

<b>POLICY TITLE: Youth Clothing Allowance</b>		<b>PAGE 1 OF 3</b>
	<b>CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY</b> <b>Approved by: <u>Brenda Donald</u></b> Agency Director  <b>Date: <u>October 30, 2013</u></b>	<b>REVISION HISTORY:</b> October 30, 2013
	<b>LATEST REVISION:</b> June 10, 2014	

<b>I. AUTHORITY</b>	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws, regulations, including but not limited to provisions in Title 4 of the DC Official Code, Chapter 60 and 62 of Title 29 of the DC Municipal Regulations, and the <i>LaShawn A. v. Gray Implementation and Exit Plan</i> .
<b>II. APPLICABILITY</b>	All Agency employees, contracted personnel, and contracted agency personnel.
<b>III. RATIONALE</b>	Children who enter foster care often have limited resources, including clothing. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children residing in a foster home or congregate care facility receive clothing needed for school and leisure activities and funds are allocated for this purpose.
<b>IV. POLICY</b>	It is the policy of CFSA to provide a clothing allowance for youth ages 15 up to 21 who are placed in a foster home or congregate care facility for a minimum of 30 consecutive days. The amount of clothing allowance to be allocated shall be determined by CFSA. Funds for the clothing allowance are included in the existing foster care board payment or the CFSA-approved contractual funding provided to private agencies. Social workers shall inform youth and resource providers on their caseload that there is a policy regarding clothing allowances and shall ensure that youth receive clothing allowances in accordance with this policy.
<b>V. CONTENTS</b>	<b>A.</b> General Requirements for Clothing Allowance <b>B.</b> Monitoring and Tracking of Allowances <b>C.</b> Complaints and Grievances
<b>VI. PROCEDURES</b>	<b>Procedure A: General Requirements for Clothing Allowance</b>  1. Resource providers shall allocate a clothing allowance of a minimum of \$83.34 a month (\$1000 annually) to all youth ages 15 up to 21 who are placed in their care for a minimum of 30 consecutive days for the purchase of clothing. Although \$1000 annually is the minimum that must be spent on clothing, this policy should not be construed as limiting the resource provider's obligation to provide each youth in their care with his or her own clean, well-fitting, attractive and seasonal clothing appropriate to the youth's age, gender and individual needs, regardless of cost.  <i>Note: in instances where a youth is in immediate need of clothing, the social worker or resource provider may obtain an emergency clothing voucher through CFSA.</i>

	<p>2. Separately from the allowance described in item #1 above, CFSA shall also allocate an annual back-to-school clothing allowance for youth. This is a one-time payment that will be provided prior to the start of the school year to assist with the purchase of clothing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. All youth ages 15 up until 21 who are in an approved foster or group home, or residential treatment center are eligible to receive an annual back-to-school clothing allowance.</li> <li>b. Funds shall be distributed yearly on or before August 31st.</li> <li>c. Youth must be in foster care at the time of distribution.</li> </ul> <p>3. The social worker shall ensure that the youth has sufficient clothing and that the resource provider provides the youth with the designated amount of clothing allowance required by CFSA.</p> <p><i>Note: sufficient clothing includes items that are age and seasonally appropriate, clean, attractive, and fit properly.</i></p> <p>4. The resource provider shall discuss with the youth how the clothing allowance will be distributed based on the youth's clothing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The resource provider shall inform the social worker of the plan.</li> <li>b. The social worker shall document the distribution plan in FACES.NET.</li> </ul> <p>5. In instances where the youth is deemed to have sufficient clothing, the resource provider may allocate the funds at a later time when the need arises (e.g., a change in season requiring additional clothing). The resource provider is still responsible for allocating the designated amount of clothing allowance to the youth (as noted above, totaling either \$83.34 per month, or \$1000 annually).</p> <p>6. If the clothing allowance funds are not provided for the youth and he or she is deemed to have insufficient clothing, the social worker shall work with the youth to ensure past funds are provided to the youth as designated. (See <i>Procedure C</i> for more information.)</p> <p>7. The resource provider may distribute the clothing allowance directly to youth in instances where he or she feels the youth has the maturity level to manage funds appropriately.</p> <p>8. The resource provider shall provide necessary guidance and coaching to the youth to help reinforce financial management and budgeting skills when shopping for clothing, and to develop the tools needed to be a knowledgeable consumer. The resource provider can help youth develop these skills by demonstrating and discussing the following tools needed to be a "smart shopper":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Developing a savings plan and a budget</li> <li>b. Identifying needs vs. wants</li> <li>c. Finding a sale or choosing a less expensive option (e.g., bargain shopping)</li> <li>d. Using coupons to make purchases</li> </ul>
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	<p>9. The resource provider shall allocate the clothing allowance, as described above, even when the youth is employed.</p> <p>10. Clothing allowances may not be withheld as a form of discipline.</p> <p>11. All clothing purchased shall become the property of the youth and must be sent with the youth upon his or her exit from foster care, or move to a new placement.</p>
	<p><b>Procedure B: Monitoring and Tracking of Allowances</b></p> <p>1. The resource provider shall keep receipts of all clothing purchased with clothing allowance funds and furnish receipts upon request by CFSA.</p> <p>2. In instances where the resource provider distributes clothing allowance funds directly to youth, the resource provider shall maintain accurate records of all clothing allowance payment distributions for purposes of monitoring and/or auditing, including, at a minimum, signed documentation from the youth acknowledging the amount of funds given and the date the clothing allowance was received.</p> <p>3. In instances where the social worker suspects inappropriate use or mismanagement of clothing allowance funds provided directly to the youth, the social worker may review the receipts to verify allowance purchases.</p>
	<p><b>Procedure C: Complaints and Grievances</b></p> <p>1. Social workers shall inform youth and resource parents on their case load of the procedures outlined in this policy for complaints and grievances.</p> <p>2. If a youth has a grievance regarding the receipt or suspension of a monthly allowance, he or she may contact his or her social worker and/or youth ombudsman for review.</p> <p>3. If the youth contacts the social worker, he or she shall review the concern and make a determination within 5 business days of receipt of the complaint.</p> <p>4. If the youth is not satisfied with the determination of the social worker, he or she may elevate his or her grievance up the social worker's chain-of-command up to the deputy director of program operations or the private agency program director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth should elevate grievances no later than 30 calendar days after informing the social worker of his or her concern.</li> </ul> <p>5. Any determination made by the deputy director or program director shall be final.</p>

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