

SYSTEMS OF CARE

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SYSTEM PROFILE: FOSTER YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATING PROGRAM*

A foster youth enters a school district or charter school foster youth services program at a school through referral by a county child welfare agency or probation department for all open court cases. Each local educational agency is required to designate a foster youth educational liaison which:

- Facilitates the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.
- Assists foster children when transferring from one school to another school in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records, and grades.
- Provides the foster child and the person holding the right to make educational decisions for the foster child with a written explanation stating placement recommendations.
- May notify a foster child's attorney concerning possible expulsion.

The foster youth liaison is supported by the Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP) coordinators. These coordinators develop memoranda of understanding among the county child welfare, education, and probation agencies to articulate procedures to promote school stability for foster youth. The coordinators provide direct support to the liaison when students transfer between school districts and counties.

*This document provides a summary of the Foster Youth Services System. It is not an exhaustive review of all relevant legal authorities and does not constitute legal advice.

OVERVIEW

Our goal is simple: our programs must meet the needs of the children and youth we serve. These are our collective children, and they all deserve the very best.

We recognize that it is our obligation to ensure that the services we are providing are coordinated, timely, and trauma-informed. We must come together as one government to break down silos and build a culture that is focused on delivering services that are person-centered and not program-centered.

PURPOSE

As a resource to state, county, and local staff, we developed system profiles that provide an overview of the services offered by our various systems that all serve children and youth.

This is our compendium of resources available to children and youth served by are various systems. The system profiles outline how eligibility is determined, what the denial appeal processes entail, how the system interacts with other systems or programs, how information is shared, and how referrals are made

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ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Foster youth are eligible for services when the child welfare agency identifies the child as a foster youth.

For foster youth direct services, the definition of foster youth includes all open cases for minor and non-minor foster youth, including temporary custody, dependent of the court, ward of the court, and recommendation of a probation department. Since the Local Control Funding Formula definition of foster youth extends to minor and non-minor foster youth in transition jurisdiction of the juvenile court, the school district liaison and FYSCP also provides support to these identified youth.

DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY

The direct services for foster youth are administered at the local educational agency (LEA) level. This includes providing support to place the foster youth in the least restrictive educational setting and to ensure educational stability for the youth. It also includes support for foster youth rights. The foster youth liaison provides a written explanation stating placement recommendations to the foster youth and education rights holder. This includes access to academic resources, extracurricular, and enrichment opportunities. The educational liaison, child welfare agency or probation representative, and educational rights holder meet to discuss the placement recommendations. Ultimately, the person holding the right to make educational decisions has the final decision concerning placement for the youth.

APPEAL PROCESS

If a foster youth or educational rights holder disagrees with the recommendations for placement, an appeal can be filed with the school district superintendent or charter school administrator. After the school district superintendent or charter school administrator review the educational liaison recommendations and wishes of the person holding the right to make educational decisions a decision is made, which is a recommendation to the educational rights holder. If the educational rights holder chooses to further appeal the recommendation, they may file a Uniform Complaints Procedure with the California Department of Education.

PROGRAM INTERACTIONS

Medi-Cal Managed Care – Some LEAs have a working relationship with Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans.

Child Welfare Services – Provides services to Foster Youth. Several counties have child welfare services staff collocated at the county office of education. The agencies split the cost of the staff members. The staff provide services and data gathering procedures.

INFORMATION SHARING

The FYSCPs establish Executive Advisory Councils (EACs) which develop data sharing agreements. This is usually done through interagency agreements or memoranda of understanding. Most counties have either completed or are in the process of completing these agreements for information sharing. About 80 percent of the FYSCPs use Foster Focus, a comprehensive

data tool which combines state level information from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System, the CWS/CMS Child Welfare and Probation, district data, and manual entry. All county agencies are able to access this data, based on their need to see specific data.

REFERRALS

The EACs discuss case management systems among county agencies. About 80% use Foster Focus, created by the Sacramento County Office of Education. Others use various systems, such as the Aries Client Services Systems. The county agencies discuss student referrals during their EAC meetings regarding appropriate placement and appropriate services.

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Our Systems of Care work has been accelerated by the implementation of Assembly Bill 2083 (Chapter 815, Statutes of 2018), which requires each county to develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various local entities that serve children and youth in foster care who have experienced severe trauma.

The legislation is focused on the child welfare system, but can and must be expanded to look at children and youth served by various other systems.

The legislation calls for the establishment of a Joint Interagency Resolution Team to provide guidance, support, and technical assistance to counties with regard to trauma-informed care to foster children and youth.

We have identified the mission of the State Restitution Team to include

1. Promoting collaboration and communication across systems to meet the needs of children, youth and families;
2. Resolving timely access to trauma-informed services for children and youth; and
3. Resolving technical assistance requests by counties and partner agencies, as requested, to meet the needs of children and youth.

For additional system profiles, including mental health services, rehabilitation services, developmental services and education services, please visit our website at www.chhs.ca.gov.