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	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY Approved by: <u>Brenda Donald</u> Agency Director Date: <u>April 29, 2014</u>	REVISION HISTORY:
	LATEST REVISION: April 24, 2014	

I. AUTHORITY	<p>The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA or Agency) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency’s mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations, including but not limited to the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act of 1974 and its implementing regulations, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. 677, Title 4 of the DC Official Code, provisions of Title 29 of the DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR), and the <i>LaShawn A. v. Gray</i> Implementation and Exit Plan (IEP). <i>This policy supersedes CFSA’s Transition Services policy (April 8, 2013), and the following administrative issuances: CFSA-06-18, CFSA-07-9, CFSA-10-10, CFSA-11-2, CFSA-06-19, CFSA-08-9, CFSA-13-1, CFSA-06-9, CFSA-06-12, CFSA-12-13.</i></p>
II. APPLICABILITY	All CFSA staff and CFSA-contracted agency personnel.
III. RATIONALE	<p>CFSA recognizes that different age groups have different service needs. At present, almost half (44 percent) of the District’s child welfare population are youth aged 15 and older. As a result of this relatively high percentage of older youth in care (when compared to the national average of 25 percent), the District’s child welfare system has taken steps to ensure capacity for accessible and appropriate supportive resources specifically for all youth who had a committed status on their 15th birthday. Each youth is eligible for and deserves to receive quality and reliable assistance in accessing resources and services for financial management, planning for educational and vocational goals, aftercare services, and other supports. CFSA’s Office of Youth Empowerment (OYE) serves as the administrative unit responsible for assisting these youth to receive the supports and services they need to be safe, stable, and successful. Additionally, because social workers have primary responsibility for helping youth and their families to identify and access such services and supports, all case-carrying social workers need to be well-informed about OYE and to connect their clients as early as possible to OYE services. To support social workers in this regard, OYE has developed guidelines and policies that emphasize each social worker’s responsibility for ensuring that all youth are afforded the opportunity to receive OYE’s assistance and that all youth are successfully transitioned to adulthood.</p>

<p>IV. POLICY</p>	<p>It is CFSA’s policy to provide services and supports through OYE to youth with open neglect court cases, aged 15 through their 20th year, to help prepare them for their entrance into adulthood. It should be noted that OYE does not accept referrals for youth who have turned age 21. OYE connects youth with community-based service providers that provide individualized services that can help the youth develop and address their particular strengths and needs. In addition, these services help youth to master an array of skill sets that are essential for the transition from foster care to adulthood. During this process, CFSA ensures that youth are consistently supported by individuals who make up the youth’s “team” and who partner directly with the youth to collectively determine the services that are best suited for the path toward self-sufficiency. In addition, a youth eligible or receiving OYE supportive services at case closure can still continue to receive such services after the case closes.</p> <p>It is also CFSA’s policy to conduct monthly outreach efforts to youth, foster parents, assistant attorneys general, guardians <i>ad litem</i>, and social workers (including CFSA-contracted social workers) in order to reinforce the importance of access to OYE services. These monthly outreach efforts focus on each youth just turning age 15, or a youth aged 15 or older just entering care. Outreach information includes access to services related to case-management, education, post-secondary education, vocational training, preparing for employment, transitioning out of the foster care system, aftercare, and the unique needs of such populations as pregnant and parenting teens. To refer youth to OYE, all social workers must use the OYE Universal e-Referral form located on the Agency’s website and must ensure that a youth is enrolled within 30 days of the youth’s 15th birthday. <i>Note: Specific steps and procedures for accessing services for older youth will be detailed in the upcoming revision of OYE’s Procedural Operations Manual (POM). Social workers should consult with their assigned supervisor if there are any questions or concerns.</i></p>
<p>V. CONTENTS</p>	<p>A. Case Management of Youth B. Education and Post-Secondary Education C. Vocational and Employment Services D. Pregnant or Parenting Youth E. Transition Services F. Aftercare Services</p>
<p>VI. PROCEDURES</p>	<p>Procedure A: Case Management of Youth</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All youth who are placed in a congregate care facility or a CFSA foster home, and who are aged 17½ through 20, will be considered on a monthly basis for case management assignment to OYE, based on an individualized clinical determination. 2. While OYE social workers case manage for older youth (as noted in item #1 above), <u>all</u> social workers with youth aged 15 to 20 on their caseload are responsible for ensuring a youth’s successful access to OYE services and successful transition planning. 3. All social workers with youth on their caseload are responsible for the following case management activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Serving as leader for the youth’s interdisciplinary team

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Developing and implementing case plans, including permanency planning c. Visiting the youth at least twice per month d. Participating in Family Court hearings and other meetings e. Completing and documenting learning and educational assessments in FACES.NET f. Providing connections to the following resources (at a minimum and as applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Community services (e.g., Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives) ii. CFSA's Office of Well Being iii. OYE Career Pathways Unit iv. OYE Educational Unit v. OYE Generations Unit g. Completing the Supplementary Security Income (SSI) tool h. Referring youth to driving school i. Utilizing the Transition ToolKit (see <i>Procedure E: Transition Services</i>) on an ongoing basis j. Facilitating youth transition planning meetings k. Referring youth to aftercare services <p>4. In addition to the resources cited above in # 3.f., comprehensive case management for all youth shall include (at a minimum and as applicable) cooperative partnerships between CFSA and the following entities when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Department of Behavioral Health b. Department on Disability Services c. Rehabilitation Services Administration d. Developmental Disabilities Administration e. Department of Employment Services f. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
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	<p>Procedure B: Education and Post-Secondary Education</p> <p>All social workers with youth on their caseload must encourage biological families (if applicable) and foster family members to take a proactive role in their child's education. When working with youth, social workers must emphasize the importance of completing a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED), and must discuss the option of pursuing a post-secondary education. With the support of OYE educational specialists, as needed, social workers must further assist youth with challenges in achieving these goals. In support of a social worker's efforts in this regard, OYE provides educational and post-secondary educational services (e.g., tutoring, after-school enrichment, and computer access) to assist youth in planning for their futures and in making a successful transition to a self-sufficient adulthood. In addition, CFSA provides room and board for youth in care who are attending post-secondary education.</p>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OYE partners with CFSA’s Office of Well Being to ensure that all youth, particularly any youth who are disconnected from a school or academic program, are engaged around education when appropriate. 2. As is the case with the ongoing social worker, a youth’s primary social worker must update all educational information, including academic performance, in FACES.NET during the following critical points over the life of a case: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. For high school students, at the end of each marking period b. For college students, at the end of each semester c. For all students, at the beginning and end of each academic year d. After any school placement change e. Whenever there is a new or updated individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan (i.e., section 504 of the federal <i>Rehabilitation Act</i>, a plan that ensures a child with an identified disability has access to a supportive learning environment to achieve academic success) f. Following each transition planning meeting (<i>see Procedure E: Transition Services</i>) 3. OYE offers pre-college supports to eligible youth seeking to further their education and future professional opportunities. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Youth seeking pre-college services must be at least 15 years old and comply with at least one of the following eligibility criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Current enrollment in high school ii. Current enrollment in a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program iii. Possession of a GED or high school diploma iv. Active interest in pursuing the benefits of pre-college services, even if the youth has not been academically engaged or does not hold a diploma b. Pre-college services include but are not limited to the following supports: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Creation and presentation of a college preparation curriculum, including the following elements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discussing and researching different options and types of higher education, including educational supports b) Reviewing college entrance requirements and application processes, including financial aid and scholarship programs c) Preparing youth to be able to successfully prepare for, register for, locate, complete, and maximize use of standardized test scores that meet college acceptance eligibility d) Providing a summer academic enrichment program and summer bridge programs
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. To the extent that funds are available, assistance with college enrollment, including on-site visits and funding for summer bridge programs (see # iv.d following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under limited circumstances and as approved by the OYE administrator, a youth may have additional visits if necessary for college admission. The social worker for a youth not participating in pre-college services under OYE should contact OYE to find out further information. iii. Individual consultations, including but not limited to direct assistance regarding any and all aspects of the pre-college curriculum cited above, as well as consultations regarding the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Freshman year course selection b) College grade point and credit system c) College correspondence d) Time management e) Budgeting f) Living with a room-mate g) Identifying on-campus services iv. The following limited payments (to the extent that funds are available) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fees for SAT/ACT preparation classes b) Fees for taking a GED c) Fees for taking a preliminary SAT (i.e., PSAT) d) Fees for taking at least one SAT or one ACT (<i>Note: students may also apply to the District's Office of the State Superintendent of Education to get a voucher for the ACT test.</i>) e) Up to \$1000 per youth when an institute of higher education requires a summer session or orientation program for admission f) College application and entrance fees, room deposits, books, lap top, etc. g) Moving and transportation expenses, as applicable <p>4. Youth graduating from high school shall receive a maximum of \$500 in expenditures for activities related to graduation. Requests for payments for the following graduation activities must be submitted by the case-carrying social worker through the demand payment process and be paid directly to the vendor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. cap and gown b. pictures c. class ring d. invitations and announcements e. class trip f. senior package fees g. Prom-related expenses
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5. For youth who elect to enroll in post-secondary education, OYE facilitates partial funding for the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education (including but not limited to colleges, universities, community colleges, and training institutions) through the Chafee Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) program.
 - a. Eligibility for the ETV program includes the following criteria for youth:
 - i. Youth are aged 18 to 20 years old.
Note: only youth receiving ETV funds at the time they age out of the foster care system may re-apply up to age 23.
 - ii. United States citizenship or legal residency.
 - iii. Out-of-home care at the age of 15 years or older, or adopted or under legal guardianship at the age of 16.
 - iv. High school diploma or equivalent.
 - v. Enrollment in post-secondary school or training program as a full-time or part-time student.
 - vi. An application for financial aid, including the completion of a FAFSA (i.e., Free Application for Federal Student Aid) has been submitted to the post-secondary school or training program.
 - vii. The post-secondary education or training was initiated before age 21.
 - viii. Satisfactory academic progress (i.e., at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale) or academic standing consistent with the institution’s FAFSA graduation requirements.
 - b. The total voucher amount provided cannot exceed \$5,000 a year nor should it exceed the cost of attendance at the youth’s institution of higher education.
 - i. ETV funds are provided only after all other forms of financial aid have been explored and utilized, including but not limited to completion of a FAFSA or granting of a scholarship.
 - a) In the context of ETV funding, loans are not considered “financial aid”. Neither ETV funds nor CFSA will pay off the loan.
 - b) It is imperative that the OYE educational specialist thoroughly discuss the responsibilities of school loans with any youth who elects to pursue this option and that this discussion occurs prior to the youth deciding to take out a loan.
 - ii. ETVs are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, until the ETV funds are exhausted.
 - c. Youth must re-apply for an ETV each academic year.
6. All OYE, CFSA, and private agency case-managing social workers must submit demand payment requests for medical services not covered by DC Medicaid, including the following services:
 - a. Medical costs to non-DC Medicaid providers for youth enrolled full-time in a post-secondary institution that does not automatically offer health insurance to students (for example, community colleges)
 - b. Coverage for a campus health plan for youth enrolled either full- or part-time at a college or university

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. A personal care allowance distributed directly by CFSA in either of the following amounts for youth who are living on the campus of the educational institution during the school year: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. \$300 per month for each youth enrolled in post-secondary education and participating in a meal plan at the educational institution. b. \$500 per month for each youth enrolled in post-secondary education and not participating in a meal plan at the educational institution. c. Every 2 years, CFSA will re-evaluate dollar amounts for personal care allowances for youth in college or university. 8. For youth who are in enrolled in a post-secondary program and living in a CFSA placement, it is the responsibility of the resource parent or group home provider to disperse \$100 for personal care each month, including youth who are home on scheduled school breaks.
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	<p>Procedure C: Vocational and Employment Services</p> <p>Vocational and employment services and supports are also an essential part of preparing youth for self-sustaining income before, during, and after their transition from foster care. As with education, social workers must encourage biological families (as appropriate) as well as foster families to take a proactive role in helping youth plan for their vocational and employment futures. In addition, social workers must also proactively guide youth in this regard.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OYE partners with the Office of Well Being to explore options for youth ages 15-17 (including the District’s Summer Youth Employment Program). 2. OYE’s Career Pathways Unit provides the following vocational and employment services for youth ages 18-20, including those who have graduated from high school or who have a GED (regardless of age), those who have graduated from college, and those who have chosen not to pursue the college pathway: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance in identifying appropriate vocational services, including completion of vocational assessments and referrals to or completion of vocational training, including dual track GED programs b. Job readiness support, including but not limited to the following services: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Instruction in basic employability skills ii. Referral to industry specific programs iii. Assistance with career exploration, including but not limited to the following opportunities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Preparation for career pre-requisites b) Employment searches and navigation c) Career shadowing opportunities, including introduction to professionals with comprehensive knowledge of the selected field d) Ongoing support from an OYE specialist while the youth is placed in an employment or vocational program
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	<p>e) Identification of educational supports</p> <p>f) Referral to community resources (as needed while completing vocational program)</p> <p>g) Financial assistance for vocational training</p>
	<p>Procedure D: Pregnant or Parenting Youth</p> <p>CFSA seeks to thoughtfully identify and engage pregnant and parenting youth in foster care. Any social worker with a pregnant or parenting youth on their caseload is expected to engage the youth in discussions (as applicable) on pre-natal care, child-rearing, continuing the youth’s education, sexual health, family planning, etc. OYE’s Generations Unit provides supportive services both to youth mothers and youth fathers, as well as their children, regardless of whether the youth is case managed by CFSA or a private agency. If appropriate, a pregnant or parenting youth who turns 17½ years old is eligible to have his/her case transferred to OYE for case management. OYE’s Generation Unit commits to improving key outcomes for pregnant and parenting youth who are currently in the foster care system by offering the following services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early identification of pregnant teens to ensure prenatal care and services, including enrollment in birthing classes, as applicable 2. Enrollment in parenting classes and support for co-parenting between mothers and fathers, as appropriate and safe 3. Connection to health services by assignment to a nurse care manager (through CFSA’s Healthy Horizons Assessment Center) 4. Identification and support of teen fathers in caring for their children, as appropriate, including community-based services as needed 5. Access to high quality daycare information, services, and vouchers 6. Referral to home visiting programs, as appropriate 7. Partnering with one or more of the following community resources to support healthy youth families: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Metro TeenAIDS: Stable Families b. Healthy Babies/Teen Alliance for Prepared Parenting c. DC Department of Human Services d. Fatherhood Empowerment and Educational Development (FEED) Program 8. Referrals to any school-based programs that provide community-based services to support positive outcomes for the pregnant and parenting youth in the community 9. Other linkages to educational resources (e.g., home instruction) to promote connections for continuing education and achieving positive educational outcomes

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Procedure E: Transition Services

The transition for any adolescent to young adulthood can be fraught with challenges, fears, and doubts. To mitigate these natural challenges, youth receiving in-home services are linked to the Healthy Families/Thriving Communities (HFTC) Collaboratives and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). For youth in foster care, the transition process requires additional, solid support from family, community, and the youth's transition planning team. Regardless of whether the youth is receiving services in-home or through foster care, it is essential that the voice and values of every youth be a guiding force during decision-making discussions. Youth must be heard and respected by social workers and team members during the transition process. In support of these efforts, OYE connects each youth with community service providers that can help youth master an array of skill sets useful for the successful transition from the foster care system to healthy self-sufficiency and well-being. OYE accomplishes this mission by requiring the following activities of all case managing social workers:

1. Transition planning, which begins at age 15 for committed youth and continues every 6 months until the youth reaches permanency or age 20
 - At age 20, a youth's transition planning increases to every 90 days (and more frequently if needed) until the youth reaches age 21.
2. Developing a transition planning team that includes but is not limited to the following individuals:
 - a. The youth
 - b. The youth's mother and father, as appropriate, as well as other identified family members, as appropriate
 - c. Other supportive or significant individuals identified by the youth and his or her family
 - d. Community-based partners, e.g., staff from the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), the Department on Disability Services (DDS) (including the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Developmental Disabilities Administration), Department of Employment Services, and non-profit service providers
 - e. OYE specialists (i.e., the education specialist, Career Pathways specialist or the Generations Unit specialist), as well as representatives from CFSA's Office of Well Being or other Agency administrations, as applicable
 - f. The ongoing CFSA or private agency social worker, as well as the social worker's supervisor
 - g. Guardian ad litem
 - h. CASA, if applicable
 - i. The youth's resource parent or staff from the youth's group home
3. Utilizing the [Transition ToolKit](#) in partnership with and in support of the youth throughout the life of the case, including emphasis on the following 12 domains (as applicable):
 - a. Finances and money management

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Job, career, and life skills c. Identity d. Permanency e. Education f. Self-care and health g. Housing h. Transportation i. Community, culture, and social life j. Pregnancy and expecting k. Parenting <p>4. Shepherding the youth’s transition plan from onset to completion, and documenting the plan in FACES.NET, including notations regarding the close monitoring of goals, tasks (including who is responsible for each task and the deadline for completing each task), and timelines outlined in the plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the responsibility of the social worker to disseminate the plan to members of the team and to ensure that the plan is updated on at least a quarterly basis. <p>5. Individual tailoring of transition plans to youth, especially those who live under special circumstances, including but not limited to the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Youth who are incarcerated on a long-term basis (i.e., over 6 months) b. Youth living in residential facilities that are outside of a 50-mile radius of the Washington, DC metropolitan area c. Youth with developmental disabilities who may be living in nursing facilities or require substantial support in the setting in which they live. <p><i>Note: additional specifics of tailoring transition plans are included in the OYE POM as noted in earlier in this document.</i></p> <p>6. Facilitating and ensuring a seamless transition to adult systems, as needed, e.g., the Department of Behavioral Health, the Department on Disability Services, or any equivalent agency in any other jurisdiction.</p> <p>7. Ensuring that every youth who has participated in the E\$CROW program prior to transitioning from care receives a Transition Care Package, which comprises gift cards for basic household essentials, up to the value of \$1000 (see OYE POM.)</p> <p>8. Facilitating seamless continuation of Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income coverage, as applicable and in accordance with the jurisdiction of a youth’s residence</p> <p>9. Requesting a consumer credit report on behalf of youth between 15 and 17 years old, and facilitating requests for youth age 18 and older (See administrative issuance CFSA-12-12 Protecting Children in Care from Identity Theft.)</p>
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	<p>10. Partnering with a youth’s attorney to facilitate expungement (as appropriate) of any juvenile justice record for any youth on the social worker’s caseload</p> <p>11. Ensuring that prior to exiting the child welfare system every youth receives all of their personal, identifying, legal documents (e.g., birth certificate, Social Security card, Medicaid card, school records, and any other relevant documents)</p>
	<p>Procedure F: Aftercare Services</p> <p>To secure a safe and self-sufficient future, youth must have the support of family and community. Youth also frequently need the additional support of aftercare services. Social workers are therefore expected to ensure that referrals for any appropriate aftercare services have been submitted in a timely fashion (as indicated below) and completed prior to a youth exiting the foster care system.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The youth’s case-managing social worker is expected to refer the youth for aftercare services when a youth is 19½ years old. 2. Through CFSA’s contracted partnerships with the HFTC Collaboratives, and through contracted services from CASA for Children of DC, youth are eligible for the following services for 2 calendar years after the youth’s exit from foster care to permanency: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance in the search for stable housing b. Aftercare case management c. Employment and vocational guidance, including referrals d. Ongoing life skills development e. Guidance for accessing public services f. Parenting classes and daycare vouchers for those with dependents g. Transition to adult systems as needed, e.g., DBH, DDS, or any equivalent agency in any other jurisdiction 3. Youth who decline aftercare services can still reconsider participation within 2 years of their 21st birthday and remain eligible for services by re-opening their aftercare cases in the following ways: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The youth contacts the previously-assigned aftercare provider to indicate reconsideration, at which point the provider will re-open the case. b. The youth contacts OYE directly, which ensures that the youth is re-linked with their previously-assigned aftercare provider, as appropriate. 4. To prevent duplication of services from more than one agency, qualifying youth with moderate to severe developmental disabilities should receive direct comprehensive case-management services through DDS.

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	<p>5. Only the Agency’s director can vet and approve Rapid Housing assistance for youth who meet one or more of the following eligibility criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstration of progressive maturity, and achievement of self-sufficiency goals as outlined in the youth’s transition plan b. Part-time employment if currently enrolled in an academic or vocational program c. Full-time employment if not enrolled in an academic or vocational program d. Submission of the Rapid Housing application no later than 90 days prior to the youth’s transition from care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all youth who were once in care, applications can be submitted until age 23.
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