

Available Services to Youth Ages 18 – 21

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families

A youth who is receiving services from the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) at the time of the youth's 18th birthday may be eligible to receive the following transitional services and supports.

	Case Management	Health Care	Education & Employment Services	Housing
Youth with serious emotional disturbances (SED) or youth with functional developmental disabilities (DD)	DCYF case management, services and supports available through age 21. Services are provided in accordance with RIte Care, the State Managed Health Care Program.	Health care will be provided through RIte Care, the State Managed Health Care Program.	Per program criteria, eligible for Higher Education Opportunity Grant, Federal Chafee Education and Training Voucher and Teen Grant Program.	Receives placement, including residential, in accordance with service plan.
Youth closed to DCYF upon reaching 18 years of age and referred to aftercare services*	Management support activities included through the Aftercare Service Program.	Health coverage through Medical Assistance continues to be provided to all youth who were in foster care on their 18 th birthday, have been closed to DCYF and who are residents of Rhode Island. Coverage will be provided to these youth until their 21 st birthday.	Per program criteria, eligible for Higher Education Opportunity Grant, Federal Chafee Education and Training Voucher and Teen Grant Program.	Youth resides with families, others or on their own with community supports. Receives a set allocation for housing/living expenses with the expectation that over time they will make contributions to their own expenses.
Youth with safe, viable transition plans to parents, relatives or other adults	No case management services once the case is closed to DCYF.	Health coverage through Medical Assistance continues to be provided to all youth who were in foster care on their 18 th birthday, have been closed to DCYF and who are residents of Rhode Island. Coverage will be provided to these youth until their 21 st birthday.	Per program criteria, eligible for Higher Education Opportunity Grant, and Federal Chafee Education and Training Voucher.	No housing/living expense assistance.

*** Youth closed to DCYF upon reaching 18 years of age who are referred to aftercare services will be placed on a waiting list once all funds for the program have been appropriated. The department has allocated enough funds for 100-125 youth to be served at any one time. Any youth placed on the waiting list will still have health coverage and may be eligible for education assistance.**

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Who Decides What Services a Youth is Eligible for?

Decisions about how youth are classified and what services the youth may be eligible for are made by the DCYF caseworker and/or casework supervisor and youth. Youth with questions about their classification should contact their caseworker and/or casework supervisor. Any youth who is determined to be ineligible for services is entitled to file an administrative appeal.

How Does a Youth File an Appeal?

To file an appeal, youth should complete a *Formal Request for Hearing* form and submit this form to the Administrative Hearing Officer at the Department of Children, Youth and Families, 101 Friendship Street, Providence, RI 02903. Youth can obtain a form from their DCYF caseworker and/or casework supervisor.

How Does a Youth Know if They are Eligible for Services?

A youth who is in the care and custody of DCYF on their 18th birthday will be eligible for a range of services and supports, depending on his/her status with the Department and their eligibility for the Aftercare Service Program.

- Youth with serious emotional disturbances (SED) or youth with functional developmental disabilities (DD): Youth ages 18-21 with serious emotional disturbance or youth with functional developmental disabilities who have been in the care and custody of DCYF before their 18th birthday may continue to receive services in accordance with their service plans.
- Youth closed to DCYF upon reaching 18 years of age and referred to aftercare services: Some youth will be closed to DCYF upon reaching the age of 18 and will be referred to an Aftercare Service Program. Youth must be a resident of Rhode Island, be at least 18 but less than 21 years old and must have exited foster care on or after the youth's 18th birthday. (Note that foster care does not include placement at the Training School or any other facility operated primarily for the detention of children who are determined to be wayward or delinquent.)
- Youth with safe, viable transition plans to parents, relatives or other adults: Upon reaching the age of 18, youth who can safely move from foster care into the homes of parents or relatives or who have other viable transition plans will be closed to DCYF. These youth continue to be eligible for health insurance and may be eligible for education assistance.

What Other Information is Available about Health Insurance Coverage?

Health insurance coverage will continue to be provided to youth under 21 years of age, provided that they were in foster care on their 18th birthday and they are a resident of Rhode Island. For youth closed to DCYF, staff of the Department update and transfer the youth's files to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Youth do not need to do anything to initiate this transfer.

Youth should be assisted with obtaining a birth certificate and a State issued picture identification, such as a license. Copies of these documents will be included in the file transfer to DHS for eligibility purposes.

The Department of Human Services will mail youth a redetermination form, once in a 12 month period. Youth must complete and return that form to DHS to maintain their health insurance coverage. If health insurance coverage is terminated because DHS did not receive the complete redetermination form, youth can contact DHS to regain eligibility. Youth are also responsible for notifying DHS within 10 days of any changes in address.

Who Do You Call with Questions?

For more information please contact Mike Burk at 401-528-3576 or mike.burk@dcyf.ri.gov.



Prepared by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, May 2008
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For more information, contact Kat Keenan, Policy Analyst, at 401-351-9400 or kkeenan@rikidscount.org