

Community Housing Assistance Program (CHAP)

DCF may offer the Community Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) and provide support to youth who were committed uncared for, abused or neglected as of the 18th birthdays who demonstrate an interest and ability to pursue post-secondary education, work, or vocational training. DCF offers youth in care several living options coupled with support services to assist with their gradual move towards successful adult living. Housing options include but are not limited to individual and shared apartments, boarding arrangements and on-campus dormitories. **The goal for most youth is to have, 40 productive hours per week. This goal is flexible based on youth needs.** A "productive hour" is defined as time devoted to classes, study time, extra-curricular activities, part-time work, internship, volunteering, training, apprenticeship, treatment activities or any combination of those activities.

Youth in a post-secondary vocational training program may be eligible to continue receiving support from DCF through the end of the school year of his or her 23rd birthday. Youth over 18 who have not graduated high school can access CHAP support (excluding the stipend) if the TSS and the DCF Central Office Chap Coordinator grant an exception.

Every youth accepted to receive CHAP services can be referred to Community Case Management which provides the following support and guidance:

- developing a DCF CHAP contract with the youth and DCF Transitional Specialist;
- identification, development and support of permanent family and supportive relationships and network of community providers;
- assistance in developing a monthly budget;
- determining the monthly subsidy in collaboration with the youth;
- monitoring expenditures, at least monthly;
- providing crisis intervention;
- providing supportive intervention and on-going contact;
- providing community referral services;
- conducting a DCF-approved life skills assessment;
- developing individualized independent living plans and goals;
- and needs assessment with the youth;
- monitoring and assessing the youth's educational status;
- assessing and understanding the youth's trauma history, triggers and successful coping mechanisms;
- assisting youth with management of behavioral health issues, including medication, by addressing how to access care, how to navigate the involved systems, and how to pay for services;
- monitoring the youth's employment status and adherence to the savings plan described above;

- submitting monthly, written case management progress reports that specify the desired outcomes, goals and objectives and the dates, times and number of case management hours; and
- submitting a quarterly life skills acquisition report that includes transition progress.

CHAP Funding

Apartment Deposit

DCF may provide a one-time apartment deposit for eligible CHAP youth. The apartment deposit may include the first and last month's rent but not exceed the Area Office rental amount defined in this policy. If a youth successfully completes his or her post-secondary educational or vocational program, the youth may keep the deposit.

Start-Up Furniture, Housewares, and Food Supplies

DCF may provide an eligible youth with a maximum amount for startup furniture, which must be used for the purchase of furniture. DCF may also provide youth a maximum amount for housewares. DCF may provide an eligible youth with a one-time payment voucher or a direct payment to a vendor for the purchase of food staple items.

Monthly Subsidies

The Transitional Specialist and CHAP Case Manager, if applicable, shall develop a monthly budget with the youth based on expenditures for rent, food, utilities, telephone, transportation and clothing. If the youth receives Social Security benefits or any other entitlements, these monies shall be subtracted from the funding limits provided in DCF policy and will be considered a part of the overall budget for the youth. Once the subsidy is determined, a monthly payment shall be sent to the youth to spend on budgeted items. The youth shall save all cancelled checks and receipts for these expenditures, and the Transitional Specialist and Community Case Manager shall monitor these items to assess the youth's compliance with his or her budget. A provider number must be established at least 21 days prior to placement for youth entering CHAP. The CHAP subsidy must be processed in the computer system by the fifth day of the month in order to cover expenses for the following month.

Maximum rental rates are based on HUD rates.

Post-Secondary Education (PSE) and Vocational Youth

When calculating a youth's monthly subsidy, the PSE annual funding limit must be taken into consideration. CHAP categories and line item limits contained within this policy may not be exceeded.

If a youth is participating in a paid internship, fellowship or any learning opportunity that involves a subsidy, this funding must be subtracted from the funding limits provided in this policy and will be considered as part of the overall budget for the youth. Additional funding for housing and living are available for youth during school breaks if the youth has reached his or her PSE limit. Any funding for school breaks must follow the funding structure below. If a PSE

youth returns to stay with his or her biological parent(s) during school breaks, the youth is eligible for a CHAP stipend only.

Out-of-State PSE Youth

If a youth is attending an approved PSE program out of state and is living off campus, the HUD Fair Market Rental Rates for that state and area where youth is living must be used when calculating monthly rental subsidies. DCF CHAP boarding rates must be utilized if a youth is boarding out of state. CHAP stipends are used for youth in out-of-state and boarding arrangements.

CHAP Categories

CHAP Post-Secondary Education Program (PSE) with Case Management

Full-time college or vocational students, residing in their own apartment and receiving case management services from a private CHAP provider shall receive five hours of case management per week, of which three hours will be face-to-face contact, and two hours will be collateral contacts.

CHAP PSE Case Management Rate - Hourly

The hourly case management rate can be used when additional case management hours, pre-service activities or travel are necessary. The DCF-2163, "Request for Additional Case Management Services(CHAP/CHEER)", must be submitted by the Area Office and sent to the Central Office CHAP Program Coordinator for approval.

CHAP PSE Stipend

A youth who is in a full-time college or vocational program and who is residing on campus may receive a monthly stipend if, when the stipend is added to the cost of tuition, room and board, the total does not exceed the yearly PSE funding limits.

If a youth is attending a college or vocational program where housing or any of the stipend categories are being provided, the youth is eligible only for the categories not covered or for amounts that do not exceed the CHAP stipend amounts. This also applies to summer internships and bridge programs.

CHAP PSE Boarding

A youth who is attending a college or vocational program full-time and who is residing in the community with an approved caregiver or at an approved location is entitled to subsidies for housing, utilities, heat, telephone, food, clothing, and personal care items.

If the youth will be residing in the approved home of a relative, friend or former foster parent, the responsible adult(s) in the home must sign the youth's CHAP contract agreeing to such an arrangement. Roles, rules and responsibilities for all involved must be identified and agreed upon in the CHAP contract and be updated quarterly.

Note: Any funding going directly to an identified adult in the household for rent is considered taxable and reportable income

Non-CHAP Adolescent Service Type

For youth who are in secondary school, an adult education program or in a general equivalency diploma (GED) program, and in an approved living arrangement, the placement shall be entered in the computer system under the service type "Non CHAP Adolescent," #791. The Transitional Specialist consults with the Central Office CHAP Program Lead for this service.

Payments for Minor Children

Payments received by a youth for minor children in their custody shall not be included in the calculation of the youth's net income or the youth's DCF annual "cost of attendance" funding limit.

Earned Income

Earned income is the net income for wages, salary or profits from employment.

Employment is a requirement under CHAP once the youth has demonstrated academic stability (e.g., following a successful freshman year).

Savings and planning for a youth's transition from care must be documented in the CHAP contract at least every six months. Employment sites should be geared toward providing youth with experiences related to their career goals whenever possible. Available unpaid internships related to the youth's course of study are also encouraged and, when appropriate, may be used as a substitute for paid summer employment. Youth must keep in mind what they will need to support themselves after leaving care when making decisions on unpaid internships vs. paid employment.

Youth taking summer classes or who are involved in a year-round vocational program are also encouraged to work. Work requirements will be based on the youth's individual program, number of hours dedicated to instruction, internships and other program requirements and other program requirements and will be adjusted accordingly.

Preparation for transitioning from care must be taken into consideration when waiving the employment requirement for youth. Youth will be required to submit their yearly savings account statement to their Transitional Specialist to ensure that they do not leave DCF care inadequately funded. Social work staff will also be required to document in the computer system each September the efforts made to assist and monitor youth with their planning for transition from care.

Community Case Management

Services may include:

- developing a DCF CHAP contract with the youth and DCF Transitional Specialist;
- identification, development and support of permanent family and supportive relationships and network of community providers;

- assistance in developing a monthly budget;
- determining the monthly subsidy in collaboration with the youth;
- monitoring expenditures, at least monthly;
- providing crisis intervention;
- providing supportive intervention and on-going contact;
- providing community referral services;
- conducting a DCF-approved life skills assessment;
- developing individualized independent living plans and goals;
- conducting a strengths and needs assessment with the youth;
- monitoring and assessing the youth's educational status;
- assessing and understanding the youth's trauma history, triggers and successful coping mechanisms;
- assisting youth with management of behavioral health issues, including medication, by addressing how to access care, how to navigate the involved systems, and how to pay for services;
- monitoring the youth's employment status and adherence to the savings plan described above;
- submitting monthly, written case management progress reports that specify the desired outcomes, goals and objectives and the dates, times and number of case management hours; and
- submitting a quarterly life skills acquisition report that includes transition progress.