


POLICY TITLE: Youth Personal Allowance		PAGE 1 OF 5
	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY Approved by: <u>Brenda Donald</u> Agency Director Date: <u>October 30, 2013</u>	REVISION HISTORY:
	LATEST REVISION: October 30, 2013	

I. AUTHORITY	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency 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, Chapters 60 and 62 of Title 29 of the DC Municipal Regulations, and the <i>LaShawn A. v. Gray Implementation and Exit Plan</i> .
II. APPLICABILITY	All CFSA staff, contract agency personnel.
III. RATIONALE	The Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) is committed to preparing youth in foster care for the often challenging transition to adulthood. To ensure proper preparation and quality support to youth learning to become self-sufficient, CFSA works to help youth develop vital financial management skills while in care. To this end, CFSA outlines the requirements for youth in out-of-home care to receive a personal allowance for their own personal use.
IV. POLICY	It is the policy of CFSA to provide a personal allowance to youth ages 15 up until age 21. The youth must be placed in a foster home or congregate care facility for a minimum of 30 consecutive days to receive a personal allowance for their personal use. Allowances are distributed to youth by the placement resource provider (i.e., resource parents or group home operators). Resource providers are expected to provide daily guidance and coaching to youth regarding how to manage their allowance to help reinforce financial management and budgeting skills. Funds for the allowance are included in the existing contractual or otherwise CFSA-approved foster care board payment. Social workers are expected to inform youth and resource providers on their case load that there is a policy regarding personal allowances.
V. CONTENTS	A. General Requirements of the Personal Allowance B. Distribution, Monitoring and Tracking of Allowances C. Suspension of Allowances D. Complaints and Grievances
VI. PROCEDURES	Procedure A: General Requirements of the Personal Allowance All youth ages 15 up to 21 who are placed in a foster home or congregate care facility, for a minimum of 30 consecutive days, shall receive a personal allowance of \$100 by their resource provider for the purchase of discretionary items and services, and for learning money management skills. <i>Note: allowance funds cannot be used to cover the youth's basic necessities (such as basic clothing, school supplies, and toiletries), which are covered by a portion of the resource provider's board and care rate.</i>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be eligible to receive a personal allowance, the youth shall satisfy the following criteria on a monthly basis: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. No unexcused absences or excessive lateness (to be determined by the resource provider and the school attendance policy) b. No new involvement in the juvenile justice or penal system, and no non-compliance with on-going requirements set forth by the youth's current involvement in the juvenile justice system or penal system c. No curfew violations (as determined by the resource provider) d. No abscondences (<i>see the Agency's policy on Missing or Absconded Children for more information</i>) e. Attendance at the Financial Literacy Trainings required by CFSA f. During the 30 days preceding allowance payment, no inappropriate use of allowance payments, as described in Procedure B:7 2. The resource provider shall ensure that the youth satisfies the eligibility criteria on a monthly basis in order to receive an allowance. 3. If the youth does not satisfy the eligibility criteria, the resource provider shall suspend the allowance payment for up to a month (<i>see Procedure C: Suspension of Allowances</i>). <i>Note: a youth's allowance may be suspended for periods exceeding a month under certain circumstances (see Procedure C: 2 for more information).</i> 4. The youth shall develop a budget with input from the social worker and resource provider, addressing the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Amount of money to be saved b. Amount of money to be spent c. Financial goals 5. Throughout the youth's placement, the resource provider shall provide daily guidance and coaching to the youth regarding how to manage their allowance to help reinforce financial management and budgeting skills. 6. If a youth does not have the mental capacity (as determined by a mental diagnosis) or emotional maturity level (as determined by the case management team, including the youth) to manage his or her allowance, the social worker shall meet with the youth and resource provider to develop an appropriate disbursement and management plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social worker shall document the youth's inability to receive an allowance on a monthly basis and the alternative disbursement plan in FACES.NET.
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Procedure B: Distribution, Monitoring and Tracking of Allowances

As noted above, it is the responsibility of the youth's resource provider to provide the youth with his or her personal allowance.

1. The resource provider may distribute the allowance on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis, in accordance with the resource provider's household practice or facility's standards, so long as the youth receives at least \$100.00 on a monthly basis (e.g., \$25 per week or \$50 every 2 weeks).
 - a. The resource provider shall inform the social worker and the youth of the distribution schedule.
 - b. The social worker shall document the distribution schedule in FACES.NET.
2. When distributing the personal allowance, the resource provider shall ensure that the youth satisfies the eligibility criteria on a monthly basis (see *Procedure A: 1 above*) in order to receive an allowance.
3. The resource provider and social worker shall ensure that the youth understands the personal allowance eligibility criteria and the parameters around the disbursement of this money.
4. The social worker, the resource provider, and the youth shall meet on an on-going basis to discuss the following allowance-related items:
 - a. Distribution and receipt of the personal allowance
 - b. Expectations on how the money is spent
 - c. Review of the youth's ability to develop and maintain a budget
5. The resource provider shall maintain accurate records of all allowance distributions for purposes of monitoring and/or auditing. At a minimum, the following information shall be documented at the time the allowance is distributed:
 - a. Name of the youth
 - b. Date that the allowance was distributed or suspended
 - c. The amount distributed
 - d. Manner in which the allowance was distributed
 - e. Signature of the resource parent or group home provider who distributes the allowance
 - f. Youth's signature upon receipt
 - The youth's signature requirement is dependent upon the youth's age and developmental capacity.

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	<p>6. In instances where the youth requests that the resource provider use the youth's allowance to purchase items on behalf of the youth, the resource provider shall keep receipts of the items purchased and furnish the receipts upon request.</p> <p>7. A resource provider is required to report any knowledge of a youth's inappropriate use of allowances or mismanagement of funds to the social worker or appropriate CFSA or contracted agency staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate use may include but is not limited to the following examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Purchasing illegal substances (e.g., drugs and alcohol) ii. Engaging in any illegal activity iii. Aiding and/or abetting in any illegal activity <p><i>Note: for more detailed information on reporting illegal activities of youth, see Administrative Issuance CFSA-12-01 Unusual Incidents Related to Children and Youth.</i></p> <p>8. In instances where a resource provider or social worker suspects inappropriate use of the allowance or the mismanagement of funds, the youth may be required to submit monthly receipts to verify allowance purchases.</p> <p>9. If any allegations surface regarding a resource provider's failure to distribute allowances, or a youth's continuous inappropriate use of allowance funds, the ongoing social worker shall immediately document the allegations in FACES.NET and follow up with the youth and resource provider to address all concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an allegation of failure to pay allowance is substantiated, the resource provider shall provide the youth with the full amount owed.
	<p>Procedure C: Suspension of Allowances</p> <p>1. A resource provider may suspend the youth's personal allowance for up to a month if the eligibility criteria (<i>see Procedure A:1</i>) is not satisfied on a monthly basis.</p> <p>2. A youth's personal allowance shall be automatically suspended for periods that may exceed a month under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The youth is incarcerated. b. The youth is no longer connected to an approved CFSA placement. c. The youth engages in continuous inappropriate use of his or her allowance. Inappropriate use includes using the allowance for the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Purchasing illegal substances (e.g., drugs and alcohol) ii. Engaging in any illegal activity iii. Aiding or abetting in any illegal activity

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. When an allowance is suspended, the resource provider shall complete the following tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inform the youth that he or she will not receive an allowance for the following month and specify the reason(s). b. Document the date of the suspension, the amount of funds withheld, and the reason(s) for the suspension. <i>(See Procedure B:5 above regarding documentation of allowances for more information.)</i> c. Notify the social worker of the suspension and specify the reason(s). 4. The social worker shall document in FACES.NET all notices indicating that the youth's allowance has been suspended. 5. The resource parent may reinstate a personal allowance that was suspended for inappropriate use with the approval of the social worker. 6. The resource provider shall not suspend or withhold the youth's personal allowance as a method of punishment or discipline.
	<p>Procedure D: Complaints and Grievances</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social workers shall inform youth and resource parents on their case load of the procedures outlined in this policy for complaints and grievances. 2. If a youth has a grievance regarding the receipt or suspension of a personal allowance, he or she may contact his or her social worker for review and resolution. 3. If the youth contacts the social worker, he or she shall review the concern and make a determination to be documented in the youth's case record within 5 business days of receipt of the complaint. 4. If the youth is not satisfied with the determination of the social worker, he or she may contact the youth ombudsman to have his or her grievance elevated up the social worker's chain of command, up to the deputy director of program operations or the private agency program director, or their designees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth should elevate grievances to the youth ombudsman no later than 30 calendar days after informing the social worker of his or her concern. 5. Any determination made by the deputy director or program director shall be final.

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