

TURNING 21?

DCFS CAN STILL HELP.



The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has good news regarding housing, healthcare and financial assistance for youth in care after they turn 21. Until further notice, youth beyond the age of 21 can remain in their current placement or return to DCFS care, with no reduction of financial or healthcare benefits, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OPTION 1: Elect to remain in care upon turning age 21

Youth can remain in their department approved placement for up to 12 months or through September 30, 2021, whichever occurs first. If you are moving to final living arrangements, you can seek cash assistance through the Youth Housing Assistance Program for security deposit, rent, utilities, furniture, household items and other needs.

OPTION 2: Request re-entry and receive a Re-Entry Alternative Contract (RAC)

Youth over the age of 18 whose case has closed since January 27, 2020 and who have not yet turned 22 can receive a monthly stipend of \$312 from DCFS until their 22nd birthday. Referrals for community resources, healthcare and housing assistance/advocacy are provided.

Requirements – The youth must:

- Be a former youth in care who aged out after January 27, 2020
- Participate in RAC meetings via Zoom to update transition plan, connect to resources and reengage with DCFS supports
- Submit a copy of photo identification (driver's license, state identification card, school or employment identification)
- Provide a valid address, phone number and email address

These services are available to youth regardless of which option is chosen:

Family Advocacy Centers Alumni Services can help youth:

- Get a copy of important documents, including a birth certificate, Social Security card and medical records;
- Get a state identification card or a driver's license;
- With transportation to a job or training program;
- Connect to community-based adult services to receive needed support; and with housing referrals and application.
- To find a Family Advocacy Center, visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/brighterfutures/Pages/FAC.aspx>

Youth Housing Assistance Program (YHAP):

- Youth between the ages of 21 and not yet 27 remain eligible for all services provided by YHAP as described in DCFS Procedures 302-Appendix M until 10/1/21 regardless of whether the youth's case is open or closed.
- YHAP provides a housing advocate who will work with the youth to obtain and maintain adequate housing.
- Youth Cash Assistance Program: Provides funding to purchase items needed to obtain or maintain adequate housing, such as security deposits, rent and utility arrears, furniture and basic household items.
- Youth Housing Subsidy: Provides up to \$500 to the agency or person from whom the youth rents an apartment each month, until 10/1/21. A housing advocate will work with the youth to determine the amount of the monthly subsidy.

Questions?
Contact your caseworker or call the Youth Hotline toll-free at 866.459.6884
www2.illinois.gov/DCFS

Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services