

A HANDBOOK FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

How to maneuver your way through foster care, understand what is happening, and get what you need.



STATE OF MICHIGAN

Department of Human Services

The purpose of this handbook is to help you:

- Understand what is happening.
- Know who people are and what they are supposed to do.
- Know what documents are available and their purpose.
- Maneuver your way through foster care.
- Get what you need.

We hope you read it when you first come in to foster care and keep it with you as your journey continues.

This handbook is modified from “A Parent’s Guide To Child Protective Processes” by the Office of Children’s Ombudsman, and Children’s Charter of the Courts of Michigan, Inc. The modified version was developed in collaboration with the Department of Human Services, the Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) and MYOI Youth Boards. Special thanks to Bay County Youth Board.

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Key People Involved

When you are in foster care there are many people involved in making sure you are safe and your family meets their goals so you can return home. The list below tells you who are the key people involved in your family's plan.



Children's Protective Services (CPS)

Worker: The CPS worker is the person who investigated a report of abuse and/or neglect. The CPS worker assessed your safety and made a recommendation to the court on whether it was safe for you to remain at home or enter foster care.

Foster Care Worker: The foster care worker is also called a caseworker. Caseworkers are from either the Department of Human Services (DHS) or a private foster care agency and are assigned to work with you and your family. The caseworker works with you and your family to develop a service plan for your family to be reunited or for you to find a safe and permanent family. Your caseworker visits with you, your parent(s) and/or siblings, attends court hearings, reports on your family's progress and makes recommendations to the court about what should happen next.

Judge or Referee: A judge or referee is the person who conducts court hearings. At each hearing the judge or referee listens to the information and evidence presented, makes decisions about where you are living, what goals your parents are meeting and what the next steps should be. The judge will:

- Decide if there is a risk of harm to the level that you have to be removed from your parents' care.
- Decide parenting time. Parenting time is the time you spend visiting with your parents when you are in foster care. The court decides how often and how much time your parent(s) and/or family members get to spend with you while you are in foster care.
- Review your family's progress on the service plan.

- Order your parent(s) to comply with the service plan.
- Decide if you can return home.
- Decide if you need another permanency plan.

Prosecutor/Assistant Attorney General: The prosecutor or assistant attorney general is an attorney who represents the state and/or DHS at court hearings.

Lawyer-Guardian Ad Litem (LGAL): The LGAL is the person who represents you and your best interests. He/she is responsible for:

- Talking to you and others about your needs and sharing that information in court.
- Telling the court what he/she thinks is best for you.
- Telling the court what your wishes are.
- Explaining to you what is happening in court.
- Attending all court hearings.
- Visiting you before each hearing.
- Making sure you are getting the services listed in the Case Service Plan and/or ordered by the court.

Foster Parents: Foster parents are licensed by the state of Michigan to take care of you while you are in foster care. Foster parents may be single or married. Your caseworker includes your foster parents in discussions about you and your family's needs and progress on meeting the goals in the service plan.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)*: The CASA is a trained volunteer who makes recommendations to the court about your best interests. He/she asks you about how you are doing in your placement, school, and other services that are provided such as counseling. The CASA shares your updates with the court to ensure that your strengths and challenges are shared with the court.

Permanency Planning Conference (PPC) Facilitator*: The PPC facilitator coordinates Permanency Planning Conferences. The facilitator makes sure you, your family and other supportive people are at the PPC meetings to discuss your placement, set goals, and discuss how goals will be met.

Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI) Coordinator*: The MYOI coordinator is responsible for managing the county's youth board and financial literacy training. The coordinator is a resource for older youth in care who may provide trainings in education, employment, housing, health and community engagement.

Education Planner*: An education planner is a DHS staff person who assists you and your worker in creating a plan to help you do well in school, have the educational services you need, graduate on time and have a plan for college or vocational school.

Youth Advocate*: A youth advocate is a young person who has been in foster care and is trained to assist his/her peers in understanding and participating in Permanency Planning Conferences.

* These positions may not be available in all counties.

How Did I Get Here?

Being in foster care does not mean you did anything wrong or are guilty of anything.

A Children's Protective Services (CPS) worker of the Department of Human Services (DHS) went to court after investigating your family for a complaint of abuse or neglect. If you are in foster care, it means a judge or referee decided it was necessary to place you in foster care because he/she was concerned about your safety.

If it was an emergency situation, you may have been removed from your home by a police officer, or by a CPS worker, with court approval. The ability for you to return home depends on your parent's or caregiver's ability to provide a safe environment.

What Is Foster Care?

When you are in foster care you do not live with your parents. Foster care exists so kids and youth can be safe until their parents are able to provide a safe home again. Where youth are placed depends on their needs. Your caseworker tries to find a placement that can be a home for you and your siblings in or close to your neighborhood. It is important that you tell your worker about family or friends that may provide a good home or be a support for you. The most common types of placements are listed below:



Relative/Kinship Care: A relative/kinship placement is a home where you live with a relative, such as a grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin. This type of care is the preferred type of placement your caseworker will try to find for you.

Foster Home: A foster home is a family home licensed by the state of Michigan. A licensed home means the foster parents have attended foster parent training, and their house is considered safe and appropriate for you. A foster home is usually the next type of placement your caseworker will try and find for you if a relative/kinship placement is not available.

Residential Care: A residential placement is where multiple youths live and are cared for by a staff of trained professionals. Residential placement is available for youths with behavioral concerns who need specific treatment. The goal of residential care is to provide treatment so the youth can move back to a community placement.

Pre-Adoptive Placement: A pre-adoptive placement is a home where the parents are committed to adopting you. Children and youths are sometimes adopted by other family members, friends or foster parents. Adoption does not mean you have to change

your name or lose contact with your siblings and family. It means you have a lifelong committed family. You should talk to your caseworker and pre-adoptive parents if you have these questions.

Independent Living: An independent living placement is when a young person has his/her own apartment or lives in someone's home and pays rent. Independent living is primarily for youth ages 18 – 20 who are in school or working full time.

When you are in foster care, your caseworker establishes a permanency goal for you based on your long-term plan. The preferred permanency goal is:

- **Reunification** – going back to live with your parents.

If you cannot return home to live with your parents, the permanency goal may be:

- **Adoption** – having a family take legal responsibility for you as their child.
- **Guardianship** – going to live with someone who is appointed by the court to take care of you, such as a family member, friend or other supportive adult.
- **Permanent placement with a fit and willing relative** – living with a relative who has committed to take care of you but is not legally your guardian.
- **Placement in another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA)** – living in a foster home or in your own apartment.

Visits and Meetings

If you are in foster care, you are not living with your parent(s) and you may or may not be living with some or all of your siblings. Even though you are not living with your family, it is still important that you keep a strong and



healthy relationship with them. Therefore, visits are scheduled to make sure you spend time together as a family.

Family Visits: Parenting and sibling time, also called visitation, is very important for you and your family. A visit may happen at a DHS office, restaurant or at a home. You and your family can spend time together during visitations and it may be monitored by agency staff. Visit time can be emotional for everyone and may be difficult for you and your family. Some common emotions youth have expressed related to family visits include: happiness, anger, sadness, fear, relief, anxiety and guilt. All of these emotions are valid, and you shouldn't feel bad about them because they are common feelings for young people in your situation. The court decides how often your parents can visit you, but you are entitled to visit with your brothers and/or sisters.



Remember, visits offer you and your family time together and reassurance. For the agency, visits provide an opportunity to see how the family communicates and interacts with each other.

Visits with your caseworker or family may produce different feelings such as excitement, anger, anxiety or stress. Here are ways to help you deal with the emotions you might feel about visits:

- Know intense feelings are normal and should be expected.
- Find a trusting person to talk to about how you feel.
- Go somewhere private and scream or cry.
- Write about how you feel.
- Find out details about the visit such as when and where it will be held and who will be there.
- Expect visits may be difficult for your parents. They may act differently when being observed visiting their kids in such odd circumstances.

- Discuss how you feel with your parents during a visit.
- Talk to your LGAL or caseworker.

Caseworker Visits: When you are first placed out of your home, the caseworker sees you at least two times within the month. After the first month, the caseworker visits you monthly, with a visit at your foster home placement occurring at least every other month. Other visits may happen at school or other settings. The caseworker also makes unannounced visits quarterly. The caseworker should make time to talk to you alone. Visits are one way to ensure your safety and to talk to you about how things are going.

Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC): PPCs were formerly called Team Decision Making meetings. The PPC happens when there is a change in your placement or permanency goal. The meeting may be facilitated by a permanency planning facilitator, instead of your caseworker. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that your placement is a safe and supportive environment and that all of the people involved in your case are a part of the decision making process.

The PPC is an opportunity for you to voice your concerns and requests as they relate to your plan. Your worker needs to know what your opinions are so the best decisions can be made for your future. You are also allowed to invite supportive people to this meeting. An open and honest conversation is encouraged, so come prepared to openly discuss your situation and express your needs and wants.

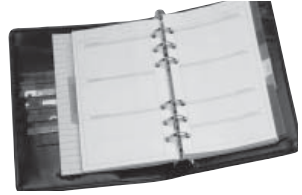
Annual Transition Meeting: Beginning at age 16, an annual transition meeting must be held to discuss your permanency goal and identify supportive adults. If a youth enters care after his/her 16th birthday, the annual transition meeting must be held within 30 days of entering care.

At the meeting you discuss areas including housing, education, employment, transportation, financial management skills, emotional/mental/physical health, substance abuse and other areas that may impact you in successfully transitioning out of foster care. More information can be found in the Service Plan section below.

90-Day Discharge Meeting: The 90-day discharge meeting must occur no later than 90 days prior to a youth's exit from care. A 90-day discharge plan is developed during a discharge meeting. More information can be found in the Service Plan section below.

Service Plans and Stuff Like That

Plans for you and your family are written and updated while you are in foster care. The case service plans keep track of the work the caseworker does and the progress made on the goals set with the youth and the parent(s). The case file is the file that contains all foster care reports about contacts, visits and services provided to the family. It includes the Initial Service Plan, the Updated Service Plan, and the Parent Agency Treatment Plan and Service Agreement. Below are descriptions of what these terms mean:



Initial Service Plan (ISP): The Initial Service Plan is a report written by the foster care worker that includes information about you, your family and your parent(s). It identifies the services needed to bring your family back together.

Updated Service Plans (USP): The Updated Service Plan is a report written by the caseworker every 90 days. It includes updated information about you and your family, the progress made toward achieving the permanency goal, recommendations about services, and ongoing planning for you.

Parent-Agency Treatment Plan and Service Agreement: The Parent-Agency Treatment Plan and Service Agreement is developed by the caseworker, parent(s) and youth. The Parent-Agency Treatment Plan also lists the services that are provided to you and who is responsible to provide them. If the goal is for you to return home, the plan will outline what your parent(s) and your worker must do to make the home and living situation safe for you. If the goal is for you to return home, the plan will include:

- Recommended services for your parents and you.

- Actions your parent(s) must take before you can return home.
- Actions your foster care worker must take.
- Parenting time, expectations and arrangements. Parenting time is when you visit with your parents.

The court reviews the plan and makes changes as needed. The court ensures the plan addresses the following areas as they relate to your family:

- Housing.
- Employment.
- Mental health counseling.
- Substance abuse treatment.
- Parenting classes.

90-Day Discharge Plan: Each youth transitioning out of foster care at the age of 18 or older must have a 90-day Discharge Plan. If a case is closed unexpectedly, a discharge meeting must still occur within 30 days of case closure. The discharge plan must be youth-driven. The plan must be completed to address:

- Housing.
- Health insurance.
- Education.
- Mentors/supportive adults.
- Continuing support services.
- Workforce/employment services.

Annual Transition Plan: The Annual Transition Plan identifies the tasks and goals for you to transition to adulthood successfully. The plan is developed at the annual transition meeting and is recorded on a DHS form called the Annual Transition Plan.



Court Hearings

Court hearings play a critical role in foster care. The court hearing is the time when you, the caseworker, your parent(s), and the lawyers meet with a judge to review the progress on your family's goals and determine the next steps. You have the right to attend the court hearing and meet with your LGAL. It may feel intimidating to be in court with lawyers and judges. But it is important for your voice to be heard; they need to know how you feel. The different types of court hearings are described below.

Preliminary Hearing: The preliminary hearing is typically held prior to the removal from your home. It is required to happen within 24 hours of the removal. The judge or referee tells your parent(s) why you were removed and why a petition was filed by CPS. If your parent(s) deny the allegations, the case proceeds to a trial. Your parent(s) will be advised of their right to have an attorney. An attorney will be appointed if they cannot afford to hire one themselves.

Pre-Trial Hearing: The court may choose to have a pre-trial hearing before the actual trial. At this hearing, the attorneys give the court a list of people who may testify as witnesses for your parent(s) or DHS at the trial. A date for the trial is usually scheduled at this time. In some cases, the parents admit to the allegations or plead "no contest," in which case a full hearing is not necessary.

Adjudication Hearing or Trial: Adjudication is the legal process when a judge reviews evidence from opposing parties so he/she can come to a decision that determines rights and obligations between the parties involved. An adjudication hearing must occur no later than 63 days after you are removed from your parent's care. Evidence is presented to the court, and witnesses will testify and be cross-examined. Sometimes, it is during this hearing that parents admit to the allegations or plead "no contest," in which case a full hearing is not necessary.

Other times, parents tell the court they have done nothing wrong. In that case, the case goes to trial. At the conclusion of the trial, the court decides whether you should stay in foster care or be returned to your parent's care.

Dispositional Hearing: The dispositional hearing must occur within 35 days after the adjudication hearing. At this hearing, the court orders your parent(s) to achieve certain goals so you can safely return home. Your caseworker recommends services for your parents which are outlined in a Parent-Agency Treatment Plan and Service Agreement.

In certain cases, DHS may seek termination of parental rights at the beginning of your case. If so, termination of parental rights may occur at this hearing.

Review Hearing: Review hearings take place at least every 91 days after the dispositional hearing, for as long as you remain in care. At each hearing, the court reviews your parent's progress. The court then decides whether you should return home or stay in foster care. You have the right to attend and voice your opinion to the court. The court also monitors your adjustment to foster care and checks to see that your health, educational and social needs are met.

Permanency Planning Hearing: The permanency planning hearing must occur no later than one year after you were removed from your parent's care. The purpose is to:

- Determine a permanency goal for your future.
- Decide if you can safely return home.
- Decide if you will remain in foster care.
- Decide if it is necessary to begin the process to terminate your parent's parental rights.

Termination Hearing: "Termination" means a parent's rights to parent his/her child will be ended permanently. If a legal petition has been filed to end parental rights, the court holds a termination

hearing or trial. Evidence is presented to the court, and the judge decides whether there is enough evidence to terminate your parent's parental rights. The court considers your best interest when deciding whether or not to terminate parental rights.

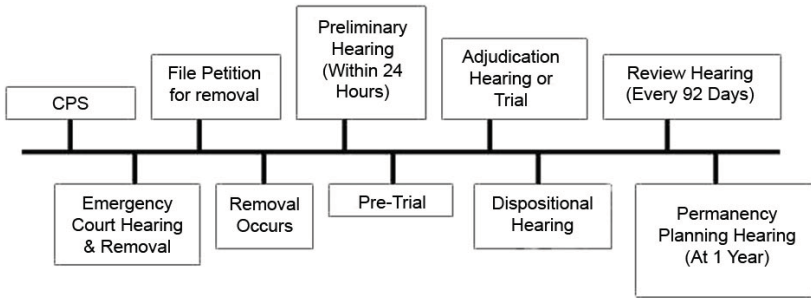
Voluntary Release: Your parent(s) may decide they cannot provide a safe home and/or situation for you. If this is the case, your parents may voluntarily release their parental rights. If they do, a full termination trial will not be held.

Tips for Going to Court

Court rooms are formal and professional, and it may be a new experience for you. It may be intimidating. There are also a lot of rules when you go to court. Below are some tips to help you feel more comfortable and prepared for court.

- Wear clean clothes.
- Leave food and drinks outside.
- Take off your hat inside the courtroom.
- Ask your attorney questions.
- Address the judge as "Your Honor".
- Answer questions honestly.
- Use respectful language.
- Do not chew gum.
- Do not bring cell phones or pagers into the courtroom even if they are turned off.

Timeline for Court Hearings



Planning for the Future

If you have an open foster care case it may be continued until you reach age 20. Some young people want their case closed at age 18, but keeping your case open until age 20 has its advantages. There are more financial and emotional supports available to young people who have an open foster care case.

As you prepare for the future and transition into adulthood you must think about what skills you need and who you can count on for support. Having a lifelong committed adult in your life eases your transition into adulthood and provides you with someone to ask questions to, celebrate successes with and lean on for support when stressors occur throughout life. People lean on their supportive family for things such as:

- Celebrating graduations, birthdays or weddings.
- Advising on relationships, housing troubles and decision-making.
- Listening and talking about daily life.

You should also think about skills and goals you have as they relate to housing, education, employment, and health and community connections. The types of things you will want to consider are below.

Life skills: You need to know:

- Laundry.
- Housing cleaning and safety.
- Money management and banking.
- Grocery shopping, cooking, and nutrition.
- Organization for taxes, bills, other files, and appointments.



Education: A high school diploma is critical not just if you want to go to college but also for any job opportunity. You should know if you are on track to graduate on time. If you are not, work with your school counselor and/or caseworker to make sure you have a plan to graduate.

In addition to having a plan to graduate high school, you should also have a plan for post-secondary school, such as vocational training, community college, or a four-year university. Extra-curricular activities such as volunteer work, sports, creative arts, theatre, or student council, are also good ways to increase your chances of acceptance into post-secondary education. There are financial resources available specifically for foster youth. See the “Services and Resources” section of this handbook or ask your caseworker for more details.

Employment: As you think about leaving high school you should also think about what type of career you want to have. You need a steady job in order to pay for rent, bills, food and other needs. Think about what type of post-secondary education you need for the career you want. You may also want to think about internships and volunteer experience – these will help build your resume. Work with your school counselor or caseworker to write a resume.

Housing: If you are not reunified with your parents or living with a committed family, you may need to think about what type of housing you will have when your foster care case closes. Some of the things you should consider are:

- Do you know where safe and affordable neighborhoods are located?
- Do you know about rental leases and renter's insurance?
- Do you know about landlord and renter responsibilities?
- Is there someone you know who would be a trustworthy roommate to share expenses so you can save money?
- Have you created a budget that includes all rent, utilities, and food?

Health: Young people are generally healthy. But you still need to have regular physicals and dental appointments. In addition, healthiness is not just physical health. It also includes mental and emotional health. You should start to think about how you plan to take care of yourself as you transition to adulthood. Some things to consider are:

- Do you know about Foster Care Transitional Medicaid?
- Do you know what type of health insurance you have and what it covers?
- Do you have a medical power of attorney?
- Are you ready to schedule your own yearly physicals and dental appointments?
- Do you know how to find doctors, therapists, and emergency rooms?

Community Connections: Community connections are services and programs in your neighborhood that could be a support to you such as: after school programs, community centers, food banks, donation centers, child care agencies, and many more. As you transition into adulthood you should consider the following questions:

- Have you thought about what community connections you need?
- Do you know what community connections are available in your area?
- Do you know how to access those connections?

Rights and Responsibilities

The following is a list of rights and responsibilities for young people in foster care. The two go hand-in-hand. With each right comes a responsibility.

RIGHT	RESPONSIBILITY
To know your rights and how to file a complaint if you feel your rights are being violated.	To know all rights carry with them responsibilities.
To be told why you came into foster care, and why you are still in foster care.	To maintain an open mind toward the foster care process, and understand adults have a responsibility to keep you safe.
To live in a safe, healthy home where you are treated with respect, have a place to keep your things, receive healthy food, adequate clothing, and appropriate personal hygiene products.	To treat care giver(s) and other household members fairly and with respect.
To have personal belongings secure and transported with you.	To treat others' personal belongings with respect.
To have caring foster parents and caregivers who are properly trained, have received background checks, screenings, and adequate support from the agency to help ensure stability in your placement.	To be patient and understanding toward other people and speak up if something is wrong.
To be placed in a home with your brothers and sisters when possible, and to maintain regular contact with siblings, when separated (including help with transportation), unless otherwise ordered by the court.	To develop and maintain healthy sibling relationships, and to respect healthy boundaries.

RIGHT	RESPONSIBILITY
To attend school and participate in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment activities.	To reach your full academic ability.
To have your privacy protected and expect confidentiality from the adults involved in your case.	To respect the privacy of others.
To be protected from physical, sexual, emotional or other abuse, including corporal punishment (hitting or spanking as a punishment), or being locked in a room (unless you are in a treatment facility).	To accurately report any violations to your caseworker and to not be involved in the physical, sexual or emotional abuse toward others.
To know what and why your doctor prescribed medications and to refuse to take medications, herbs, and vitamins.	To refrain from using illegal substances or substances that are detrimental to your health.
To have an immediate visit after placement, and to have regular ongoing visits with biological parents or other relatives, unless prohibited by the court. You may also speak to your foster care worker or LGAL about unwanted visits. Visitations may not be cancelled, postponed or denied as a disciplinary measure.	To be on time and ready for visits and to treat family members respectfully.
To make and receive confidential phone calls and to receive unopened mail unless prohibited by caseworker or the court.	To not use the mail or phone to attempt to circumvent the legal system.
To have regular contact with caseworkers, attorneys, and advocates, and be allowed to have confidential conversations with them.	To treat caseworkers, attorneys and advocates with respect.
To be told by your caseworker and your attorney about any changes in your case plan and your placement and receive honest information about the decisions that affect your life.	To be involved in your case and to treat all officers of the court with respect.
To attend religious services of your choice, and to preserve your cultural heritage. If possible, your placement should be with a family member or someone in your community with similar religion, culture, and/or heritage.	To respect caregivers' rights to their religious beliefs and their cultural background.

RIGHT	RESPONSIBILITY
To be represented by an attorney in administrative or judicial proceedings, with access to fair hearings and court reviews of decisions, so your best interests are safeguarded.	To attend court and speak to a judge about what you want to have happen in your case.
To be involved in the development of your case plan and to express your objections to any of the provisions of the case plan during case reviews, court hearings and case planning conferences.	To be actively involved in your case plan and to advocate for your needs.
To have a plan for your future, including a 90 day transitional plan and annual transition plan (for leaving foster care when your case closes), and to be provided services to help you prepare to become a successful adult.	To be actively involved in using these services for your own benefit.

Services and Resources

There are services and resources available to youth in foster care. You may be eligible for the following resources. Talk to your caseworker to determine your eligibility.

McKinney-Vento Act: The McKinney-Vento Act specifically covers children “awaiting foster care placement.” While the act does not define “awaiting foster care placement,” the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Homeless Education Office considers a foster care placement temporary until a child/youth has been in the care of the same foster parent for a minimum of six continuous months. Therefore, a foster child entering out-of-home placement or residing in the same foster care placement for less than six months is eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as transportation to his/her school of origin. There is one McKinney-Vento liaison assigned to each school building.

Michigan Works!: Michigan Works! is an employment agency. The agency can help you obtain job training, interviewing skills and job placement. Your caseworker may refer you for services while you are in foster care. You can also go to the office and

ask for assistance. Make sure you talk to your caseworker about Michigan Works! because it will put you on the right track for getting a job. For more information, go to www.michiganworks.org.

Youth In Transition (YIT): Youth In Transition funding provides services and resources to youth transitioning out of foster care. These funds are intended to help you become a successful adult. YIT funds can be used for things like education, employment, or health. The funds are only available if there is no other way to pay for the services needed. In addition, each county may have different amounts and rules for using YIT funds. You can get more information about YIT by going to www.michigan.gov/fyit.

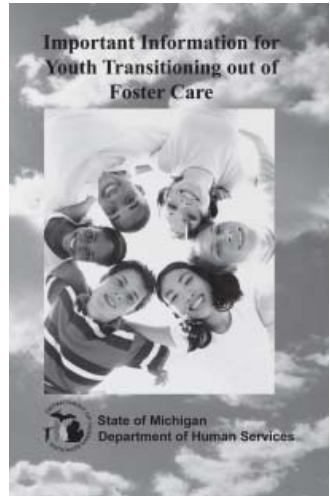
Foster Care Transitional Medicaid (FCTMA): If you were in foster care at the age of 18 you may be eligible for medical coverage through FCTMA until the day you turn 21. If you are 18 or older when your case closes, and you are not returning home, give a friendly reminder to your caseworker to sign you up to receive FCTMA. Caseworkers can begin the process by completing a form called DHS-57. You can also call the FCTMA Message Phone at 877-268-3754.

Education and Training Voucher (ETV): The Education and Training Voucher is a funding source for post-secondary education for youths who have been in foster care. ETVs can help pay for vocational school, community college or a four-year university. You must be enrolled in the ETV program **before** you turn 21! If you are enrolled before 21 you can receive funding until you are 23. You must have your high school diploma or GED and be registered at an accredited school before applying. For more information go to: www.mietv.lssm.org.

Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative (MYOI): MYOI is a program that focuses on financial literacy and youth advocacy. The program provides training on money management, and skills that help you become a successful adult. Local youth boards serve as a support network and are a way to share your voice and thoughts on making the child welfare system better. Right now MYOI is in 26 sites across the state. For more information ask your caseworker and go to www.michigan.gov/fyit.

Important Papers and Documents

Ask your caseworker for the DHS Publication 858, Important Information for Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care. Publication 858 gives you more information on services and funding that are available and where to go for assistance in getting your critical documents. The four most important pieces of documentation are your birth certificate, photo ID, social security card, and green card (if you are not a U.S. citizen). These documents should be given to you by your caseworker or your caseworker should help you get them:



- Birth certificate.
- Photo ID (drivers' license or state ID).
- Green card (only if you are not a U.S. citizen).
- Social security card.

In addition to these documents, you should also have:

- Medical Passport: When your case closes, your caseworker must give you your medical passport. The case worker completes the form called the DHS-221 Medical Passport during the entire time you are in foster care. The Medical Passport includes medical information about your biological mother and father and a record of all your medical care.
- Medicaid Cards including the MI Health card and your Medicaid Health Plan card.
- A written statement from your caseworker indicating when and where you had an open foster care case.
- High school transcripts or proof of GED completion.

Online Resources

www.michigan.gov/fyit – This is the DHS website for youth transitioning out of care.

www.fosterclub.com – This website provides a lot of information and support for youth transitioning out of foster care across the country.

www.jimcaseyyouth.org – The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative leads the way in advocating for older youth in foster care.

Contact Information

Have Need

DHS Worker

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

DHS Manager

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Private Agency Worker

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Private Agency Manager

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Lawyer Guardian Ad Litem

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Court Appointed Special Attorney

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Medical Doctor

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 McKinney-Vento Liaison

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Permanency Planning Facilitator

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative Coordinator

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Educational Planner

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Have Need

 Youth Advocate

Name _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Quantity: 3,000
Cost: \$2,456.28 (.82 ea.)
Authority: DHS Director

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DHS Pub-89 (5-11)