



AB 12

The California Fostering Connections to Success Act Preparing Foster Youth for the Transition to Adulthood

OVERVIEW

What is AB 12 (the California Fostering Connections to Success Act)?

AB 12, a law that passed in 2010, allows foster youth under the age of 17 (as of January 2011) to be provided transitional support up to age 20 (possibly to 21 if funding is made available by 2014).

What is the purpose of AB 12?

The purpose of AB 12 is to provide extended support services to foster youth, whom are legal adults, to help in the transition process and ensure that they are given the necessary skills to survive on their own.

ELIGIBILITY

If I want to have this support should you do?

Once you turn 18, you will automatically be eligible for this support (you must live in an approved placement, meet one of the program requirements options, and sign a mutual agreement). You can decide that you don't want to take part in this program, and then you can decide to leave the program and "opt-out". A caseworker will be assigned to each youth to assist them with developing their own case plan and to help them meet the program requirements (see program requirements below).

What are the program requirements for AB 12?

A youth must be working or going to school at least part time.

Will my case be court supervised?

Yes, youth that decide to opt-in will have their case under court supervision and their will be a minimum of court reviews every six months.

What are the basic eligibility requirements?

A youth must be in a high school or in a GED program, enrolling in a college or vocational program, employed at least 80 hours a month, participating in a program aimed at gaining employment, or unable to work/attend school because of a medical condition. A youth must also live in an approved placement and sign a mutual agreement with their case worker.

If I want to live in my foster home after age 18 will I have to be fingerprinted?

No. The only exception is if you leave the program and come back and are going to live in a placement with minors in foster care.

How long does it take to get in to the AB 12 program?

Once you turn 18 you are automatically in the program unless you opt-out. If you leave the program and decide you want back in the program there will be a process. As the program is developing over the next few months CYC is advocating that the process to re-enter the program or opt-in be as simple and as fast as possible, but as of now we are unaware of how long it will take.

If I decide I do not want to participate in the program and decide later that I do, can I?

Yes, you can decide to leave the program at any time under what is called “trial independence” and come back at any time as long as you are still eligible (see program requirements) and are under the age limit. There will be a process you need to go through to re-enter the program.

Can I take part in the AB 12 program and other programs as well?

The program restrictions are still being worked out, but it will depend on the requirements that are developed and the requirements of other programs as well.

What would disqualify me from AB 12?

You may be disqualified from the program if you no longer meet the program requirements (i.e. not working or not going to school), participating in a program that already provides housing, joining the military, getting married, etc. A list of disqualifying programs will be available in the future. When you meet program requirements again you may re-enter the program.

What if I am a parent, can I still participate?

Yes, youth who are parents have the same rights to participate in the program as other youth.

If I am currently 18 years old or older can I participate in the program?

If you turn 18 this year, you will not be eligible for this program, although you may be able to stay in care if you’re finishing your high school diploma as under existing law. If you turn 17 this year (2011) you will be eligible for participation in the program (see eligibility questions).

Am I still eligible for the extension of care if I don’t have legal documents?

Yes, in fact it is important that you make sure that you obtain all your papers before exiting care. AB 12 includes language that makes sure this continues to happen after age 18 if you have not exited care yet.

Can I participate in THP-Plus and not be in AB 12?

Yes, THP+ is available to all youth 18 to 24 for up to two years. Space is limited though so you are not guaranteed housing whether you are in or out of the AB 12 program.

PLACEMENT

What are my placement options?

You will have several options for housing:

- A home of a relative, non related legal guardian, or foster parent
- A group home setting up to age 19 (or possibly later if there is a documented medical reason)
- THP-Plus Foster Care Program
- Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)

What is Supervised Independent Living?

Supervised Independent Living is a new placement option for youth. This placement option may include an apartment, college dormitory, or a shared roommate setting. In this setting payment will go directly to the youth participant.

If I want to leave my current placement at age 18, can I?

Yes, a youth can choose to remain in their current living setting or choose to live in another placement that is developed as part of their case plan.

Does my placement have to be approved?

Yes, if you live in a group home or a foster care placement (including a THP program) it must be licensed. If you live in a supervised independent living placement it must be approved by your caseworker.

BENEFITS

What benefits do I receive?

Financial assistance for housing will be provided to youth in one of the possible placement requirements (see placement options above). Participants will also receive case management. Depending on the placement a youth may receive the payment directly or it may be sent to the provider/ caregiver.

How much money do I receive?

The amount of money is based on the placement option that the youth has chosen. If the youth decides to live in a Supervised Independent Living Setting (SILP) they will be provided the basic rate, which is currently \$627.

If I live in an expensive area can I receive more money in a SILP placement?

No, every participant will receive the same amount of payment for a SILP placement.

What other benefits may I receive that are not related to AB 12?

- Medi Cal up until the age of 21
- Food Stamps
- Supplemental Security Income
- Financial Aid if you are enrolled in college
- Independent Living Program (ILP or ILSP) benefits up until the age your county allows
- A list of other support programs and services will be available in the coming months