

# Big Bend Community Based Care Policy & Procedure

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<b>Series:</b>	500: Special Populations	
<b>Policy Name:</b>	Independent Living Services	
<b>Policy Number:</b>	509	
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<b>Regulation:</b>	39.701, F.S. 39.6241, F.S. 39.6035, F.S. 39.6251, F.S. 409.1451, F.S. 65C-41, F.A.C. 65C-42, F.A.C. P.L. 111-148, Patient Protection & Affordable Care Act	

## Referenced Documents:

JRSSR for 17 year olds  
JRSSR for APPLA Goals  
BBCBC Transition Plan  
BBCBC Financial Management Needs Assessment Form  
BBCBC Individual Living Agreement  
BBCBC Shared Living Agreement

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## Policy

It is the policy of Big Bend Community Based Care, Inc. (BBCBC), to assure that a full array of Independent Living (IL) services are made available to youth 17 years of age in out-of-home care and eligible young adults formerly in foster care. Services are intended to assist in the development of skills necessary to successfully transition into adulthood. These skills will allow young adults receiving services to build personal responsibility and achieve a greater sense of well-being.

## Procedure

### A. Assessment and Transition Planning.

1. Each youth will participate in a formal independent living skills assessment during the 180-day period after turning 17 years of age and a BBCBC Transition Plan should be developed in accordance with this process.
  - a. The Case Management Organization (CMO) may determine which skills assessment tool that they wish to utilize for the youth that they serve. Life skills assessment tools are available online from organizations such as Daniel Memorial and Ansell-Casey.
  - b. Dependency Case Managers (DCMs) and Independent Living Specialists (ILS) shall utilize the outcome of the life skills assessment tool(s) and incorporate the results into the BBCBC Transition Plan in efforts to determine each youth strengths and needs. This development should assist DCMs, ILS and BBCBC Well-Being Specialists (WBS) in determining and/or guiding youth in most appropriate living arrangements after they turn 18.

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- c. During this process of transition planning, a meeting should occur between the ILS and the youth at a minimum. The WBS or another representative from BBCBC should always be invited to attend. The youth should also invite other caring adults that may be able to assist in the transition to adulthood such as the DCM, guardian ad litem, family member(s) and caregiver(s). In those circumstances where the young adult is identified as eligible for Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) services, the BBCBC Permanency Specialist should be invited to attend the transition plan meeting and any subsequent transition meetings.
- d. Any transition plan for an APD eligible youth must be completed in collaboration with the caregiver identified plenary and or legal guardian, APD and any individual the youth would like to include in planning.
- e. The BBCBC Transition Plan form must be used as it aligns with the requirements in Section 39.6035, F.S., and 65C-41.004, F.A.C. Additionally, the plan incorporates the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, P.L. 111-148 requiring that youth in out-of-home care be educated and informed about the importance of having a health care power of attorney, health care proxy.

## **B. Judicial Review.**

1. Along with the assessment and transition planning information, the youth's progress in acquiring the skills needed for success and self-sufficiency will be reported to the court in the Judicial Review Social Study Report (JRSSR). Any barriers to progress and a plan to address these barriers will be part of this report.
  - a. A special judicial review will be held within ninety (90) days after the youth's seventeenth birthday. The JRSSR for 17 year olds form should be used to assist the case manager or ILS with additional documentation when transition planning. The judicial review social study report should include written verification that the youth has been provided with a current Medicaid card and information about the Medicaid program, certified copy of his or her birth certificate, Florida identification card, information related to Social Security Insurance benefits if applicable, information and training related to budgeting skills, interviewing, and parenting skills, information on Road to Independence Program, Extended Foster Care, and information about public assistance. The youth needs to be provided a clear understanding of where he or she will be living on his or her 18th birthday, how living expenses will be paid, and what educational program or school he or she will be enrolled in, assisted in opening a bank account or provided information on how to open an account.
  - b. In accordance with the "Regis Little Act to Protect Children with Special Needs", youth require a review for the necessity and need for continued guardianship post 18 years of age. Youth that potentially meet eligibility for APD services require an updated case plan to be submitted with the JRSSR. The updated case plan needs to include all personnel relevant to ensure the plan meets Section 39.701, F.S.
  - c. Youth with the goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) need additional documentation filed with the court along with the information needed for filing a JRSSR for 17 year olds. The JRSSR for APPLA Goals form is to be used to assist the case manager or ILS on ensuring the appropriate information is provided to court.

## **C. Continuing Care for Young Adults.**

1. It is the intent for young adults that have not achieved permanency prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to remain in licensed care under the jurisdiction of the court and in the care of the Department as an

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extension of foster care. The goal for young adults who choose to remain in care is to successfully transition into independent living.

2. Extended Foster Care (EFC) is for young adults that meet the eligibility requirements in subsection 39.6251(2), F.S., and 65C-41.003, F.A.C.
  
3. On their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday eligible young adults are automatically enrolled in EFC unless they choose to opt out. ILS should assist the young adult in following the application procedures that desire to be readmitted into care.
  
4. Young adults must have a transition plan and a case plan while in EFC. The case plan should be initiated within thirty (30) days of the young adults 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or approval of entry into EFC. The plan should be reviewed with the young adult prior to each judicial review hearing and updated as necessary.
  
5. A BBCBC Financial Needs Assessment should be completed in conjunction with BBCBC Transition Plan. For those young adults participating in EFC, this form serves as a method for addressing allowance and guides the DCMs or ILS to consult with the young adult on whether an allowance will be provided and the amount.
  
6. Supervised living arrangements are required for young adults participating in EFC and should meet criteria detailed in 65C-41.003(9), F.A.C. All living arrangements will need approval by the WBS or BBCBC Operations Manager (OM). DCMs or ILS should complete either BBCBC Shared or Individual Living Agreement forms along with the young adult and any other relevant adult. The Agreement should guide the participants in assessing the level of supervision and support needed while the young adult is in the home. Approval for the young adults living arrangement should only be withheld if the arrangement jeopardizes the young adult's safety, well-being, and does not align with the goals outlined in the transition plan.
  
7. It is the expectation that the CMO and the assigned ILS will oversee and supplement any life skill instruction, counseling, education support, employment preparation, and development of support networks that the young adult's living arrangement is unable to provide.
  
8. Documented monthly face-to-face contact with the young adult must occur, but more often as necessary and as agreed to by both the case manager and the young adult. If the young adult lives outside the BBCBC service area, monthly contact may occur by telephone.

## **D. Services for Young Adults in the Road to Independence Program.**

1. Postsecondary Education Services (PESS) and Aftercare Services are available to young adults who meet the eligibility requirements in subsection 409.1451(2), F.S., and 65C-42.002, F.A.C.
  
2. It is the responsibility of the CMO to notify CLS of pending adoption or court-approved permanent guardianship cases for youth turning 16 years old to ensure that all relevant parties, including but not limited to GALs, attorney's, court, etc. understand the PESS eligibility; was 16 years of age and adopted from foster care; and spent six (6) months in licensed care with twelve (12) months immediately preceding such adoption; and spend six (6) months in licensed care before reaching his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday of subsection 409.1451(2)(a)(1)(2), F.S..
  
3. As referenced in Section 409.1451, F.S., and 65C-42.002, F.A.C., all young adults participating in PESS are required to complete a release of information form. ILS should determine if their agencies forms are sufficient to obtain the education records necessary to ensure eligibility for the

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program. Some educational institutions have their own requirements in accordance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). ILS shall work with the young adult and educational institution staff as needed to eliminate barriers to eligibility.

4. ILS should assist the young adult in following the application procedures in order to ensure all supportive documentation is received and young adult fully understands the program requirements in order to remain eligible once approved.
5. Young adults entering PESS must complete the BBCBC Financial Management Needs Assessment Form with their ILS. This form will be used to determine if the young adult can successfully manage the full amount of assistance, per subsection 409.1451(2)(b), F.S.

## **E. Appeals or Discharge from Programs.**

1. ILS are to follow the guidelines outlined in 65C-42.004, F.A.C., regarding Road to Independence Program. Also ILS are to follow the guidelines outlined in 65C-41.005, F.A.C., and 65C-41.006 F.A.C., regarding Extension of Foster Care.
2. Prior to any submission of paperwork for appeals or discharge from programs, ILS are to consult the WBS and provide supporting documentation prior to an adverse action.

## **F. My Service Review and Florida National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).**

1. BBCBC supports the collection of data from youth in foster care and young adults formerly in foster care through the administration of the My Services Review and Florida NYTD surveys.
2. WBS will obtain reports of those youth and young adults selected to participate in the survey and forward information to the CMOs, continually monitoring compliance.
3. Each CMOs DCMs and ILS shall partner with caregivers and young persons by assisting in the coordination of survey completion.

## **G. Role of WBS, ILS and CMO Program Administrators.**

1. ILS provide case management, support and coordinate life skill development activities for eligible young adults receiving Independent Living services. As directed by their respective CMOs, they also take the lead in transitioning 17 year olds aging out of foster care. The transitions can include, but are not limited to, the following: development of a Transition Plan, JR, assignment as a secondary on case management duties, assistance with completion of program applications, secure stable housing, and monitoring the youth's program eligibility requirements.
2. CMO Program Administrators or their delegates should provide a level of program administration, coordination, and mentoring to ILS. ILS should first seek council and approval of their CMO authority prior to submission of any Independent Living services related documents to WBS.
3. WBS provide a level of program administration, coordination, and mentoring to ILS and DCMS to assure young adults are receiving quality Independent Living services. The WBS are actively involved in the application process, routinely staffing and reviewing cases for eligibility integrity. WBS approve all financial changes/requests related to IL services. This will ensure that due process is followed regarding the denial/reduction/termination of IL services to young adults as well as support the ILS.