

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>20-098</p>	Subject/Title	Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) Eligibility Exception During COVID-19
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Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

This communication provides information and guidance for enrolling additional youth in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) to provide critical supports during this time. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the eligibility of many youth who wish to enter the YAVFC program due to their inability to meet one of the eligibility requirements, most often in employment. This includes youth who wish to immediately transition to YAVFC as their abuse/neglect case closes and youth who have left foster care and wish to re-enter.

Youth who transitioned from foster care without permanent and supportive adults to rely on may experience instability in their economic, health and housing circumstances. Outreach and engagement with these youth is critical to ensure their needs are met and they are aware of opportunities to re-engage voluntarily with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) for supportive services and financial support through YAVFC.

Funding has been identified to temporarily approve youth to enter YAVFC regardless of their ability to meet the school/employment/volunteer requirements that are typically required. Entry into YAVFC will allow youth to receive services and a pro-rated stipend through September 30, 2020. To be eligible, youth must have been in out-of-home placement on or after their 18th birthday, be under age 21 and currently reside in Michigan.

While the YAVFC case is open, the assigned caseworker should assist the youth with working toward meeting one of the education, employment, or volunteer eligibility requirements by September 30, 2020, so the youth can remain in the program until their 21st birthday. On October 1, 2020, if the youth is not meeting regular eligibility requirements, the 30-day grace period will begin, allowing one month for the youth to meet requirements.

Opening the Case

- If interested in participating in YAVFC, the youth will enter the program with the eligibility type “youth is incapable of doing any part of the employment or educational activities due to a medical condition” with a comment indicating, “due to the COVID-19 health emergency, the youth is considered to be meeting YAVFC eligibility requirements.”
- The youth must sign the DHS-1297, *Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Agreement*, which states they are voluntarily agreeing to enter foster care placement and provides permission for MDHHS to provide supportive services.
 - Payment and services will start on the date the DHS-1297 is signed.
- It is important that outreach occur as soon as possible to invite youth to enter YAVFC as payments cannot be made prior to the date the DHS-1297 is signed and will be pro-rated based on the date of signature.
 - Attachments are provided with activities that need to be taken to invite youth to enroll in YAVFC, tips on locating youth whose foster care case has closed and additional considerations for youth entering YAVFC after case closure.
- Consistent with all YAVFC cases, the case is opened in MiSACWIS as a Legal Status 56, YAVFC, by doing a non-CPS intake.
 - The YAVFC case will be opened in the county of residence, regardless of where the prior case was active.
- A Judicial Best Interest Determination will need to be completed, as well as all other tasks associated with new entries into YAVFC, with case work services being provided to support the youth’s identified needs.

Payment

- Payment to the youth’s placement including independent living (IL) and a private agency foster care (PAFC) administrative rate can be paid until September 30, 2020 under the medical exception eligibility type.
- Payments will be completed through MiSACWIS consistent with a normal YAVFC case.

Notification to Program Office

Program office must be notified through the YAVFC mailbox when a youth is enrolled in YAVFC under this exception at MDHHS-YAVFC@michigan.gov. The email should include:

- The youth’s name.
- The youth’s date of birth.
- The youth’s MiSACWIS person ID.
- The date the DHS-1297 was signed and payments started.
- The agency name if the case is assigned to a PAFC.

Also, please notify program office if the YAVFC case is closed or if the youth begins to meet one of the eligibility requirements and they no longer need the exception. If the youth begins to meet one of the eligibility requirements, update MiSACWIS to reflect this information.

Youth Currently Enrolled

Youth currently enrolled in YAVFC should remain in the program and not enter a grace period if they lose eligibility due to not meeting school, employment, or volunteerism requirements for the month. This exception remains in effect until September 30, 2020. At that time, a youth who does not meet

school, employment, or volunteerism requirements may maintain eligibility by entering a 30-day grace period.

- For youth who have an approved 90-day review, no action needs to be taken.
- A comment should be entered indicating that, “due to the COVID-19 health emergency, the youth is considered to be meeting YAVFC requirements.”
- If a youth enrolled in YAVFC relocates and the stipend is being mailed directly to the youth, the caseworker must update the address in the youth’s profile to ensure no disruption in payment.