



Pathways to Success Milestones of Foster Care

For Pathways Navigators (Adult Stakeholders)

With each birthday, youth and young people become eligible for certain benefits and encounter greater responsibilities. Major milestones, programs and opportunities are highlighted below.

 As you navigate these milestones, pay special attention to green traffic signals  and traffic signs. These mark key resources, opportunities and important times in a young person's case.

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Informal Job Experience

- Youth can start working in a variety of informal jobs like snow shoveling, gardening, delivery of advertising and golf caddying.

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Criminal Charges

- Youth can be charged with a crime in a delinquency case.

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College in Colorado

- Every sixth grade student should be registered for a [CollegeinColorado.org](https://collegeincolorado.org) portfolio, a free online college and career planning website. Young people can store their vital documents and important personal information on the free, secure cloud server.

<https://collegeincolorado.org>

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Consent to Adoption



Youth are required to consent before the court finalizes an adoption.

Adult Charges

- Youth can be charged with a crime as an adult.

Babysitting

- It is permissible for young people to babysit other children under the Colorado Youth Employment Opportunities Act (C.R.S. 8-12-107)



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Financial Aid for School

If a youth was in foster care anytime after turning age 13, the youth can claim independent status on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), which allows them to complete the application without providing their parents' financial information. Young people should identify themselves on question 52 of the FAFSA as having spent time in foster care in order to qualify for the Pell Grant.



Permanency Hearings - All youth MUST be consulted by the court, in an age-appropriate manner, regarding his or her permanency goal. This can be accomplished by preferably bringing the youth to court, having the youth write a letter to the judicial officer, or otherwise discussing permanency with the youth prior to a permanency hearing.

Congressional Youth Award

- Beginning at age 13 ½, youth can be registered for a Congressional Youth Award, a non-competitive, voluntary program designed to recognize youth (ages 14 to 23) who meet their goals in one of four areas: Volunteer Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration.

<http://www.congressionalaward.org/index.php>

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WIA / WIOA (Workforce Development)

Youth are eligible for Workforce Investment Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act employment services through local workforce centers. These services for at-risk youth and young adults (ages 14-21) are aimed at helping them achieve their education and employment goals. Young people should be encouraged to identify themselves as having spent time in foster care as a means of eligibility.

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDLE-EmployTrain/CDLE/1251621078706>

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Chafee Program (While In Foster Care)

Beginning at age 15, a youth qualifies for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program if he or she has been in out-of-home placement for a minimum of six months (need not be consecutive). This includes out-of-home care with non-certified kin when the County DHS maintains legal custody and placement authority. This voluntary program can help youth achieve their goals, learn new skills, and get connected to opportunities, services and supports.



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5****Driver's Permits**

- Youth ages 15 to 15 ½ can obtain a Driver's Education Permit (valid for three years). To do so, youth must have completed the driver's education course (classroom or online) and must have a signed Affidavit of Liability Guardianship (DR 2460). The youth must then complete a 50-hour supervised drive time log.
- Youth ages 15 ½ to 16 can obtain a Driver Awareness Permit (valid for three years). To do so, youth must have completed an approved driver's education program, a 4-hour prequalification driver awareness program, or complete a 30-hour classroom study course. The youth must have a signed Affidavit of Liability Guardianship (DR 2460). The youth must then complete a 50-hour supervised drive time log.

Mental Health Treatment

- Youth age 15 and older may consent to their own mental health treatment services.

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6****Independent Living Plan (ILP)**

The Family Service Plan must contain a description of services and a plan for accomplishing tasks to assist the youth in preparation for self-sufficiency and independent living as early in placement as possible, but no later than sixty calendar days after the youth's 16th birthday. The ILP should be updated annually.

Driver's Permits

- Young people ages 16-21 may obtain a Minor Instruction Permit (valid for three years). If under age 18, the youth must have a signed Affidavit of Liability Guardianship (DR 2460). Youth must hold the permit for a minimum of 12 months before applying for a driver's license. Young people may be enrolled in a driver's education course to gain driving experience.

Governor's Summer Job Hunt

- Youth ages 16-21 are eligible to participate in the Governor's Summer Job Hunt Program, which helps to match young people with full- and part-time employment in clerical, customer service, labor and sales industries.

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDLE-EmployTrain/CDLE/1248095317847>

Chafee Program (Adoption & Guardianship)

- Youth ages 16-21, who meet the requirements for relative guardianship assistance or adoption assistance and entered the guardianship or adoption after their 16th birthday, can qualify for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

Marriage

- Youth under age 16 can marry with the court's consent.





Continuing Jurisdiction

When a youth in out-of-home placement reaches the age of 17, the court shall assess the youth's individual circumstances and determine if the youth will be ready to become independent at age 18 or will need continued care and supervision of the county until age 21 (unless earlier terminated by the court). In doing so, the court shall look to whether the youth is working to complete one of four goals:

- Completing secondary education or equivalent credential;
- Enrolled in a post-secondary or vocational education;
- Participating in a program designed to promote or remove barriers to employment; or
- Employed at least 80 hours per month.

The court should also consider whether the youth has a documented medical condition that makes him or her incapable of engaging in the above activities.

Scholarships

- **Helen McLoraine Scholarship** - This program provides financial assistance for part-time or full-time post-secondary or vocational study for young people under the age of 23, who were in Colorado foster care for a minimum of 24 months (need not be consecutive) between the ages of 13 and 18. Applicants may have emancipated, been adopted at age 15 or older, or be participating in the guardianship assistance program or independent living arrangement.

<http://www.denverfoundation.org/grants/page/scholarships-for-college-students>

- **Boundless Opportunity Scholarships** - These scholarships are available at select two- and four-year colleges and universities in Colorado. Eligibility varies by school but may include young people who have been in foster care or in the juvenile justice system.

<http://www.danielsfund.org/Scholarships/Opportunity/Index.asp#Colorado>

- **Forward Steps' Guardian Scholars Scholarship** - This program provides financial assistance for emancipated foster care youth in Colorado wishing to continue their post-secondary education and apply mostly to students applying to the Community College of Denver.

<http://forwardsteps.org/>

Post-Secondary Education Support Services

- Many Colorado schools provide specialized services and supports for emancipated foster youth and unaccompanied minors. Encourage young people to ask about these programs as they explore their educational options.



Age of Majority

The young person reaches the age of majority and is entitled to most adult rights.

For information on the rights and responsibilities of young people turning 18 visit:

<http://www.cobar.org/index.cfm/ID/20885>

Emancipation Transition Plan (ETP)



The young person, the caseworker, the provider and other members of the team shall jointly develop a detailed, formal emancipation transition plan at least 90 business days prior to the young person's projected emancipation date.

Chafee Program (18–21)

- Young people ages 18-21, who were in out-of-home care on their 18th birthday, can qualify for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

- Young people ages 18-23, who were in out-of-home care on their 18th birthday, can qualify for Educational and Training Vouchers of up to \$5,000 per year.

Young people can apply for an ETV at www.statevoucher.org

Youth Family Unification Housing Vouchers (FUP)

- Young people ages 18-21 are eligible for Youth Family Unification Housing vouchers (FUP) if they are homeless or inadequately housed and were in foster care on or after their 16th birthday. FUP Vouchers provide 18 months of housing assistance.

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- Males ages 18-25, including Unaccompanied Refugee Minors, must register for the selective service within 30 days of their 18th birthday.

Medicaid Health Insurance

- Young people who were in out-of-home placement on their 18th birthday qualify for Former Foster Care Medicaid until age 26 under the Affordable Care Act.

SSI / SSDI

- Young people who have been on Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) prior to turning 18 must be re-determined eligible as an adult. Redetermination of eligibility may begin 90 days prior to the young person leaving foster care.



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Chafee Program

- Eligibility for services through the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program ends.

Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

- Young people who wish to use extended Education and Training Voucher assistance until age 23 must enroll in the program before age 21.

Legal Substance Use

- Young people may legally use alcohol and marijuana in the state of Colorado.

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Youth Family Unification Housing Vouchers (FUP)

- Eligibility to apply for Youth Family Unification Housing Vouchers (FUP) ends.

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Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV)

- Eligibility for extended Educational and Training Voucher assistance ends (if the young person enrolled before age 21).

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Former Foster Care Medicaid

- Eligibility for Former Foster Care Medicaid ends.
- By law the young person must either purchase health insurance apply for Medicaid and meet the eligibility requirements on his or her own. The young person may qualify for a subsidy on health insurance purchased through the Connect for Health Colorado.

<http://connectforhealthco.com/>

Youth of any age can receive access without parental consent to the following:

- Contraception
- STD testing
- Breast and pelvic exams
- Prenatal, delivery, and post-delivery care
- Substance abuse or alcohol treatment

Pathways To Success Milestones of Foster Care developed by:



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ROCKY MOUNTAIN
children's
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Do you have updates or suggestions for future versions of the Pathways to Success Milestones of Foster Care? Contact Brian.Brant@state.co.us