

# OLDER YOUTH IN CARE

## *Bench Card*

### **PURPOSE**

To determine the services needed to assist an older youth to make a transition from foster care to independent living<sup>1</sup> and to ensure youth leaving foster care achieve a lifelong connection to a permanent family.

### **WHEN**

The court must consult with the youth, in an age appropriate manner, regarding the transition from foster care to independent living.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the best practice at any post-adjudicatory hearing involving a youth over the age of fifteen is to inquire into independent living needs and services.

### **WHO**

1. A youth fifteen (15) years of age or older in the custody of the IDHW, must have an individualized Independent Living Plan that includes a permanency plan and independent living skills development.<sup>3</sup>
2. A youth sixteen (16) years of age or older must have a permanency plan approved by the court and a permanency hearing that includes a determination of the services needed to assist the youth to make the transition from foster care to independent living.<sup>4</sup>
3. A Transition Plan must be completed during the 60-day period immediately after the youth's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday or prior to the youth aging out of foster care.<sup>5</sup>
4. Before youth age out of care, the IDHW must provide the youth with a Health and Education Passport, which includes among other items:<sup>6</sup>
  - a. Birth certificate;
  - b. Social Security Card;
  - c. Health Records;
  - d. Education Records;
  - e. Independent Living Plan;
  - f. State and Regional resource guides;
  - g. Appropriate Vouchers.

### **FINDING**

In those cases in which the youth's permanency goal is another permanent planned living arrangement (APPLA), the court should consider, as appropriate, completion of the independent living and transition plans as part of the reasonable efforts to finalize permanency analysis.

### **ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. For youth 15 and older, what services are the youth accessing to help him/her acquire independent living skills?
2. For youth 17 and older, what are the contents of the youth's transition plan?
3. If a youth is aging out of foster care, what is the youth's plan for living independently?

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4. Have arrangements been made in the following areas:
  - a. Health care power of attorney
  - b. Educational training vouchers (ETVs)
  - c. Support structure and contacts in the community
5. What is the youth's current educational level and plans for completion of high school and/or post-secondary education?
6. If the youth has a developmental or physical disability, or a serious mental health diagnosis:
  - a. What has been completed to ensure the youth has the skills necessary to live independently?
  - b. Has SSI been applied for?
  - c. Has the youth been referred to adult services for disabilities?
7. If the youth is in court:
  - a. What are your future educational plans?
  - b. Where are you going to live when you turn 18?
  - c. How do you plan to access health care when you turn 18?
  - d. Are you getting the help you need?
  - e. Who will you call when you need help? Do you have that person's contact information?

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> I.J.R. 45(c); 42 U.S.C. §675(5)(c)(iii).

<sup>2</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 675(5)(c)(iii).

<sup>3</sup> The "Working With Older Youth Standard", Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Family and Community Services, Child and Family Services (2010). Can be found at:

[www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Children/AdoptionFosterCareHome/ChildWelfareStandards/tabid/429/Default.aspx](http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Children/AdoptionFosterCareHome/ChildWelfareStandards/tabid/429/Default.aspx)

Last accessed on September 1, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> I.C. §16-1622(2)(e).

<sup>5</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 677.

<sup>6</sup> The "Working With Older Youth Standard", Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Family and Community Services, Child and Family Services (2010). Can be found at:

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