



Department of
Children's Services

Independent Living and Transition Planning Guide

Tennessee Department of Children's Services | Independent Living | February 2025



Table of Contents

Development of the Independent Living Plan (ILP).....	1
Development of a Transition Plan: Procedure to Promote a Successful Transition of Youth from State Custody to Adulthood and Independence.....	2
Essential Documents List: Transition From Care.....	5
The Transition Plan for Young Adults Receiving Extension of Foster Care Services.....	6
Procedures for Extension or Re-Establishment of Foster Care For Young Adults.....	7
Guidelines for Terminating Extension or Re-Establishment of Foster Care for Young Adults.....	10
Extension of Foster Care Services Case File	12
Guide of Responsibilities.....	14
Child and Family Team Meeting Guide.....	16
Health Insurance for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care.....	16
Independent Living Forms.....	17

Introduction

The Independent Living and Transition Planning Guide is a set of protocols. These protocols are designed to inform the following:

- ◆ The process of developing Independent Living and Transition Plans, with particular attention paid to the roles and responsibilities of the participants and documentation in the Electronic Record System.
- ◆ Procedures for establishing Extension of Foster Care Services and information about Extension of Foster Care file maintenance.
- ◆ Assisting youth and young adults with maintenance of health insurance.

Development of the Independent Living Plan (ILP)

As a component of the Family Permanency Plan, the Independent Living Plan (ILP) must be developed in the context of a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM: reference the DCS [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#)) as required by DCS policy [16.51, Independent Living and Transition Planning](#).

The ILP is unique in that a specific emphasis must be placed on the youth's input and preferences in its development. Its purpose is to guide the acquisition of skills youth will need to be successful as adults. The integration of outcomes that anticipate the youth's increasing ability to manage all aspects of their own lives self-sufficiently, with all available options for the establishment of legal, physical, and relational permanency and support, is essential. This work must be viewed in the context of a life-long process.

As part of the preparation of team members for the CFTM, the assigned FSW must:

1. Ensure that all youth in state custody age fourteen (14) or older complete the necessary life skills assessment, at least annually. This must occur in advance of plan development, as the results from the assessment must guide the creation of measurable outcomes in the ILP. The initial life skills assessment must be completed no later than fourteen (14) days after a youth enters custody. The time frames for updating the assessment are referenced in the Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Manual.
2. Whenever possible and appropriate, ensure that the youth's caregivers or supportive adults complete the necessary life skills assessment. This must occur in advance of plan development, as the results and recommendations generated from the assessments must guide the creation of measurable outcomes goals in the ILP.

Note: *There are circumstances that may impede the completion of a life skills assessment in advance of the initial CFTM/ Family Permanency Plan development. These circumstances and alternative measures are outlined in the following protocol: Alternative Life Skills Assessment Protocol, (Refer to the [Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Guide](#), page 4).*

3. Communicate to the youth and team members that foster parents or providers will assist in the healthy development of youth in care through implementing "reasonable and prudent parent" decision making that supports health, safety and best interest of the youth. These decisions can include opportunities for risk-taking like those typically made by parents of youth who are not in foster care. That planning will promote "normalcy" and the ability to engage in healthy developmentally appropriate activities that promote well-being for all youth in care.

4. Communicate to the youth and team members that foster parents or providers will also assist the youth in making developmentally appropriate choices in choosing normal activities which include, but are not limited to extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities, that may include dating, outdoor activities, “hanging out” with friends, prom, sports, clubs, vocational activities, religious/cultural events, field trips, driver’s education, etc.
5. Ensure that all team members expected to participate or provide technical assistance/specialized advisement are given adequate information to review. Team members may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Important adult connections (parents, etc.);
 - b) Foster Parent(s);
 - c) DCS Education Specialists;
 - d) DCS Independent Living Specialists;
 - e) DCS Psychologists;
 - f) DCS Nursing staff;
 - g) DCS Health Advocacy Staff, including the adult transition team;
 - h) Center of Excellence (COE) clinicians;
 - i) Provider agency staff;
 - j) Representatives of the community mental health agencies;
 - k) Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDDS), and
 - l) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Youth must also be informed of the option to invite up to two (2) individuals who are not direct caregivers or family members, such as coaches or mentors, to assist with development of the plan. One of these additional participants may be designated as an advisor/advocate.

6. The information referenced may include, but is not limited to, medical evaluations, clinical and educational evaluations and assessments, and vocational assessments, but must include the Life Skills Assessment results (*Refer to the [Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Guide](#)*). This must occur in advance of plan development, as team members will need sufficient time to review the information, identify resource options, and formulate recommendations.

Use the [Permanency Plan Development Guide](#) to ensure that the Independent Living Plan is developed appropriately.

Development of the Transition Plan for 17-Year-Old Youth in Custody: Procedures to Promote Successful Transition of Youth from State Custody to Adulthood and Independence

As a component of the Family Permanency Plan, the Transition Plan must be developed in the context of a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM: reference the DCS [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#)) and as required by DCS policy [16.51 Independent Living and Transition Planning](#).

The Transition Plan is unique in that a specific emphasis must be placed on the youth's input and preferences in its development. Its purpose is to identify methods and resources to help youth make a successful transition from care to adulthood, when developed for youth in custody age 17 and up.

1. An Independent Living (IL) Specialist, or other representative of the Office of Independent Living, must meet with designated regional DCS staff on a monthly basis to identify young adults ages seventeen (17) or older who are at risk of emancipating to adulthood from state custody. Mutual decisions must be reached regarding the extent to which staff from the DCS Office of Independent Living must provide technical assistance (e.g., information and advisement) as part of Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) preparation, or to directly participate in the scheduled CFTMs.
2. DCS Office of Independent Living staff will share information obtained from the Electronic Record System reports to help identify these youth with applicable Regional Directors of Child Programs and Juvenile Justice, Team Coordinators (TC), Team Leaders (TL) and Family Service Workers (FSW)/Juvenile Service Worker (JSW) on a monthly basis.
3. The TL and FSW/JSW must ensure that a "Transition to Adulthood" CFTM (as defined by the DCS [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#)) is convened for all custodial youth who reach 17 years of age, and then at least six (6) months prior to anticipated discharge if the young adult is adjudicated delinquent and anticipated to remain in DCS custody past eighteen (18) years of age. The purpose of the CFTM is to develop a Transition Plan.
4. Ensure that all team members expected to participate or provide technical assistance/specialized advisement are given adequate information to review. Team members may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Important adult connections (parents, etc.)
 - b) Foster Parent (s)
 - c) DCS Education Specialists;
 - d) DCS Independent Living Specialists;
 - e) DCS Psychologists;
 - f) DCS Health Services staff, Center of Excellence (COE) clinicians;
 - g) Youth Villages LifeSet representative;
 - h) Provider agency staff;
 - i) Representatives of the community mental health agencies;
 - j) Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDDS), and
 - k) Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Youth must also be informed of the option to invite up to two (2) individuals who are not direct caregivers or family members, such as coaches or mentors, to assist with development of the plan. One of these additional participants may be designated as an advisor/advocate. Additionally, the FSW/JSW will:

5. Communicate to the youth and team members that foster parents or providers will assist in the healthy development of youth in care through implementing "reasonable and prudent parent" decision making that supports health, safety and best interest of the youth. These decisions can include opportunities for risk-taking like those typically made by parents of youth who are not in

foster care. That planning will promote “normalcy” and the ability to engage in healthy and developmentally appropriate activities that promote well-being for all youth in care.

6. Communicate to the youth and team members that foster parents or providers will also assist the youth in making developmentally appropriate choices in choosing normal activities which include, but are not limited to extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities, that may include dating, outdoor activities, “hanging out” with friends, prom, sports, clubs, vocational activities, religious/cultural events, field trips, driver’s education, etc.
7. Important information for developing Transition Plans may include, but is not limited to, medical evaluations, clinical and educational evaluations and assessments, and vocational assessments, but must include the Life Skills Assessment results. (Refer to the [Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Guide](#)). This must occur in advance of plan development, as team members will need sufficient time to review the information, identify resource options and formulate recommendations.
8. The FSW/JSW will develop a Transition Plan concurrently with the initial Family Permanency Plan for all youth who enter DCS custody at or after age 17. All other procedures associated with this process must be followed.
9. It is not necessary that an IL Specialist attend every CFTM focused on Transition Planning, but the IL Specialist must be in attendance when circumstances exist that require additional support as outlined in item 1 of this protocol. The applicable regional Child Programs or Juvenile Justice staff and IL Program staff must make this decision jointly. If it is determined that an IL Specialist should attend a CFTM, the FSW/JSW must provide notice of the CFTM to the Office of Independent Living at least ten (10) days in advance utilizing form [CS-0746, Meeting Notification](#).
10. The FSW/JSW must develop a Transition Plan in the context of the CFTM. The Transition Plan must include the possibility and benefits of receiving Extension of Foster Care Services, as applicable, to include Youth Villages LifeSet Services if necessary or appropriate. It is not necessary to update the other portions of the Family Permanency Plan unless it is otherwise due or warranted.
11. The Transition Plan must be reviewed by the Court within ninety (90) days prior to the youth exiting state custody.
12. The FSW/JSW must then ensure that a Discharge Planning CFTM as outlined in the DCS [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#) is convened within thirty (30) calendar days of the youth exiting state custody. The youth and Child and Family Team must review the Transition Plan, and the FSW must ensure that all outcomes are updated as needed to reflect youth’s current needs and decisions. When there is a provider agency or designated FSW available in which a youth may receive Extension of Foster Care Services, a representative of this agency must attend the discharge staffing if the youth is accepting Extension of Foster Care Services.

The FSW must provide notice of the CFTM to the IL Specialist and/or Extension of Foster Care Services staff member serving the applicable region of commitment at least ten (10) days in advance (utilize form [CS-0746, Meeting Notification](#)).

Use the [Permanency Plan Development Guide](#) to ensure that the Transition Plan is developed appropriately.

13. The FSW must ensure the youth receives all applicable essential documents upon discharge and must complete the Transitional Survey. Refer to the [Case Closure Protocol](#) for additional information. The FSW/JSW must upload scanned versions of the documents to the youth’s person record in the Electronic Record System.

Use the Following List to Guide Transfer of Essential Documents to the Youth

- ◆ List of adult relatives and other supportive adults (contained in Genogram documents) and emergency contacts
- ◆ State ID, dependent upon youth's age (as applicable)
- ◆ Driver's license (as applicable)
- ◆ Social Security Card (original, Copy for DCS file)
- ◆ TennCare Card: *refer to Protocol for Continuation of TENN CARE Eligibility for Children Exiting Custody*
- ◆ Birth Certificate (original to young adult, a copy for the DCS file)
- ◆ Any legal documents, including court order indicating family/guardian has custody of the child/youth
- ◆ Updated & recent medical health and mental health records and assessments, including immunization records as well as information regarding any special needs and appropriate treatment. Include the names and addresses of child/youth's Primary Care Physician, dentists, specialists and all other providers, including Mobile Crisis contact Information.
 - Needed medical, dental, developmental, mental health, substance use treatment services as well as Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech Language Pathologist
 - List of any appointments already scheduled with pertinent details
 - Needed medication and any prescriptions, including instructions and potential side effects
- ◆ Resume (when work experience can be described)
- ◆ Bank account access information
- ◆ Credit Check Information
- ◆ Information regarding Advance Care Plan *
- ◆ Religious documents and information
- ◆ Documentation of Immigration, Naturalization
- ◆ Documentation of tribal eligibility or membership
- ◆ Death Certificate for deceased parents (as applicable)
- ◆ Life Book/ pictures/ personal items
- ◆ Previous placement information (printed placement page from the current child welfare information system)
- ◆ Educational records including copies of report cards and the most current Individualized Education Plan (IEP); list of schools attended and grades
- ◆ Copy of Discharge CFTM that outlines the aftercare plan and includes a written summary of the child/youth's living environments/placements, experiences and growth while separated from their family
- ◆ Selective service number or proof of registration (as applicable)
- ◆ Voter registration card

*Ensure that young people aging out of foster care receive information and education about the importance of having an Advance Care Plan. Contact a regional Independent Living Specialist to obtain information about Advance Care Plans.

The Transition Plan for Young Adults Receiving Extension of Foster Care Services

As a component of the Family Permanency Plan, the Transition Plan must be developed in the context of a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM: reference the DCS [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#)) as required by DCS policy [16.51, Independent Living and Transition Planning](#).

The Transition Plan is unique in that a specific emphasis must be placed on the young adult's input and preferences in its development. Its purpose is to identify what is necessary to assist young adults with acquisition of their goals, to include services needed. Use the [Permanency Plan Development Guide](#) to ensure that the Transition Plan is developed appropriately.

Young adults must be informed of the option to invite up to two (2) individuals who are not direct caregivers or family members, such as coaches or mentors, to assist with development of the plan. One of these additional participants may be designated as advisor/advocate. Additionally, the Extension of Foster Care Worker (hereafter described as Worker) will:

1. Communicate to the young adults and team members that foster parents or providers will assist in the healthy development of young adults in care through implementing "reasonable and prudent parent" decision making that supports health, safety and best interest of the young adult. These decisions can include opportunities for risk-taking like those typically made by parents of young adults who are not in EFCS. That planning will promote "normalcy" and the ability to engage in healthy and developmentally appropriate activities that promote well-being for all young adults in EFCS.
2. Communicate to the young adults and team members that foster parents or providers will also assist the youth in making developmentally appropriate choices in choosing normal activities which include, but are not limited to extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities, that may include dating, outdoor activities, "hanging out" with friends, prom, sports, clubs, vocational activities, religious/cultural events, field trips, driver's education, etc.
3. Emancipated young adults receiving voluntary Extension of Foster Care Services will have a Transition Plan updated at least annually by the EFC worker. The CFTM must be documented in the Electronic Record System as a Progress Review CFTM. (Refer to the [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#) for details on team development). Young adults receiving Extension of Foster Care services will have the Transition Plan reviewed by the court or representative of the court annually and by the Foster Care Review Board on a semi-annual basis. The reviews must be documented utilizing the applicable documentation functions in the Electronic Record System.
4. It is acceptable to utilize the Transition Plan components developed just prior to exiting custody for young adults that transition directly to Extension of Foster Care Services. However, the plan must be updated in the Electronic Record System, to include the young adult's applicable permanency goal, **within 30 days of the young adult's entry into EFCS**. The Transition Plan must be reviewed by the court within 60 days of the young adult's entry into EFCS, and then plan updates and reviews will occur by the schedule outlined in DCS policy [16.51, Independent and Transition Living Planning](#) or more often as needed. Updated Transition Plans reflect the young adult's current circumstances

and needs at the point that they are reviewed by the court or the court's representative and Foster Care Review Board.

5. Young adults who exit care at age 18 or after and return from a break in service to receive Extension of Foster Care Services must have a new Transition Plan developed. The assigned EFC worker must develop a new plan within thirty (30) days of return to care.

All Reviews outlined in this section must be documented in the Electronic Record System, as applicable. ***Storyboards are available that demonstrate how to enter Extension of Foster Care hearings and court orders: [EFCS 'Best Interest' Hearing and Court Order Storyboard](#) and [EFCS Annual Permanency Hearing and Court Order Storyboard](#). Case Conference notes must also be entered to document internal staff*** review of all Extension of Foster Care as Adult cases, at a minimum in relation to the Court and FCRB schedule. The schedule for court related reviews for EFCS young adults is available, here: [Court Appearances for EFCS Young Adults](#) and [EFCS Court Procedures Time Frames](#).

All court related forms and documents cited in this section of the guide will be uploaded to the case record in the Electronic Record System.

Procedures for Extension of Foster Care for Young Adults

1. If the young adult is transitioning directly from DCS custody for the purposes of Extension of Foster Care at age 18, or up to age 19 if adjudicated delinquent, the custodial FSW/TL must:
 - a) Review form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#) with the youth during the Discharge Planning CFTM. The form must be completed and signed to begin the process of establishing Extension of Foster Care, and upload to the documents section of the Electronic Records System. The form must be accompanied by verification of eligibility. Note: if the verification of eligibility supports an educational program, such as an enrollment letter, the program's start date cannot be more than the next semester or term for high school graduates or HiSET recipients, or otherwise 90 calendar days from the enrollment date. Any exceptions require approval by the Director of Independent Living.
 - b) The Independent Living Director or designee must review and approve Extension of Foster Care. The FSW/TL must ensure that form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#) is completed and all applicable signatures obtained following case review. The Department Representative signature must be obtained the same day as the youth's signature, and the final approval signature must be obtained within fifteen (15) business days of the youth's signature. Additionally, a Regional Representative or designee must provide approval by signature for Extension of Foster Care cases that will be maintained by DCS. This form must be upload to the documents section of the Electronic Record System.
 - c) If a youth's decision is not to accept Extension of Foster Care, the FSW must ensure that form [CS-0759, Refusal of Extension of Foster Care – Youth Leaving Custody](#) is completed and all applicable signatures obtained. However, every effort must be made to encourage young adults to consider the available service options.
 - d) All youth participating in transition meetings must receive a standard packet of information that the youth can reference to facilitate this decision. This packet must include the *Essential*

Documents (refer to the Essential Documents List for details), and a description of voluntary service options and community resources available in the area the youth plans to reside in following discharge. The Independent Living Program Specialist must assist the regional DCS staff with the development and availability of the resource materials. The FSW must ensure that the Transition Plan references this information.

- e) The FSW must ensure that the transition of youth with special needs is addressed according to the applicable DCS policies [19.7, Transitioning DCS Youth with Serious Psychiatric Disorders into Adult Behavioral/Mental Health Services](#) and [19.8, Transitioning Youth to the Employment and Community First \(ECF\) Choices Program for Adult Services](#), and the outcomes established in the Transition Plan (refer to DCS policy [16.51, Independent Living and Transition Planning](#)).
- f) Ensure all applicable Discharge Planning CFTM and other documentation is entered into the Electronic Record System. Ensure that all other records applicable to the custodial casework (Assessments, Family Permanency Plan, custodial case service referrals) are resolved and in an approved status, as applicable.
- g) Upon exit from custody, the FSW must complete all applicable areas of the Transitional Survey in the Electronic Record System and update the Family Functional Assessment. Complete and approve the Transitional Survey, Type=Custodial 17 to 19. This is the Electronic Record System version of the "Exit Survey." There is an available storyboard in the Electronic Record System Knowledge Base on this subject (entitled: *Transitional Survey Storyboard*).
- h) Update all Court related system records and Juvenile Justice related system records (as applicable).
- i) Update the youth's Person record in the Electronic Record System to include a correct, forwarding address, prior to terminating the custody legal status record.
- j) Contact the regional Independent Living Specialist. Staff from the Office of Independent Living will provide support to update the Electronic Record System records, to include termination of the custody legal status record (not the Court information that needs to be completed by the regional staff). The IL Eligibility record must be established and approved within fifteen (15) business days of the actual transition to Extension of Foster Care Services.
- k) The effective date for Extension of Foster Care Services is the exiting custody date, when IV-E Eligible young adults transition directly from custody to EFCS.
- l) Youth who were not IV-E eligible while in custody will be asked to sign form [CS-0968, Voluntary Placement Agreement for Transitioning Young Adults](#) on the date of exiting custody; the form cannot be signed prior to the youth exiting custody. This form will be signed by the youth and Department Representative when the youth signs the form. If the exiting custody date is affected by a leap year birth date, the form may be signed by the youth the next day. The effective date for Extension of Foster Care Services is the youth's signature date on this form. If the exiting custody date falls on a weekend, state holiday, or is affected by a leap year birth date, the form may be signed by the Department Representative the next business day. The youth will also be asked to complete and sign form [CS-0953: Application for Title IV-E Eligibility for Young Adults Requesting Extension or Re-establishment of Foster Care Services](#). The IL Specialist is responsible for ensuring that the Voluntary Placement Agreement form is completed and signed timely, but may request assistance from others (DCS regional staff, provider agency staff, resource parents, etc.) when necessary.

- m) Establish the applicable permanency goal for the youth and update the Transition Plan to reflect a version appropriate for Extension of Foster Care Services within 30 (thirty) business days of transition to Extension of Foster Care.
- n) The Independent Living Specialist and Child Welfare Benefits Coordinator (CWBC) will coordinate all procedures for establishing IV-E eligibility, if necessary.

2. If the young adult is returning to request Re-Establishment of Foster Care Services following a break from custody, or a prior episode of EFCS;

- a) Young adults can go to any DCS county office to request Re-Establishment of Foster Care Services.
- b) Designated staff at each DCS county office will be positioned to assist the young adult with completion and submission of form [CS-0778, Application for Re-Establishment of Foster Care as an Adult](#). The application must be accompanied by verification of eligibility. Note: if the verification of eligibility supports an educational program, such as an enrollment letter, the program's start date cannot be more than the next semester or term for high school graduates or HiSET recipients, or otherwise 90 business days from the enrollment date. Any exceptions require approval by the Director of Independent Living. Submit the application and all supporting documents to the IL Director/Designee for review.
- c) A decision to proceed with re-establishing services must be made within ten (10) business days of the young adult's signature on the application; this decision is evident by signatures on the application. The Office of Independent Living will coordinate assignment of a Worker to carry the young adult's case with the responsible agency.
- d) Once the decision is made to move forward with re-establishing services: Schedule a CFTM within ten (10) business days of the application approval to complete an applicable Family Permanency Plan with the young adult.
- e) All young adults re-establishing foster care will be asked to sign form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#) during the CFTM. The Department Representative signature must be obtained the same day as the youth's signature, and the final approval signature must be obtained within fifteen (15) days of the young adult's signature.
- f) When youth are IV-E eligible proceeding from a custodial episode: The effective date for Extension of Foster Care Services is the young adult's signature date on this form.
- g) Young adults who were not IV-E eligible while in custody, return in excess of 6 months from exiting custody, or return following a prior EFCS episode will be asked to sign form [CS-0968, Voluntary Placement Agreement for Transitioning Young Adults](#) during the CFTM. This form will be signed by the young adult, and Department representative when the young adult signs the form. The effective date for Extension of Foster Care Services is the young adult/Department Representative signature date on this form. Note: If, for some reason, the Department Representative signature is after the young adult's signature, the Department Representative signature will be the effective date of EFCS. The young adult will also be asked to complete and sign form [CS-0953: Application for Title IV-E Eligibility for Young Adults Requesting Extension or Re-establishment of Foster Care Services](#). The IL Specialist is responsible for ensuring that the Voluntary Placement Agreement form is completed and signed timely, but may request assistance from others (DCS regional staff, provider agency staff, resource parents, etc.) when necessary.

- h) The Independent Living Director or designee must review and approve Extension of Foster Care. The IL Specialist must ensure that form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#) is completed and all applicable signatures obtained within fifteen (15) business days of the EFCS effective date (as determined above). This form must be filed in the Electronic Record System.
- i) Staff from the Office of Independent Living will coordinate updating of the Electronic Record System records, to include creation of a new case and establishment of the IL Eligibility records. This must also be accomplished within fifteen (15) business days of EFCS approval. If the young adult is eligible for traditional placement support, procedures for coordinating establishment of this service with the Network Development unit must be followed.
- j) The Independent Living Program Specialist and Maximization Unit will coordinate all procedures for reviewing and establishing IV-E eligibility.
- k) The EFC worker must establish the applicable permanency goal for the young adult and develop the Transition Plan to reflect a version appropriate for Extension of Foster Care Services within thirty (30) business days of the EFCS effective date (as determined above).

Guidelines for Terminating Extension of Foster Care for Young Adults

1. There are circumstances that may warrant the termination of Extension of Foster Care for Young Adults that include, but are not limited to:
 - a) The young adult has successfully completed the goals outlined on the Transition Plan.
 - b) The young adult is not maintaining one or more criteria of eligibility (see DCS policy [16.52, Extension or Re-Establishment of Foster Care for Young Adults](#), for details), to include the conditions agreed upon in form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#).
 - c) The young adult is convicted of a felony and/or any crimes against a person.

Note: Services may be suspended when a young adult is charged with a crime pending disposition of the case. This is particularly applicable when the young adult is incarcerated, and services cannot be provided according to DCS policy [16.53, Eligibility for Independent Living Services](#), on that basis.

 - d) The young adult informs their EFC worker that she/he no longer wants to receive services.
 - e) The young adult has not made contact with DCS or a service provider in excess of sixty (60) consecutive business days.
2. The Worker must make efforts to contact the young adult if the issue is one of no contact. There must be, at a minimum, one attempt at a face-to-face contact and one attempted telephone, email or text contact within a sixty (60) day period. These attempts at contact must be documented as the Electronic Record System case recordings.
3. The young adult must have the opportunity to participate in a CFTM. The assigned Worker and team will work with the young adult to identify supports and services available in the young adult's community that may be accessed following discharge. The young adult must also be notified in writing that DCS is terminating Extension of Foster Care Services using form [CS-0760, Notice of Denial, Termination or Change in Independent Living Services](#). The EFCS termination date and

specific reasons must be clearly outlined on the form. The young adult must be notified of the right to appeal the decision and provided form [CS-0761, Independent Living Program Review Request](#).

4. If efforts to contact the young adult are not successful, the young adult must be notified in writing that DCS plans on terminating Extension of Foster Care Services using form [CS-0760, Notice of Denial, Termination or Change in Independent Living Services](#). The EFCS termination date and specific reasons must be clearly outlined in this correspondence. The notification must be made via certified letter with a response requested within ten (10) calendar days. Form [CS-0761, Independent Living Program Review Request](#), must be included with this correspondence. This notification must also be documented in a case recording.

Note: If the young adult signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement, the young adult will have the opportunity to sign the form indicating that he/she no longer wants Extension of Foster Care. Otherwise, the assigned staff will sign the Voluntary Placement Agreement using the appropriate option.

5. Young Adults have the right to appeal decisions made by DCS related to the provision of Extension of Foster Care for Young Adults. In these cases, the following procedure must be followed:
 - a) The young adult will submit a written statement utilizing form [CS-0761, Independent Living Program Review Request](#), which outlines the specific reasons they are not in agreement with the decisions made by DCS related to the provision of service. The young adult's request will be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of receiving notice of the decision.
 - b) Staff with the Office of Independent Living will enter the Program Review record in the Electronic Record System.
 - c) The *Program Review Request* will be reviewed by the Director of Independent Living, and the decision will be documented on the form and Program Review record in the Electronic Record System. This decision is binding, with the final authority held by the Director of IL.
6. Additionally, the following procedures must be completed by the responsible agency in order to end Extension of Foster Care Services for a young adult:
 - a) The responsible agency must notify the regional IL Program Specialist to end the IL Eligibility and Service Referral record. The case can be closed as applicable. If the issue is one of no contact, these procedures must be applied upon 10 days expiring per #3 of this section.
 - b) Ensure all applicable Discharge Planning CFTM and other documentation is entered. Ensure that all other records applicable to the post custodial casework (Assessment, Transition Plan, IL case service referrals) are resolved and in an approved status, as applicable.
 - c) Update court related the Electronic Record System records and follow the steps established to notify the court of case closure. The responsible agency must inform Network Development of placement services ending, if the young adult was receiving traditional placement support. Utilize <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/for-providers/placement-central-for-providers/report-a-placement-change.html>.
 - d) Complete and approve the Transitional Survey, Type=Extension of Foster Care.

Note: There is an available storyboard in the Electronic Record System Knowledge Base on this subject (entitled: **Transitional Survey Storyboard**).

- e) Update the young adult's Person record in the Electronic Record System to include a correct, forwarding address, prior to case closure.

f) **Special Considerations:**

- ◆ The assigned Worker must inform the regional IL Program Specialist and Maximization Unit that services are terminating. DCS staff will close the case, as applicable.
- ◆ It is highly recommended that the young adult have the opportunity to complete the Youth Exit Survey, EFCS. This survey is different from the Transitional Survey, as it gathers information from the young adult's perspective.

Extension of Foster Care Services Case File

Forms and Documents Cited in this Section of the Guide Will be Uploaded to the Electronic Record System using the available Document Categories and Document Types:

1. Face Sheet (From Custody Episode)

2. Legal

- a) Release orders (From Custody Episode)
- b) Form [CS-0968, Voluntary Placement Agreement for Transitioning Young Adults](#) (as applicable) (EFCS)
- c) Judicial determination that continued Voluntary Placement beyond 180 days is in the best interest of the young adult; (as applicable) (EFCS)
- d) Annual Permanency Hearing Order (Finding of Reasonable Efforts); (EFCS)
- e) Determination of Tribal Affiliation; (as applicable) (From Custody Episode)

3. Assessment & Verification

- a) Copy of Social Security card; (From Custody Episode)
- b) Copy of original Birth Certificate; (From Custody Episode)
- c) Documentation of Immigration, or Naturalization; (if applicable); (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- d) Life Skills Assessment updated annually;(as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- e) Form [CS-0559, Authorization for Release of Information and HIPAA Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children's Services and Notification of Release;](#) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- f) Copy of Driver's License or state issued ID Card; (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- g) Copy of vehicle registration (as applicable); and (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- h) Credit Report (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- i) Dispute Letter (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- j) Credit Error Remediation Letter (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)

4. Permanency

- a) Transition Plan; (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)

- b) CFTM Summary (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- c) Client Rights Handbook Signature of Acknowledgement (Form [CS-0050, Case Intake Packet Documents and Native American Heritage Verification](#)) (From Custody Episode)
- d) Form [CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care as an Adult](#); (EFCS)
- e) Approved Form [CS-0778, Application for Re-Establishment of Foster Care as an Adult](#); (as applicable) (EFCS)
- f) Form [CS-0759, Refusal of Extension of Foster Care Notification: Youth Leaving Custody](#); (*as applicable*) (From Custody Episode)
- g) Referral to LifeSet Services (as applicable); (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS) and

5. Health

- a) Health Insurance card (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- b) EPST&T Medical/Dental; (as applicable)* (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- c) Immunization records*; (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- d) Psychiatric/psycho-social, if young adult continues to require services; (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- e) Health summary at age 18;
- f) Additional Insurance verification; and (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- g) Advance Care Plan (Health Care Proxy Form); as applicable. (EFCS)
- h) Clinical Justification Letter for Higher Level Placement (EFCS)

6. Education

- a) Education passport cover sheet; (as applicable); (From Custody Episode)
- b) Complete Education Passport if young adult is still in high school (as applicable); (From Custody Episode)
- c) Educational Evaluation (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- d) High school diploma, or HiSET certificate and scores; (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- e) "Intent-to graduate-by 21st birthday" letter from the applicable high school or HiSET Program; (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- f) College enrollment documentation; (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- g) Current grade/status reports from education/training program; (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- h) Special Education Certification; (as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- i) Most recent IEP/504 plan for high school students; (as applicable)* (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- j) Form [CS-0599 Application for Post-Secondary Funding](#); and (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)

- k) Copy of Free Application for Federal Student Aid submission: Confirmation page. (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)

- 7. Financial Benefits/Expenses

- a) Form [CS-0762, Independent Living Allowance Agreement](#); (as applicable); (EFCS)
- b) Form [W-9](#) ;(as applicable) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- c) [Direct Deposit](#) form (EFCS)
- d) Form [CS-0476, Child Welfare Benefits Notification of Change of Circumstance](#) (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- e) Form [CS-0760, Notice of Termination or Change in Independent Living Services](#) (as applicable); and (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- f) Form [CS-0761, Independent Living Program Review Request](#) (as applicable). (From Custody Episode, then any updates in EFCS)
- g) Form [CS-0953: Application for Title IV-E Eligibility for Young Adults Requesting Extension or Re-establishment of Foster Care Services](#) (EFCS)

Guide of Responsibilities

Family Service Worker/Youth Villages Foster Care Case Manager/Youth Villages EFC Case Manager

1. Administer the Life Skills Assessment, including, whenever possible, the Casey Life Skills Assessment. This assessment must be administered annually. (Refer to [Identifying and Accessing Independent Living Services Manual](#)).
2. Establish and invite the appropriate supports and team members to CFTMs.
3. Ensure that all team members expected to participate or provide technical assistance/specialized advisement are given adequate information to review.
4. Identify specific outcomes and action steps related to increasing self-sufficiency and ongoing success.
5. Ensure that outcomes and action steps listed in the Family Permanency Plan specifically relate to needed services and supports from IL Program and Chafee funding.
6. Coordinate with appropriate IL Program staff to review and plan with youth and young adults.
7. Refer youth and young adults needing special assistance to IL Program staff. Examples of these special categories are youth or young adults with significant mental health needs, youth and young adults who will transition to adult services via the Employment and Community First/CHOICES program, youth and young adults who are behind educationally, and youth or young adults with special needs not addressed by normal planning processes.
8. Coordinate the referrals for young adults that will transition into adult services (refer to DCS policies [19.7, Transitioning Youth with Serious Psychiatric Disorders to Adult Behavioral/Mental Health Services](#) and [19.8, Transitioning Youth to the Employment and Community First \(ECF\) Choices Program for Adult Services](#)), to include the application process for Social Security Benefits.
9. Assist young adults with acquiring a state-issued photo ID.

10. Assist young adults with the reapplication process for TennCare coverage.
11. Complete the transfer of items on the Essential Documents List: Transition from Care Checklist to youth and young adults.
12. Hold regular CFTM's to review progress and needs of the young adult.
13. Work with legal staff to file motions and obtain orders on behalf of young adults receiving Extension of Foster Care Services (as needed).

IL Specialist

1. Meet with designated regional DCS staff on a monthly basis to identify young people ages seventeen (17) or older who are at risk of emancipating to adulthood from state custody.
2. Provide training and technical assistance to regional staff, private providers, resource parents, facilities and young people on appropriate planning, documentation and provision of services.
3. Provide Life Skills classes and/or technical support regarding Life Skills instructional materials available in program areas.
4. Attend CFTMs and Foster Care Review Boards as needed per IL and Regional Leadership.
5. Assess the appropriateness of outcomes and action steps contained in the IL portion of the Family Permanency Plan.
6. Review Regional records on a regular basis to ensure the quality and frequency of planning, documentation, service provisions and other program requirements.
7. Receive and forward requests for the IL Allowance and DCS sponsored scholarships for review and processing.
8. Provide technical assistance on all cases when the youth or young adult qualifies for transition into on-going adult services.
9. Assist youth or young adults that have exited to Subsidized Permanent Guardianship, Adoption or reunification after age 16 with application for available educational funding.
10. Assist with completion of the Rights and Responsibilities Agreement, Voluntary Placement Agreement or Refusal of Services forms with young adults as appropriate.
11. Record all contact with young adults and attendance at CFTMs in the Electronic Record System Care Coordination notes.
12. Provide ongoing assistance to young adults that choose to receive Extension of Foster Care Services.
13. Provide assistance, training and support to all young adults that choose to pursue post-secondary study in applying for federal assistance through the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#).
14. Assist regional staff with providing all exiting young adults with a signed receipt of instructions on **Tennessee 211** (a three-digit telephone number dedicated to the community that connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities) and appropriate information for Extension of Foster Care Services.

15. Assist regional staff with review and administration of form [CS-0759, Refusal of Extension of Foster Care Services Notification: Youth Leaving Custody](#) if the young adult is eligible but unwilling to accept services.
16. Coordinate with the Maximization Unit to manage the EFCS IV-E eligibility process, as applicable.

Contract Provider Staff (Not serving in the FSW role)

1. Assist regional FSWs with planning and identification of needed services.
2. Assist in identification of appropriate supportive adults to involve in the planning process for young adults.
3. Assist with contacting IL Program staff regarding young adults that are in need of planning or service support.
4. Attend trainings of the IL Program staff to become familiar with and utilize IL Program tools.
5. Attend and participate in all CFTMs related to young adults involved in the IL Planning process.
6. Ensure that Strengths, Concerns, Outcomes and Action Steps on IL and Transition Plans are reflected in the agency's treatment planning and addressed, as applicable, per the agency contract.

Foster Parents

1. Complete the Primary Caretaker portion of the Life Skills Assessment for appropriately aged youth.
2. Utilize and encourage participation in Life Skills classes and other IL service provisions for youth and young adults. Provide informal opportunities for life skills training in the home.
3. Attend and participate in CFTMs for youth and young adults in their care.
4. Contact the FSW with specific needs that may be addressed by IL services in a timely manner.
5. Assist with the application and completion of the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) and application to appropriate fields of study and with college visits.
6. Are encouraged to attend training on life skills development for youth in foster care.

Child and Family Team Meeting Guide

For a copy of the [Child and Family Team Meeting Guide](#), download the link.

Health Insurance for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010, and one of the provisions of this legislation is health insurance coverage to age 26 for youth who "age out" of foster care. In Tennessee, this is interpreted to apply to youth in Tennessee state custody who turn 18 years of age in foster care. Such youth will have opportunity to maintain or access health insurance. This may include maintaining some version of TennCare, or the opportunity to apply for health insurance via the health insurance marketplace as adults. Some youth who turn 18 years of age in Tennessee state custody not considered to be in foster care (example: youth placed at a Youth Development Center), or those who enter custody after the age of 18 and who are not

covered, will need to apply for health insurance via the health insurance marketplace as adults. The Bureau of TennCare can be contacted for information that may be helpful for youth, and the professionals and supportive adults assisting them.

The FSW must update the youth's Person record in the Electronic Record System to include a correct, forwarding address, prior to case closure.

More information is contained on the following website, which can be shared with the youth:

[**TennCare for Aged Out Youth.**](#)

Independent Living Forms

- ♦ [**CS-0488, Rights and Responsibilities to Receive Foster Care Services as an Adult**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0953, Application for Title IV-E Eligibility for Young Adults Requesting Extension or Re-establishment of Foster Care Services**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0559, Authorization of Release of Information and Protected HIPAA Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children's Services and Notification of Release**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0746, Meeting Notification**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0759, Refusal of Extension of Foster Care Services Notification: Youth Leaving Custody**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0760, Notice of Denial, Termination or Change in Independent Living Services**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0761, Independent Living Program Review Request**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0778, Application for Re-Establishment of Foster Care Services**](#)
- ♦ [**CS-0968, Voluntary Placement Agreement for Transitioning Young Adults**](#)
- ♦ [**W-9**](#)
- ♦ [**Direct Deposit**](#)