

DSS Policy and Procedure Guide

Division 03: Child Welfare

Chapter 04: Ongoing Case Management/Practice

Item 032: National Youth in Transition Database

Suggested changes send to: [DSS PSOA](#) Mailbox

Issued: **April 1, 2014**

References: All County Letter (ACL) [11-27](#), ACL [12-52](#), ACL [13-84](#)

Replaces Issue: New

Preamble

Child Welfare Policy and Procedure Guides are meant to be used as tools to relay best practice and staff expectations. It is understood that specific case scenarios may not always align themselves with the stated practices and that at all times what is of paramount importance is the Safety and Well-being of the children we are charged to protect.

Policy

California must submit semi-annual reports to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Independent Living Program (ILP) services provided to dependents and wards of the court in foster care and to ILP eligible former foster youth, ages 16 to 21. California Department of Social Services (CDSS) accomplishes this by collecting information from two sources. One source is from documentation in CWS/CMS. Another source is from youth's responses to the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) survey.

Fresno County Department of Social Services (DSS) strives to help foster care youth achieve independence. DSS also encourages youth to voice their opinions to affect change.

Purpose

To advise Child Welfare staff of their ILP documentation and NYTD survey responsibilities. Counties who do not comply with their responsibilities risk losing 1% to 5% percent of their ILP Chafee funding. CDSS is hoping to see an 80% NYTD survey participation rate for all youth in placement, and a 60% NYTD survey participation rate for those youth not in placement. Participation rates lower than this reflects negatively on DSS and can be indicative of DSS not preparing youths for independence.

Procedure for ILP Service Delivery

Reportable services to ACF include those ILP services provided not only by their assigned Social Worker (SW) and/or an ILP SW, but also by others who have a connection to the youth. This may include the youth's care provider, a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), service provider, etc.

During their contacts with youth, but at least on a monthly basis, the assigned SW shall talk with the youth regarding their plan to transition out of care. The assigned SW will also consult with others in the youth's life that may be helping the youth achieve self-sufficiency. The assigned SW shall narrate their conversations in the Contact section of CWS/CMS within 7 days and click on all the data elements below that apply (click [here](#) for definitions):

- ILP - Needs Assessment
- ILP – Education

- ILP - Education/Post-Secondary
- ILP - Career/Job Guidance
- ILP - Employment/Vocational Training
- ILP - Money Management
- ILP - Consumer Skills
- ILP - Time Management
- ILP - Home Management
- ILP - Housing Options/Locations/THPP
- ILP - Health Care
- ILP - Interpersonal/Social Skills
- ILP - Parenting Skills
- ILP – Mentoring
- ILP - Transitional Housing

The assigned Social Work Supervisor (SWS) shall ensure that youth are receiving ILP services, and that those services are documented in CWS/CMS.

If ILP documentation is missing from CWS/CMS, the assigned SWS shall contact the assigned SW and advise them of the missing documentation.

During monthly conferences, SWSs shall discuss with their staff what services are available to help youth move towards self-sufficiency.

Procedure for NYTD Survey

The NYTD survey is given to designated groups of youths who turn 17, and will again survey the youths when they turn 19 and 21. The survey is completed online, preferably by the youth, at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG2981.htm>.

If the youth does not have a computer available to them, they may utilize the computers located in the ILP Office to complete the survey. If the youth is for some reason unable to complete the survey on their own, the assigned SW, Care Provider, assigned CASA, services provider, friend/mentor, or ILP staff can help the youth complete the survey.

Eligible youth whose 17th, 19th and 21st birthday will occur within 60 days are listed in SafeMeasures and Business Outlook. The survey becomes available to the youth and DSS on the youth's birthday and

must be completed within 45 days of the youth's birthday. **After 45 days the survey is no longer available to the youth or DSS.**

ILP Social Work Supervisor (SWS) Responsibilities

Coordinate how the youth will be advised of the NYTD survey.

Coordinate with DSS Fiscal Division in providing the incentive payments to the youth who complete the survey.

- Form [PD-001](#), *Purchasing Requisition*, shall be completed by the ILP SWS to request bulk purchases of gift cards. The completed form shall be forwarded to DSS Fiscal.

Coordinate with Fresno County Juvenile Probation as to survey completion results to send the CDSS.

ILP Support Staff Responsibilities

Place information regarding the NYTD survey in the ILP Newsletter, ILP Facebook page, and any other websites and/or social media that are deemed appropriate. (Support staff shall be authorized to utilize social media for ILP/NTYD purposes.)

Check in the Proposed Measures menu of SafeMeasures each day for those youth who become eligible to participate in the survey.

Check in Business Outlook Infoview at Public Folders/County Reports (Webi)/NYTD each day for those youth who become eligible to participate in the survey.

Check SafeMeasures daily to see which youth have completed the survey.

Send a letter to the youth within 60 days of their birthday at their last known address advising them how to access the survey, where they can take the survey, and how to collect the incentive payment.

Assist any youth who requests help completing the survey.

If the youth has an open Child Welfare case:

- Add to their case alerts in CWS/CMS that they are eligible to participate in the survey.
- The youth's physical case shall be stamped with "NYTD".

If the survey has not been completed 25 days after the youth's birthday, the youth will be sent a postcard reminding them to complete the survey, where the survey can be completed (web Address or ILP Office), and the number of days the youth has remaining to complete the survey.

If the survey has not been completed 25 days after the youth's birthday, the assigned SW and SWS will be sent an email requesting that the youth be encouraged to participate.

If the survey has not been completed 35 days after the youth's birthday, the assigned SW, SWS, and Program Manager (PM) will be sent an email requesting that the youth be encouraged to participate.

For those youth who complete the survey, arrange for them to receive their incentive.

- [Form 0065](#), *CWS Service Plan*, shall be completed for each youth who completes the survey and requests a check. The completed form shall be sent to DSS Fiscal.
- For youths who request a gift card, maintain a [log](#) as to which youth received which card.
- When the youth comes in to receive their incentive, have them sign the Payment Verification letter. This is completed for youth receiving gift cards or checks in the office only. The Payment verification is not completed by youth who choose to have their incentive checked mailed to them.

For those youth who are not in an open Child Welfare case, maintain contact information for the youth.

For those youth who do not participate in the survey, help determine why they did not. The choices are:

- Declined – The youth was located successfully and was invited to participate, but the youth declined to participate. A written or verbal decline of the youth to take the survey will be counted as a **Not Participated** status.
- Incapacitated – The youth has a permanent or temporary mental or physical condition that prevents survey participation. This category may not be used for youth who can complete the survey with accommodations/assistance. An Incapacitated status is exempt from calculation of the participation completion rate.
- Incarcerated – The youth is unable to participate because of his or her incarceration. Only youth who were in foster care within the 45 days after his or her 17th birthday are eligible to take the survey. If the youth completes the survey while incarcerated, the survey will count as a Participated status. If the survey-eligible youth is unable to participate due to incarceration, an “Incarcerated” determination is entered and will be exempted in the calculation of the participation completion rate.
 - An important point to remember is that counties must attempt to contact survey-eligible youth who were incarcerated to inform them of the survey before choosing the category “incarcerated” as a determination.
- Runaway/missing – The youth is known to have run away or be missing from his or her foster care placement. This determination will be counted as a **Not Participated** status.
- Unable to Locate/Invite – Could not locate the youth or otherwise invite the youth’s participation. (For example, no current address or telephone number on file; no forwarding address available; mail was returned). This determination will be counted as a **Not Participated** status.
 - Please note that this determination should rarely, if ever, be documented for 17 year olds since the whereabouts of all 17 year olds in care should be known unless reported in the Runaway/Missing determination.

- Death – The youth died prior to participation. This determination is exempted from the calculation of the participation completion rate.

Email survey completion results to [CWS ILP](#).

DSS survey completion results shall then be combined with Juvenile Probation survey results and sent to CDSS.

Assigned SW Responsibilities

Discuss the NYTD survey with eligible youth during their monthly contacts. If the youth has not yet completed the survey, explain to the youth the significance of the survey and encourage them to participate.

For any youth who is not able to complete the survey on their own, help the youth complete the survey. This may mean completing the soft copy survey with the youth and forwarding it to [CWS ILP](#) mailbox to be entered.

If the assigned SW is unable to help the youth complete the survey, determine if the youth has someone available in their circle of support that can assist them, i.e. care provider, CASA, mentor, etc.

For those youth who do not participate in the survey, help determine why they did not. The choices are declined, incapacitated, incarcerated, runaway/missing, unable to locate/invite or death (see above for definitions).

Maintaining Contact with Youth

Youth may be contacted to complete the survey through letters, birthday cards, postcards, telephone calls, and/or emails. All survey eligible youth will initially be sent a letter by ILP staff.

If the letter is returned to DSS, ILP staff shall complete the following in an effort to locate the youth:

- Consult with the youth's assigned SW or last assigned SW regarding any updated contact information for the youth, including but not limited to, updated addresses, telephone numbers or emails.
- Flag the bus pass requests.
- Utilize social media sites.
- Ask for assistance from DSS Parent Search staff.
- Ask for assistance from DSS Family Finding staff.

Financial Incentive

Youth who complete the survey (whether by themselves or with help) will receive an incentive. The amount of the incentive is recommended by CDSS. The youth will have a choice of receiving a check or a gift card.

Youth are asked to come to the ILP Office to acknowledge receipt of a gift card.

It is preferred that the youth come in to the ILP Office to acknowledge receipt of a check, however, a check can be mailed to a youth.

Time Study Codes

Child Welfare staff completing work in relation to the NYTD survey shall use the Time Study Code of 1841.