnesota Department of Human Services

Child Safety and Permanency Division

90 Day Transition Plan

Purpose: Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.212, subdivision 7 (e) requires that for foster youth who will be discharged from foster care at age 18 or older, the responsible social service agency must develop a personalized transition plan as directed by the youth. The transition plan must be developed and executed during the 90 day period immediately prior to the expected date of discharge from foster care. The transition plan must be as detailed as the child elects and include specific options on housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, work force supports and employment services.

Federal law¹ also requires that information provided to the child should include the child's option to designate another individual to make health care treatment decisions on behalf of the child if the child becomes unable to make these decisions and the child does not have, or does not want, a relative who would otherwise be authorized to make such decisions on the child's behalf. In Minnesota this process is known as a Health Care Directive and is governed by Minnesota Statutes, Section 145C. If youth want to pursue a Health Care Directive a suggested form is available in Minnesota Statutes, Section 145C.16.

The agency shall also provide the youth with appropriate contact information if the youth needs more information or needs help dealing with a crisis situation through age 21.

¹Public Law 111-148, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, subpart 1 of the Social Security Act; Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.

Plan development information:

YOUTH'S NAME	SOCIAL WORKER'S NAME	DATE

Youth's strengths:

Describe how the youth was involved in developing the plan:

Identify other individuals involved in developing the plan:

Transition plan: The transition plan must be youth driven and include the following items:

1. Housing:

Where will the youth live upon discharge?

2. Health insurance:

List the youth's health insurance providers:

List the health care providers accepting the youth's health care coverage:

List medical, dental, eye exam and mental health appointments scheduled after discharge:

3. Education:

Identify the youth's plans for education upon discharge:
(provide Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program information to eligible youth)

4. Local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services:

Specify services for the youth including relationships with supportive adults upon discharge:

What relationship and support can the youth expect from their foster parents/caregivers upon discharge?

Person identified as the youth's supportive adult who will always be able to get in touch with youth

NAME		RELATIONSHIP
HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER	CELL PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS

5. Work force supports and employment services:

Identify the youth's plan for employment and supports upon discharge

Resources and contact information: Provide the youth with the identified resources/contacts if they need more information or help dealing with a crisis situation through age 21.

I Medical/physical health:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Eye care:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Substance abuse:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Food shelf:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Workforce center:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Employment:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	

I Dental care:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Mental health:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Adult services:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Child care:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Vocational rehabilitation:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
I Education:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	

Housing/housing authority:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Transportation:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Public health:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Other:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	

Financial:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Parenting resources:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Other:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	
Other:	
NAME	PHONE NUMBER
ADDRESS	
CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE	

Vital documents: The responsible social services agency must provide the following vital documents to the youth at no charge prior to discharge.

Social security card	Medical records
Birth certificate	Dental records
State identification card or driver's license	Green card or school visa
Contact information for the youth's siblings, if they are in foster care	School records and education report
Contact list of the youth's medical, dental and mental health providers	If male, has registered for selective services
Youth's social and medical history as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 259.43	

The youth and the social worker should sign the plan.

Provide a copy to the youth and his/her foster parent or caregiver.

YOUTH SIGNATURE	DATE
SOCIAL WORKER SIGNATURE	DATE



Voluntary Foster Care Agreement for Youth Ages 18 -21 (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 260C.451)

Purpose: This agreement is between the county social service agency and a youth who has requested to resume foster care benefits after age 18, and meets the required conditions.

THIS AGREEMENT IS BETWEEN _____, an agency duly authorized

Agency

by the state of Minnesota to place children in out-of-home care, (hereinafter called the "agency"),

and _____, residing at _____

Youth's name

Youth's address

_____, county of _____, Minnesota.

Placement:

Youth: I agree to live in the foster care setting, which may be a supervised independent living setting authorized by the agency. I also agree that, in order to remain in foster care through the agency, I must be:

1. Completing a secondary education or a program leading to an equivalent credential
2. Enrolled in an institution that provides post-secondary or vocational education
3. Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment, or
4. Employed for at least 80 hours per month.

If I am incapable of doing any of the activities described above due to a documented medical condition, I agree to cooperate with the agency to document my condition on an ongoing basis.

Agency: The agency agrees to provide continued foster care services to you, whether you are placed in licensed foster care, residential care or an authorized supervised independent living setting.

Planning:

Youth: I agree to participate in development of the case plan, including an independent living plan (ILP) with the agency, attend all case plan reviews, and keep the agency informed about how to contact me at all times.

Agency: The agency agrees to develop a written plan, including an ILP with you, review the plan as required, provide notification of case plan reviews, and provide you with a copy of the plan.

Services:

Youth: I agree to follow through with my responsibilities as outlined in the case plan and ILP, participate in identified services, be present at visits with my caseworker and keep the agency informed of my needs.

Agency: The agency agrees to provide foster care maintenance payments, case management, at least monthly face-to-face visits, and other services according to the plan(s). Maintenance is a monthly payment to support board, room, clothing and other expenses.

Permanent connections:

Youth: I agree to visit and keep in touch with sibling, family and other important adults.

Agency: The agency will establish a plan with you, and make efforts to seek life-long permanent connections, which may include reunification or adult adoption.

Verification of eligibility condition(s):

Youth: I agree to provide and cooperate with establishing and maintaining verification(s) of my eligibility condition(s). I understand that the agency is required to verify my enrollment in school, employment, participation in a program to promote employment, or medical condition that affects my ability to work or go to school.

Agency: The agency agrees to provide foster care services and maintenance for you, as long as eligibility condition(s) and associated verification(s) are maintained.

Financial resources:

Youth: I agree to use the financial supports provided for the purpose intended.

Agency: The agency agrees to notify you, if you are placed in an authorized supervised independent living setting and are directly receiving the foster care maintenance, or your caregiver of the amount of the payment, and provide advance notice of any change in payment. Any notice of a payment change would include information about how to appeal.

Medical insurance:

Youth: I agree to apply for Medical Assistance, and provide information needed for continued eligibility.

Agency: The agency will bill health insurance or Medical Assistance for covered medical services. The agency will assist you in applying for Medical Assistance and understanding your coverage. You may be responsible for the cost of medical services not covered by your insurance.

Authorization for release of medical and educational records:

Youth: I agree to sign the necessary releases for the agency and facility/foster home to have access to my education, medical and mental health records.

Agency: The agency will maintain data privacy of this information according to state and federal laws.

Termination of the agreement:

Youth: I agree to terminate the agreement by notifying the agency of my desire to end this agreement.

Agency: The agency agrees to provide written notice to you if your voluntary placement agreement will be terminated. If your eligibility for continued foster care is not maintained, the agency agrees to offer a 90-day transition plan prior to your discharge. The written notice would include information about the youth's right to a fair hearing and how to appeal the decision.

Signatures:

I agree to the provisions contained in this voluntary foster care placement agreement. The youth and the agency representative's signature below is the agency's legal authority to resume foster care benefits.

SIGNATURE OF YOUTH
DATE OF AGREEMENT

SIGNATURE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE
TITLE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE

Attention. If you want free help translating this information, ask your worker or call the number below for your language.

ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية في ترجمة هذه المعلومات، فاسأل مساعدك في مكتب الخدمة الاجتماعية أو اتصل على الرقم 1-800-358-0377

កំណត់សំគាល់ បើអ្នកចង់បានជំនួយបកប្រែព័ត៌មាននេះដោយមិនគិតថ្លៃ សូមសួរអ្នកកាន់សំណុំរឿងរបស់អ្នក ឬ ទូរស័ព្ទទៅលេខ 1-888-468-3787 ។

Pažnja. Ako vam je potrebna besplatna pomoć za prevod ove informacije, pitajte vašeg radnika ili nazovite 1-888-234-3785.

Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, nug koj tus neeg lis dej num (worker) lossis hu 1-888-486-8377.

ໂປຼດຊາບ. ຖ້າຫາກທ່ານຕ້ອງການການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໃນການແປຂໍ້ຄວາມດັ່ງກ່າວນີ້ຟຣີ, ຈົ່ງຖາມນຳພນັກງານຊ່ວຍວຽກຂອງທ່ານຫຼືໂທຫາຕາມເລກໂທ 1-888-487-8251.

Hubaddhu. Yoo akka odeeffannoon kun sii hiikamu gargaarsa tolaa feeta ta'e, hojjataa kee gaafaddhu ykn lakkoofsa kana bilbili 1-888-234-3798.

Внимание: если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в переводе этой информации, обратитесь к своему социальному работнику или позвоните по следующему телефону: 1-888-562-5877.

Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la'aan ah, weydii hawl-wadeenkaaga ama wac lambarkan 1-888-547-8829.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, consulte a su trabajador o llame al 1-888-428-3438.

Chú Ý. Nếu quý vị cần dịch thông tin này miễn phí, xin gọi nhân-viên xã-hội của quý vị hoặc gọi số 1-888-554-8759.

LB2-001 (10-09)

ADA5 (5-09)

This information is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling your county worker. TTY users can call through Minnesota Relay at (800) 627-3529. For Speech-to-Speech, call (877) 627-3848. For additional assistance with legal rights and protections for equal access to human services programs, contact your agency's ADA coordinator.

CHECKLIST ON PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

Progress towards Independent Living Goals

Child has an Independent Living Plan (ILP) if age 16 or older

➤ If client does not have an ILP, when do you plan to ask for one? _____

➤ If you have asked for an ILP, when is the ILP meeting? _____

Client will be attending ILP meeting

Attorney will be attending ILP meeting

Long and short term goals have been set for the ILP:

➤ Educational _____

➤ Vocational _____

➤ Employment _____

➤ Healthcare
planning _____

➤ Transportation _____

➤ Money
management _____

➤ Housing _____

➤ Social and recreational
skills _____

➤ Permanent
connections _____

If client has an ILP:

Review the ILP with client before client signs it

➤ What ILP goals have been met and what goals need work? _____

➤ Are there any barriers to accomplishing any of the ILP goals? If so, how are you going to help your client remove these barriers to achieving the goal? _____

Ensure that the ILP is updated by the county social worker every six months

➤ When is the last time the ILP was updated? _____

➤ When are you asking for an updated ILP or when is the updated ILP you requested due? _____

Has the Court made findings as to what your client has accomplished on his stated goals? _____

Youth in Transition Conference

Child has had a Youth in Transition Conference (YTC)

➤ If client has not had a YTC, when do you plan to ask for one? _____

➤ Who is in your client's support system that should be at the meeting? _____

➤ If client has had a YTC, what personal goals were identified? _____

➤ List strategies that were created to help youth achieve goals: _____

Continuing in Extended Foster Care – Ages 18-21

Client received notice from county of continued foster care benefits (6 months prior to turning 18)

Reviewed client's rights and benefits to staying in foster care while 18 – 21 years old → If client elects to stay in Care, see next section about eligibility

Advised client of potential ramifications of being on the run or residing in unauthorized placement if client wants to continue in foster care at age 18

Client declined to continue in foster care and received transition plan (90 days before discharge)

Client has a completed transition plan (see page 5)

Explained to client what to do if he/she gets a 30 day written notice that foster care benefits will terminate

If client was a state ward, he knows he can return to foster care anytime between ages 18 and 21

If client is not a state ward, he knows he can likely return to foster care between ages 18 and 21 (if in foster care 6 months prior to 18th birthday or declared on runaway status after age 15)

Eligibility for Extended Foster Care Benefits 18-21

- Client elected to stay in care (or was court ordered to stay in care until age 19)
 - Client has met or has a date to meet with his/her social worker to sign a voluntary placement agreement
 - Client has met his/her new fostering connections county social worker
 - Client knows and will attend next court hearing

- Court jurisdiction for extended care was continued (by):
 - Court order granting jurisdiction (prior to client turning 18)
 - Client signed out-of-home placement plan or ILP which stated client's wish to continue in foster care (prior to client turning 18)
 - Client signed a voluntary placement agreement

- Client is re-entering in foster care (by):
 - Re-entering any time before age 21 if he was a ward of the state OR
 - Re-entering any time before age 21 if he was in foster care 6 consecutive months prior to turning 18 OR was declared on runaway status after age 15

- County files motion for re-entry (with voluntary placement agreement and out-of-home placement plan attached) within 30 days of the date the voluntary placement agreement was signed
 - Has the County notified CLC of the re-entry motion hearing date (must be within 30 days of the date the county filed the re-entry motion)? Date: _____
 - Attorney met with client on _____ before the re-entry hearing to discuss eligibility
 - Does the client know about next scheduled re-entry hearing which will take place on _____? Will he attend? _____ **It is important for your client to attend.**

- Has the client requested more frequent court review hearings than the mandatory once a year?

Client fits within at least one of the required eligibility requirements:

Completing secondary education or program leading to an equivalent credential; OR

Enrolled in an institution providing postsecondary or vocational education; OR

Participating in a program or activity designed to overcome barriers to employment; OR

Employed for at least 80 hours a month; OR

Social worker has documented that client is unable to do any of activities (1–4) due to a medical condition

Ask whether the client wants an updated ILP prepared immediately prior to his 18th birthday

Client is working with county social worker and SELF worker (meeting in-person at least once a month)

Name of county social worker _____

Name of SELF Worker _____

Name of Mental Health Worker, if one exists _____

Life Skills Worker from Connections to Independence (Hennepin only) _____



If not, refer your client to the program!

Client understands the need to continually meet the eligibility requirements

Client knows he must meet with his social worker at least once a month to continue getting money and services



In Hennepin, client must see his social worker to pick up his check



In Ramsey, client must meet monthly with his social worker to receive his check in the mail

Is your client getting the monthly payment from the county? If not, where is the payment going? _____

What foster care placement is your client in? _____



Is this setting best meeting your client's needs? If not, what setting does your client want and how is he going to get to that setting? _____

Client agrees to meet with CLC attorney at least monthly on _____

Transition Plan (90 days prior to discharge from foster care)

Client received transition plan

Review transition plan with client and confirm that all details of the plan are discussed:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Continued Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Vital Documents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Work Force Supports | <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Check |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Contact Information | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentors | <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Connections | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Made plans to address issues in transition plan that need work: _____

Education

Client has an identified advocate at school: _____

Client has not graduated high school

Attorney or client has requested a credit check sheet from county social worker

Credits earned _____

Credits transferred from residential placement schools

➤ If not, explain: _____

➤ Date to have school credit recovery plan completed: _____

Credits currently in progress _____

Credits needed to graduate _____

Client has passed standardized graduation tests (math, science, reading, writing)

Client needs tutoring in the following subjects: _____

➤ Request for tutoring was made to the county on _____

Client understands that test fees can be waived and that he can retake the tests if he is unhappy with the scores

Client has obtained high school diploma or its equivalent

Client is applying or considering applying for post-secondary education and has completed the following:

Entrance exams

Financial Aid applications (FAFSA, ETV, scholarships, grants, etc.)

An application for a tuition waiver for state wards at Minnesota state universities and colleges

An application fee waiver request

Post-secondary school application (ensure child is cognizant of deadlines and requirements)

Essays

School Tours

Client is obtaining post-secondary education

Vocational and Employment Planning

Client is employed

Client is not employed

Client is contemplating career/job opportunities in a particular vocation or area

➤ Long-term goals _____

➤ Short-term goals _____

Client has:

Connected with professionals in his area of interest

Participated in mock interviews

Learned ways to locate job opportunity listings

Completed a resume

Completed a cover letter

Learned the importance of being on time for interviews

Composed a fact sheet with pertinent personal information (references, addresses, etc.) for applications

An appropriate interview outfit

Transportation

Client has studied public transportation in the city in which he lives

Client has demonstrated ability and independence regarding transportation (by):

Obtaining a bus card (If not, will request bus card from county social worker)

Learning how to read bus schedules

Learning how to read maps

Completing a driver's education course

Obtaining a driver's license

Understanding the privileges and financial responsibilities of having a car

Healthcare

Client has a person identified to oversee his health care: _____

Client has signed an updated release of information so that identified person can access health records

Client has copies of important and consolidated medical records

County social worker has arranged for all of client's major healthcare screenings prior to aging out of the system:

Physical

Vision

Mental Health

Dental

Hearing

Substance Abuse

Client is educated about and understands concerns related to:

General physical health (dietary standards, cigarette and alcohol use)

Medication regimes (side effects, risks, filling prescriptions)

Domestic violence

Knows how to make and keep an appointment

Mental health (stress, reasons to seek therapy)

Sexual decisions (pregnancy prevention, STIs)

Client has health care coverage and providers to meet his physical and mental health needs

Doctor (Name: _____ #: _____)

Dentist (Name: _____ #: _____)

Therapist (Name: _____ #: _____)

Client understands what medicine he is taking, the side effects, and will be able to self-administer

Healthcare Directive

County social worker has informed Client about how to execute a healthcare directive

➤ If not, date by which to compel them to do so: _____

Client has completed a healthcare directive (only if 18 or older)

➤ See **Minn. Stat. §145C.16** for a suggested form

Health Insurance

Client understands that youth in foster care are eligible for Medical Assistance until 21

Client has been informed of the eligibility requirements for MinnesotaCare, dependent upon whether the child is continuing to receive care

Client has continued coverage applications submitted before age 18 by county social worker

Client has applied for and/or obtained health insurance

Client understands how to apply for or renew their insurance coverage.

Client confirms that he does not have outstanding medical bills or is getting help resolving issues with outstanding medical bills by _____

If client is transitioning to adult disability services ensure verification that services are in place prior to juvenile court jurisdiction dismissal

Disability Income Insurance

County has appropriately assessed Client in regards to disability

Asked on Client's behalf to be assessed or re-assessed properly

Client understands how to apply for SSI, disability insurance, and access housing for disabled populations.

Client has applied for and/or obtained disability income assistance (if necessary)

If disabled, child has applied for Special Needs Basic Care Health Plan

Client understands how to renew their disability insurance coverage

Housing

Social worker ensured client has obtained safe, affordable housing plan with necessary supports

ILP goal for housing is properly supported by the county

Client understands rights and responsibilities as a tenant

Client has saved sufficient funds to pay for 1st month's rent and damage deposit

Client has been informed as to how to find and get along with a roommate

Client has an alternative affordable housing plan

Client understands his rights and responsibilities as a tenant and can understand a lease

Money Management

Client is able to create a monthly budget which includes budgeting for rent

Client has opened a checking and savings account

Client understands how much required to lease an apartment

Client fully understands how to:

Pay bill

Complete tax forms

Develop a realistic short- and long-term budget

Write and cash checks

Use a debit card

Read a paycheck stub

Credit Scores and Avoiding Identity Theft

Client understands the concept of credit and understands the importance of a good credit record

Client understands their entitlement to receive an annual copy of their credit report (ages 16+) at no cost while in foster care – client or client’s attorney has requested this from the county social worker

Client has been assisted in remedying any discrepancies on his/her credit report

Client understands how to guard and restrict their personal information

Expungement

Client understands benefits of expungement and consequences of a juvenile record (regarding continued education, applying for jobs, and applying for rental housing)

Client gives attorney permission to obtain court delinquency records to proceed with expungement

Client understands that the expungement process can take 5 months

Client referred, through CLC, to an organization that aids in processing expungement requests

Permanent Connections

Youth has put together a family “scrapbook” or “life book”

Relative search done recently by county social worker

At least one permanent connection has been made

Permanency Pact has been explored

Client has designated at least one person to contact in the case of an emergency

Social and Recreational Skills

Client has registered for the Selective Service (male only)

Client is registered to vote



Client is prepared for the daily responsibilities of independent living:



Owns and can operate an alarm clock



Knows how to use an oven and microwave



Understands how to thoroughly clean a kitchen and bathroom



Knows where to shop for food, clothing, furniture, etc



Can prepare at least five good meals



Understands how to store food



Do laundry



Is able to look up resources in the phone book, newspaper, or online



Client will be able to connect with the community:



Involved with a church or other group



A member of a local recreation center



Has a list of important telephone numbers and has developed sufficient telephone communication skills



Has been paired with a mentor/counselor by his social worker



Has at least one good friendship



Is registered to vote



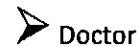
Has a library card and knows how to use it



Client will be prepared to advocate for himself



Has role-played interactions with different professionals in the community



Knows how to find and retain a lawyer and when one may be necessary



Understands the importance of support systems available to acknowledge his identity (gender identity, sexual orientation, Racial/ethnic identity)

Vital Documents on file or in possession of child

Client has in his possession:

Social security card

Visa

Contact list of medical and dental providers

Birth certificate

Passport

Consolidated Medical/Dental Records

Driver's license

Health Insurance Card

State identification card

School Records (inc. a detailed list of schools)

Contact information for siblings

Green card

Requested Missing Documents from the County on _____

Followed up on _____

Filed Motion to Compel on _____

Client has a wallet or similar item to keep track of personal identification documents

Client has a "Records Book" that will contain the his/her important papers

Client has all available information about his siblings before leaving care

Progress towards Independent Living Goals for Child under ICWA

Client has applied for enrollment/membership or is enrolled in a tribe

Client has a tribal identification card

Client has been connected with tribal benefits and/or resources

Client has a mentor who is an enrolled tribal member

Additional Issues – Please call CLC if it appears that your client needs help with any of the issues below

Landlord and Tenant law

Continued Mental Health

Immigration

Police Interaction

Case Management Services

Criminal Law

Emancipation

Funding Sources

Disability or SSI Benefits

Federal - Title IV-E

Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) for post secondary Education

The Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) Program

The Forgotten Children's Fund

Camrick Fund

S.E.L.F. PROGRAM

- **The S.E.L.F. (Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally) Program is funded by federal money, namely the Foster Care Independence Act. It is a statewide program designed to provide support and training for youth to prepare them for adulthood.**
- **The S.E.L.F. Program provides funds to each county, tribe, and select non-profit organizations to develop, implement, and continue services that prepare older adolescent foster youth (age 14+) for independent living.**
- **S.E.L.F. funds may be used to provide services for adolescents, ages 14 to 21 who have been in substitute care after the age of 14. Substitute care is defined as a county approved out of home placement, including group homes, foster care, residential treatment, and emergency shelter.**
- **In general, services are either direct or indirect. Direct services include group or individual life skills training, driver's training, supplies for apartments, college application fees, and subsidized internship or employment. Indirect services include foster parent and staff training related to older adolescents in independent living or the purchase of resources and training materials.**
- **County workers may call their designated contact persons in the county they work for to submit requests for S.E.L.F. funds on behalf of foster youth.**
- **Advocates for foster youth may refer foster youth to programs that receive S.E.L.F. funds. Foster care youth are also eligible to receive funds through the Forgotten Children's Fund through DHS and the Friends of Children Foundation through Hennepin County's Guardian Ad Litem Program.**

Weida Allen: Staff Social Worker, Children's Law Center of Minnesota May 2005
Julie Russomanno: Equal Justice Works Fellow, Children's Law Center July 2003

For information on the S.E.L.F. Program: DHS contact person is Claire Hill at (651) 296-4471