NON-MINOR DEPENDENT (NMD) HOUSING RESOURCES TOOLKIT

for Juvenile Probation Officers Assisting NMDs While in Care & in Transition

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The Non-Minor Dependent (NMD) Housing Resources Toolkit for Juvenile Probation Officers: Assisting NMDs While in Care & in Transition was developed by John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) in partnership with the Chief Probation Officers of California. This toolkit is designed to assist probation officers working to support non-minor dependents (NMDs) in their efforts to achieve housing stability, both while in extended foster care (EFC) and as they transition into independent adulthood.

Since 2012, when EFC implementation began in California, the state’s cost of housing has skyrocketed, with the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment increasing 64 percent from $1,525 in 2012 to $2,495 in 2019. California’s housing crisis has challenged the stability of the state’s EFC program, which relies partially on the availability of rental units on the private market that are affordable with existing monthly foster care payments.

The state’s lack of affordable housing not only impacts youth participating in EFC—NMDs, but also threatens the capability of those transitioning out of EFC to identify and secure stable housing that they can maintain as independent adults.

This toolkit provides an overview of the placement options for NMDs, along with a description of the various housing supports and resources that exist in California for youth once they transition out of EFC. This includes housing programs and vouchers developed for this target population, in addition to services available through the local homelessness response system.

Practice tips for probation officers are included throughout the toolkit focused on assisting youth with accessing and maintaining these housing services.

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Background on Extended Foster Care for Probation-Supervised Non-Minor Dependents

In 2010, Assembly Bill (AB) 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act was enacted, allowing California to take advantage of several components of the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, including providing foster care benefits for eligible youth up until the age of 21.1,2 Extended foster care (EFC) was implemented on a phased-in basis, starting in 2012. Any youth with a court order for foster care placement on their 18th birthday is eligible to participate in EFC until they reach 21 years of age. This includes youth supervised by juvenile probation departments with out-of-home placement orders at age 18. As of April 1, 2020, of the 8,544 NMDs in California, 1,119 or 13 percent were supervised by juvenile probation.3

In addition to having an order for foster care placement on their 18th birthday, eligibility for participation in EFC is as follows: The youth must continue under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court as a dependent, under transition jurisdiction or as a ward; meet one of the five participation conditions; and agree to live in an eligible placement. In addition, a youth must meet monthly with their social worker or probation officer and participate in six-month review hearings. Youth continuing under dependency or transition jurisdiction must also sign a Mutual Agreement, however youth under delinquency jurisdiction do not sign this agreement.4

Participation in EFC is voluntary, and youth may decide to opt out and exit at age 18, or any time before they turn 21. Youth who opt to exit may re-enter EFC before they turn 21 as long as the youth signs a Voluntary Re-Entry Agreement and agrees to meet EFC participation conditions and to live in an eligible placement. There is no limit on the number of times a youth can opt out and re-enter EFC.5

Subsequent arrests or involvement with the adult criminal justice system do not have an impact on EFC eligibility, except in the case of sentenced incarceration. While incarcerated, a youth cannot participate in EFC because they cannot reside in an eligible placement. Once released, if still under age 21 and otherwise meeting eligibility requirements, a youth can re-enter EFC.

NOTE: Currently, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, different rules and exceptions apply to NMDs, including an option for youth to receive continued financial assistance payments and case management support who are turning 21 as well as an exemption from participation conditions. More information about these temporary rule changes is available in Appendix B.

Non-Minor Dependents Under Transition or Delinquency Jurisdiction

Youth who are on probation and supervised by the delinquency court (also known as “wards” of the court) who have an order for foster care placement on their 18th birthday are eligible for EFC services in the same manner as dependent youth.6 In addition, AB 12 created a new jurisdictional status known as “transition jurisdiction,” to allow former wards who meet certain conditions to participate in EFC without having to remain under delinquency jurisdiction. Youth with placement orders on their 18th birthday who are still on probation remain under delinquency jurisdiction in EFC. Once the youth completes the terms of their probation, they enter transition jurisdiction in order to remain eligible for EFC. In addition, wards who are under 18 are eligible for transition jurisdiction if (1) the youth is subject to an order for foster care placement; (2) the youth is between 17 years old and five months and under 18 years old; (3) the youth no longer requires the supervision of the delinquency court because they have achieved their rehabilitative goals; (4) the youth is at risk of abuse and neglect and cannot be returned to the parental home safely; and (5) the youth intends to meet the EFC participation conditions.7
Meeting Extended Foster Care Participation Conditions

In order to receive benefits after the age of 18, a youth must meet one of the following participation requirements:

1. Completing high school or equivalent program i.e., GED (enrollment is defined according to the definition employed by the school or program)

2. Enrolled in college, community college or a vocational education program (half-time enrollment, as the institution defines it)

3. Participating in a program or activity designed to remove barriers to employment

4. Employed at least 80 hours a month (paid employment)

5. Unable to do one of the above requirements because of a medical condition (short- or long-term medical or mental health condition as verified by a health practitioner, but youth does not have to be currently seeking treatment)

PRACTICE TIP

It is likely that an NMD may transition between participation activities during the six-month certification period that occurs between each case review hearing. However, temporarily not participating in one criteria (i.e. job loss) does not make the youth ineligible for EFC. As long as the NMD continues to work toward the goals set out in their Transitional Independent Living Plan, then they remain eligible. Participation condition criteria number 3, “Removing Barriers to Employment” is intended to bridge any gaps in eligibility.

Note: During the COVID-19 pandemic there is significant flexibility regarding participation conditions and failure to meet these requirements should not be the cause of case dismissal. See Appendix B for more information.
Eligible Extended Foster Care Placements

Eligible placements for NMDs generally include those placement options available for minors in foster care, in addition to two placement settings developed with the implementation of EFC that are age-appropriate for young adults: the Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) and the Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD). The graph below illustrates the proportion of probation-supervised NMDs placed in each setting. Following the graph is a detailed description of each placement type.

Placement of Probation-Supervised NMDs as of April 1, 2020

Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP)

The SILP is the most independent placement option available to NMDs, providing the least amount of support and supervision, and the highest amount of autonomy. Youth are responsible for identifying their own housing for their SILP. Eligible SILP settings include a room rental; apartment or house; college or university housing; a Tribal SILP; Job Corps/AmeriCorps/California Conservation Corps onsite housing; an adult residential treatment facility; a sober living arrangement/home; and a Single Room Occupancy hotel, if deemed safe and appropriate. Most often, youth in SILPs cannot afford their own living unit and reside in shared housing with a known connection.

The SILP is the only placement where youth may receive their monthly foster care payment directly, which for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 is $1,037 per month. Youth must be deemed ready for a SILP through use of a SILP Readiness Assessment Tool. If determined SILP-ready, the youth’s identified housing setting must also be inspected by the county to ensure it meets health and safety standards, except for dormitories which do not require inspections. NOTE: In response to the COVID-19 crisis, remote methods for the SILP approval process are permitted, described further in Appendix B.

Youth not quite ready for a SILP, and who choose not to or are unable to access a more supportive placement, have the option of a “supported SILP” if they can identify a supportive adult in their life with whom they can reside and receive assistance from in the development of independent living skills or other specific goals.

As a result of a policy change in 2017, youth can also now reside in the home of their parent as a SILP. A “parent” refers to both a parent from whom the youth was removed (in the case of a dependency case) or any non-custodial parent, including but not limited to a biological parent, guardian, or adoptive parent. Previously, NMDs could not reside in the home of their parent as their SILP.

As of April 1, 2020, the SILP is the single-most utilized placement option for NMDs, with 41 percent placed here. When examining probation-supervised NMDs alone, 34 percent are placed in a SILP.
PRACTICE TIPS
Readiness Assessment: Many counties use a standardized assessment tool to conduct the SILP Readiness Assessment. For counties looking to adopt a tool, or for probation officers operating in a county that does not require a standardized tool, CDSS provides a recommended tool developed specifically for assessing SILPs, the **SOC 157C**. 

Supported SILPs: Probation should strongly encourage the use of a Shared Living Agreement for NMDs in shared housing with a supportive adult. Shared Living Agreements are not a state requirement but may be required in some counties and are considered a best practice. The agreement documents a written understanding between the supportive adult and the NMD on the various expectations for placement in a household and conditions for shared daily living (such as house rules, curfews, chores, etc.). The agreement is individualized as it should reflect the NMD’s continued transition to adulthood. The agreement should be updated as needed and appropriate in order to serve as a useful tool to facilitate discussions. For state guidance on topics to be included in a Shared Living Agreement, refer to **All County Letter 11-77**.

1. Remote Site: The THP-NMD provider leases residences in various locations in the community, checks in with the NMD regularly and provides support services. **This is the most common housing model, accounting for 85 percent of the THP-NMD placements.**

2. Single/Staffed Site: The THP-NMD provider owns or leases apartments or rooms in a single facility and an employee of the provider lives on site to provide support and supervision. The NMD also receives support services from the provider. This model accounts for 13 percent of THP-NMD placements.

3. Host Family: The THP-NMD provider finds and arranges for the NMD to live in a rented room with a host family and the NMD receives support services from the housing provider. This housing model accounts for just two percent of the THP-NMD placements.

As of April 1, 2020, 24 percent of NMDs were placed in THP-NMD. Due to data suppression the exact number of probation-supervised NMDs in THP-NMD is unavailable, however based on probation-supervised 16-21-year-olds making up 15 percent of youth in transitional housing, approximately 27 percent of probation-supervised NMDs are placed in THP-NMD. THP-NMD is the second-most utilized placement for NMDs.

THP-NMD is widespread with 58 licensed providers operating programs located across 49 counties, however its availability is quite limited in some counties with 482 youth on a THP-NMD waiting list as of June 30, 2020, statewide.

THP-NMD is a placement often utilized for NMDs requiring higher levels of support. Nearly one in four (23%) NMDs entering THP-NMD have transitioned from an STRTP, which provide the highest level of support consisting of 24-hour supervision and clinical treatment services. One in ten (10%) NMDs entering THP-NMD enter directly from homelessness or unstable housing and nearly one in four (23%) have experienced homelessness while in EFC, prior to entering THP-NMD.
**PRACTICE TIPS FOR PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION, APPLICATION AND RETENTION**

**PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION**

Attend county Independent Living Program (ILP) meetings: In many counties, attending the child welfare agency’s ILP quarterly or monthly meetings (if these are regularly convened) is generally a good practice for keeping abreast of openings in local THP-NMD programs, and becoming acquainted with intake staff.

Consider programs in neighboring counties: If there is not a THP-NMD program in the county where the youth is located, or the local program is at capacity, probation officers should consider looking into THP-NMD programs in neighboring counties. JBay maintains a statewide roster of licensed and operating THP-NMD providers, organized by county.²⁰

**PROGRAM APPLICATION**

Provide a whole picture of the youth, beyond what is stated in their paperwork: While the intake process for THP-NMD can vary greatly across providers and counties, all providers request some level of information about the youth’s history or risk factors as part of the “pre-placement appraisal,” prior to intake, in order to assess the types of supports required for participation in the program. THP-NMD Interim Licensing Standards require the appraisal to include, among other components, confirmation that the NMD does not pose a threat to other youth, and to specify the ability of the program to meet the NMD’s needs.²¹ Probation officers should use this opportunity to communicate to a provider, the youth’s strengths in addition to information about struggles and challenges.

Be transparent about important needs and potential challenges: It is important that the THP-NMD provider is aware of the youth’s needs and triggers or risk factors. For a program to best support the youth’s stability and ongoing participation in the program, the probation officer should be transparent about risk factors or challenges that may require specialized or additional attention or considerations for shared living. Not only does this assist in the youth’s retention in the program, it can enhance the probation officer’s relationship with the provider as well as open the door for potential future placement opportunities for other youth on their caseload.

Prepare youth for interviewing: Probation officers play an important role in helping youth put their best foot forward during an interview. Youth should be instructed to answer questions honestly but may need coaching on how to communicate the progress they have made in previous rehabilitative or treatment settings, including incarceration or more restrictive placement settings.

Demonstrate an understanding of the program: Probation officers should familiarize themselves with local programs so that they can help youth learn and understand the program’s parameters and policies. For youth transitioning out of facilities or incarceration, moving from a strongly structured environment can be challenging. Some THP-NMD programs are more structured than others, however they all have written policies and guidelines youth must follow. It is a best practice for probation officers to ensure youth have written copies of these policies and to review them with the youth. If the program’s communication about this information is unclear, probation officers should ensure they assist youth in accessing this information.
**PROGRAM RETENTION**

Be willing to be part of the ongoing support plan: In evaluating whether a program can meet a youth’s needs a program may express concerns about behaviors documented in the pre-appraisal or certain aspects of the youth’s past offenses. Probation officers can offer to play an active role in supporting the youth’s ongoing stability. Being familiar with the youth’s triggers and trauma history, the probation officer can be a resource to the program as its staff are still getting to know the youth, particularly during their transition into the program. Committing to be a main point-of-contact for youth if, and when they experience an obstacle can make the difference when staff desire reassurance that their program can meet the youth’s needs.

Be communicative and responsive: THP-NMD providers and probation officers report increased success for youth in these programs when there is a relationship between the THP-NMD program staff and the probation officer, and when there is regular communication occurring. Erring on the side of over-communicating is a good strategy—regular check-ins and fast response times to phone calls about youth on their caseloads ensure the probation officer and the THP-NMD program staff have the same understanding and can best jointly support the youth.
California also has a Transitional Housing Placement for Minors (THP-M) which serves youth age 16 and 17 and falls under the same licensing category as THP-NMD; however, the remote site model is not permitted in the program for minors. THP-M is rarely utilized with just 90 youth placed here statewide as of April 1, 2020. Of California’s 58 counties, 23 place youth in THP-M. There are 14 organizations licensed to provide THP-M.

Ongoing use of the placement is in question, with some exceptions. California will be losing most federal Title IV-E funding for youth placed in THP-M as of the date the state fully opts into the Family First Prevention and Services Act. The exceptions under which California counties may be able to continue to receive Title IV-E funding for THP-M would be to serve two special populations: parenting youth and youth at risk of commercial sexual exploitation.

Family-Based Settings
Family-based settings include foster homes—both Foster Family Agency (FFA) homes and county foster homes, relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) homes, and guardianships. Under Continuum of Care (CCR) Reform these families are all considered “Resource Families.”

As of April 1, 2020, 21 percent of NMDs are placed in a family-based setting. The vast majority of the NMDs in this setting are child welfare-supervised. Just five percent of probation-supervised NMDs are placed in a family-based setting.

A child or youth is eligible for placement in an STRTP if he or she either meets the medical necessity criteria for Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services or exhibits behavioral or treatment needs that can only be met by an STRTP. Placement in an STRTP is intended to be short-term and intensive, with the goal of preparing children and youth for stepping down to a less restrictive setting.

Just four percent of NMDs were placed in STRTPs as of April 1, 2020, however for probation-supervised NMDs specifically, this figure is higher, with 12 percent placed in STRTPs as of April 1, 2020. By age 19, any NMDs that were placed in STRTPs as 18-year-olds have generally transitioned to a different placement. For an NMD who either completes high school or has reached age 19, whichever is earlier, STRTP Interim Licensing Standards require their Needs and Services Plan to also contain a documented medical condition that prevents participation in educational or employment activities as specified and permits continuation in the facility, and confirmation that continuation in the facility functions as a short-term transition to the appropriate system of care.

PRACTICE TIP
Like youth placed in supported SILPs, probation officers should strongly encourage the use of a Shared Living Agreement for NMDs in family-based settings. (See tips box on page 5 for more information).

PRACTICE TIP
As NMDs in STRTPs will likely be stepped down into a less restrictive placement during their time in EFC, an important role for probation officers is to assist youth with this transition. During the first several months in their new placement, in addition to the required in-person monthly visits, probation officers should communicate frequently with the new placement and the youth to assist with addressing any challenges early on and before an incident occurs that could potentially jeopardize the youth’s placement stability. Given the intensive treatment services youth receive in STRTPs, ideally youth leaving this placement setting have developed coping skills to assist in de-escalation. Having an understanding of what these coping skills are can aid a probation officer in supporting the young person during this transition. Although youth rarely enter STRTPs once they turn 18, the tips included on “program application” under the THP-NMD section on page 6 are also applicable to STRTPs.

Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)
Under California’s CCR, group homes have been phased out as an eligible foster care placement and replaced with STRTPs. STRTPs are residential facilities, operated by a public agency or private organization, specializing in intensive care and supervision of children and youth.
Additional Extended Foster Care Housing Resources

Housing Navigators Program
The FY 2019-20 state budget included a one-time disbursement of $5 million for the Housing Navigators Program to serve young adults age 18 to 21, prioritized for young adults in the foster care system. This funding is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development and is currently being disbursed to county child welfare agencies. Counties must spend this funding by June 30, 2022 and are currently developing expenditure plans. Eligible uses are broad, centered around assisting young adults with securing and maintaining housing, including case management, emergency supports, homelessness prevention, and improvement of coordination of services and linkages to key resources across the community including those from within the child welfare system and the local homeless Continuum of Care.

PRACTICE TIP
Probation officers should contact their local child welfare partners to identify what services are being funded with their county’s allocation, how they are prioritizing NMDs, and how youth access these services. To view each county’s allocation for the Housing Navigators Program, visit the Department of Housing and Community Development’s website.

Placement Resources for Parenting NMDs
As of April 1, 2020, of the 8,544 NMDs in California, a total of 588 (7%) were custodial parents. Of the 588 parenting NMDs, 18 percent were probation-supervised. During this same time-period probation-supervised NMDs made up 13 percent of the NMD population, meaning they tend to be overrepresented among those who are parenting.

The following resources related to placement and housing are designed to provide extra support for custodial parents in EFC:

**Infant Supplement:** California provides a monthly supplemental payment of $900 to the placement of parenting foster youth whose child(ren) reside with them. For NMDs placed in SILPs, this $900 is paid directly to the youth if they also receive their monthly foster care payment directly. If the youth is in THP-NMD, the county has a process for NMDs to review and identify what maximum amount of the infant supplement payment will be retained by a provider for eligible expenses the provider is directly covering on behalf of the child of the NMD (clothing, laundry, diapers, food, medical costs, household items such as a crib, childcare costs or housing related costs). The amount must be determined as part of a shared agreement between the provider and the NMD. In most cases, youth in THP-NMD receive the bulk, if not all of the $900 payment. STRTPs receive a larger infant supplement amount ($1,379), however they are not required to pass this amount through to the youth, even if an NMD. Most counties require the youth to provide verification of birth to their social worker or probation officer, who then sends the necessary paperwork to the county’s eligibility unit.
**Parenting Support Plan:** Assembly Bill 2668 established an additional $200 per month for parenting NMDs living in a SILP if they create a Parenting Support Plan with a responsible adult mentor approved by the county. Adult mentors must be at least 21 years of age, and undergo a criminal records check and a Child Abuse Central Index Check. The purpose of the Parenting Support Plan is to identify additional support and assist the NMD parent in a SILP in providing the best care plan for their child. The plan is developed in cooperation with the social worker or probation officer and should specifically outline the ways in which the adult mentor will assist the NMD in parenting and identify supportive services to be offered to the NMD parent. Probation officers should check whether their county utilizes a specific template for the Parenting Support Plan, and if not, can refer to All County Letter 15-67 for a template provided by CDSS and for more information.  

**THP-NMD Housing Supplement:** California established a THP-NMD Housing Supplement in 2020 to address the high cost of housing in certain regions of the state. The THP-NMD Housing Supplement will supplement the THP-NMD rate paid to providers on behalf of youth placed in their programs, based on the cost of housing in each county according to HUD’s Fair Market Rent. The Housing Supplement provides a higher level of financial support for serving youth who are custodial parents, allowing for larger, non-shared housing accommodations for parenting youth and their children. Implementation is occurring on a phased-in basis across the state, beginning July 1, 2021, and fully implemented by September 1, 2022.  

**PRACTICE TIP**  
Youth often benefit from assistance with budgeting and managing their infant supplement. This is an important role for the probation officer, particularly those who have youth placed in SILPs, however it can be challenging given the tendency for young adults to resist this guidance. For youth placed in SILPs, it is strongly encouraged that they identify a responsible adult mentor. It is not only because executing a Parenting Support Plan with this individual secures an additional $200 monthly payment, but because it provides an additional support person that can assist the parenting youth with budgeting, and most importantly, with the myriad challenges of being a new parent.  

While this toolkit focuses on placement resources, there are a number of other resources for this population with which probation officers should familiarize themselves: For food security, CalFresh (food stamps) and the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); for child care, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children; for support with completing education as a young parent, the Cal-LEARN and Cal-SAFE programs; and for support with parenting, the Adolescent Family Life Program and home visitation programs such as Nurse Family Partnership.
Housing Programs and Resources for Youth Formerly in Out-of-Home Placement

Programs and Resources Targeting Former Foster and Out-of-Home Care Probation Youth

This section focuses on programs and resources for which eligibility is tied to a youth’s status as a former foster or out-of-home care probation youth, or for which eligibility is prioritized for this population.

Practise Tip
Youth may need proof that they legally qualify as a “former foster youth” to access certain housing resources. Ensure, when NMDs are exiting care, completion of the 90-day transition plan and written notice that the youth is a “former foster youth,” meaning they had a placement order at age 18. These activities are required by state law.

Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus)

The THP-Plus was established in 2001 by the California State Legislature in response the alarming rate of homelessness among youth transitioning from out-of-home care. The state’s $34.9 million budget was realigned to counties in 2011, making THP-Plus a county-administered program.

THP-Plus provides affordable housing leased or owned by a non-profit service provider coupled with comprehensive support services including counseling and case management, 24-hour crisis intervention and support, educational advocacy and support, job readiness training and support, allowance adequate to purchase food and other necessities, life skills training and assistance finding affordable housing upon exit. Youth eligible for THP-Plus are between the ages of 18 and 24, exited foster care or out-of-home care probation on or after their 18th birthday, and are working on the goals in their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP). Youth can access THP-Plus for up to 24 months, which do not have to be consecutive. In counties that have opted into the THP-Plus extension established by Senate Bill (SB) 1252, youth enrolled in school can access THP-Plus for up to 36 months and up to age 25, whichever comes first.

Practice Tip
As of FY 2019-20, a total of 28 counties have opted into the THP-Plus extension for youth in school. Once a county opts into the extension, they must apply it to all eligible participants, and not on a case-by-case basis. See JBAY’s website for a list of counties that have opted in.

Note: Another temporary extension exists for youth in counties choosing to offer it as a COVID-19 response. More information about this extension is provided in Appendix B.

Similar to THP-NMD, which was modeled after the THP-Plus program, youth are placed in one of three housing models:

1. Scattered Site: The THP-Plus provider leases residences in various locations in the community, checks in with the youth regularly and provides support services. This is the most common housing model, accounting for 72 percent of the THP-NMD housing capacity.

2. Single Site: The THP-Plus provider owns or leases apartments or rooms in a single facility and checks in with the youth regularly and provides support services. This model accounts for 21 percent of THP-Plus housing capacity. Unlike THP-NMD, no staff lives on site with the THP-Plus single site model.

3. Host Family: The THP-Plus provider finds and arranges for the youth to live in a rented room with a host family and the youth receives support services.
Specialized Housing Choice Vouchers

Youth formerly in out-of-home care may be eligible for population-specific Housing Choice Vouchers made available by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Family Unification Program (FUP) and the Fostering Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative provide Housing Choice (also known as Section 8) Vouchers which provide rental assistance, coupled with supportive services to former foster and out-of-home care probation youth. FUP and FYI vouchers—which are sometimes both referred to as FUP vouchers—are administered by Public Housing Authorities who partner with child welfare agencies responsible for referring youth and providing the supportive services.

Youth eligible for FUP and FYI vouchers are between 18 and up to 24 years old and have left foster care or will leave foster care (which includes out-of-home probation placement) within 90 days, are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The FUP or FYI voucher provides up to 36 months of rental assistance. With FYI vouchers, 36 months of supportive services are provided, however with FUP vouchers, just 18 months of supportive services are provided.

PRACTICE TIP

Probation officers should contact their local child welfare partners to inquire about the availability of FUP and/or FYI vouchers. The federal funding for FYI, which is a new program, has been largely under-accessed and there is more than $20 million available for Public Housing Authorities to provide FYI vouchers across California. If there are not enough FUP or FYI vouchers in any given community, community partners should strongly encourage their local housing authorities to apply to HUD, which accepts applications for FYI vouchers on a rolling basis. For a list of Public Housing Authorities that have FUP vouchers, visit HUD’s website and refer to FUP awards for all years and for 2020. No such list yet exists for FYI vouchers.

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from the housing provider. This housing model accounts for just seven percent of the THP-Plus housing capacity. Over FY 2019-20, there were 1,271 contracted THP-Plus slots statewide. Across 47 counties, 52 organizations operate 73 different THP-Plus programs. Of youth who entered a THP-Plus program over FY 2019-20, nine percent were formerly supervised by juvenile probation. This is a figure that has decreased from 15 percent in FY 2012-13. As of June 30, 2019, a total of 539 youth were on waiting lists for THP-Plus.

PRACTICE TIP

If there is a waiting list for the THP-Plus program(s) in any one county, probation officers should inquire with neighboring counties’ programs about openings. Serving out-of-county youth in THP-Plus is an option for counties and at least 37 counties accept out-of-county youth in some capacity. Visit JBAY’s website for a list of which counties accept out-of-county youth, and for a statewide roster of THP-Plus providers, organized by county.

Transitional Housing Program (THP)

The FY 2019-20 state budget included an annual $8 million for the Transitional Housing Program (THP) to serve young adults age 18 to 25, prioritized for young adults formerly in the foster care or juvenile probation systems. This funding is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development and is currently being disbursed to county child welfare agencies. Many counties are using this funding to expand or enhance their existing THP-Plus programs, however eligible uses are broader than THP-Plus.

PRACTICE TIP

Probation officers should contact their local child welfare partners to identify how their county is using their THP funding, and how youth access these services. To view each county’s THP allocation, visit the California Department of Housing and Community Development’s website.
Local Homelessness Response System and Affordable Housing

This section intends to familiarize probation officers with what is referred to as the “homelessness response system.” These are the federal and state resources available at the local level for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. For youth transitioning from care, these resources would be a last resort, but it’s important to have a working knowledge of them. This section also discusses permanent affordable housing.

Federal Funding

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the largest funder of homeless assistance programs in the country. Local administrative entities called homeless “Continuums of Care” (CoCs) receive and administer HUD funding through a myriad of programs and services. California has 44 CoCs, each of which contract with local service providers to provide the programs and services. People in the community access these programs and services through a local Coordinated Entry System where they are assessed and matched to services, when eligible. CoCs are a regional system; they are not city or county-based, although many do align with specific county or city borders. More information about Coordinated Entry Systems can be found in the later section of this publication.

The housing slots funded by HUD are largely not accessed by unaccompanied youth and young adults up to age 24. In 2018, just three percent of HUD-funded housing slots in California were accessed by youth when youth made up nine percent of the state’s homeless population.

HUD’s only funding targeting youth is funneled through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program, which has provided three rounds of funding totaling $151 million to 33 communities across the U.S., including three in California: Santa Cruz, San Francisco and San Diego.

The federal government also provides Runaway and Homeless Youth funding administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families. However, this funding targets unaccompanied youth up to age 21, and is severely underfunded with just $115 million available nationwide.

State Funding

California’s state funding to address homelessness is administered by several different departments. Historically, like the federal government, state investment in homelessness among youth has been quite limited. In FY 2018-19, this trend began to change. For three consecutive years, California’s budget included funding for homelessness with an explicit amount of funding for youth set aside. In the FY 2018-19 budget, $500 million in one-time funding was appropriated for the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), of which local jurisdictions were required to dedicate a minimum of five percent to addressing homelessness among youth. In FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21 the state budget included $650 million and $300 million in one-time funding, respectively, for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program, of which a minimum of eight percent was required to be dedicated to addressing homelessness among youth. Both HEAP and HHAP are administered by the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council within the Business, Housing and Consumer Services Agency.

PRACTICE TIP

HHAP funding is administered at the local level by the state’s 44 CoCs, 13 largest cities and 58 counties to local non-profit service providers. To gain an understanding of the local youth homelessness resources available, probation officers should inquire with their local administrative entities what youth services are being funded with HHAP. With information from the state’s Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council, JBAY maintains statewide rosters of CoC, large city and county contacts, and a roster of HEAP- and HHAP-funded providers.
Housing Types

Across the aforementioned federal and state funding streams, there are generally four main types of housing provided, all accessed through the local Coordinated Entry System described in the next section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency Shelter</strong></td>
<td>These facilities provide temporary shelter, typically for up to 90 days or until specific goals are accomplished by the client. Services and requirements vary greatly. Many communities have youth shelters, which, if emergency shelter is needed, are preferable for this population compared to adult shelters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitional Housing</strong></td>
<td>These programs provide housing coupled with fairly intensive supportive services, used to facilitate movement of those experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. For youth in transitional housing, a large focus is on the development of independent living skills to support transition to independent adulthood. The length of time a client can access transitional housing ranges, usually lasting no more than 24 months, and the client must generally move on from their housing unit at the end of the assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rapid Rehousing</strong></td>
<td>This housing model places priority on moving the client into permanent housing as quickly as possible. The duration of rental assistance varies but it is generally up to 24 months and is reduced over time. The client may remain in the housing unit after the assistance ends. The case management and other supportive services are generally less intensive than transitional housing. For youth programs, there is sometimes crossover or blending of transitional housing models and Rapid Rehousing models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permanent Supportive Housing</strong></td>
<td>This housing is long-term (not time-limited) and provides intensive services designed for people with disabilities who require support to live stably in their communities. The threshold to qualify for Permanent Supportive Housing is quite high, and its availability is quite limited given its permanent and costly nature. Services may include case management, substance abuse or mental health counseling, advocacy, and assistance in locating and maintaining employment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to housing, a range of diversion and homelessness prevention services are potentially available to eligible individuals through the Coordinated Entry System. These services seek to prevent people from losing their current housing or prevent the need for formal housing interventions through a rapid return to housing, usually without expectation of ongoing support. This may include assistance with problem-solving, connections to benefits programs, or temporary assistance or advocacy.
Coordinated Entry System

To access this housing, a person must be assessed through the Coordinated Entry System, which is a network of programs that have adopted shared principles and approaches to their work and ensure people are connected to the resources that are best for them regardless of the door they enter through. HUD requires all CoCs to utilize a Coordinated Entry System, which has various access points throughout the community, that all utilize the same system to assess people for services and match them based on their eligibility and need.

Given the scarce resources available to address homelessness, coordinated entry identifies how high someone’s vulnerability is and ensures resources are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible by prioritizing the highest needs individuals and families. As a result, unintentionally, youth can sometimes be “screened out” when using a coordinated entry assessment tool designed for adults, who have experienced homelessness for a longer period and more chronically. For this reason, having youth-specific entrance points and utilization of a youth-friendly assessment tool is a good practice for communities wishing to address youth homelessness. Some communities have Youth Coordinated Entry Systems, such as Los Angeles, which operates distinctly from its adult system.

Permanent Affordable Housing

Permanent affordable housing varies in type, but generally eligibility is based on income, and is sometimes population-specific, e.g., for seniors. While many youth transitioning out of care may be technically eligible for affordable housing based on their income, it is not widely available to them as the demand for it is incredibly high. Affordable housing waiting lists are typically years’ long, and generally open only during specific time periods. Unlike the homelessness response system, there is no centralized or coordinated system for applying.

PRACTICE TIP

Probation officers assisting youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness for whom none of the resources targeting youth formerly in out-of-home care are available, the first step is to be assessed through the Coordinated Entry System. The previously mentioned CoC roster also includes a column indicating the status of the community’s Coordinated Entry System and whether it has youth-specific entrance points. Youth-specific entrance points are commonly located with local youth service providers including housing programs, drop-in centers and organizations offering other services to transition-age youth and are generally accessible by phone as well.

PRACTICE TIP

The California Department of Housing and Community Development maintains an affordable housing rental directory. Probation officers can familiarize themselves with developments in their communities by searching this directory, then contacting their housing developer or visiting their website to identify when the waiting list may open. 211ca.org may also be a useful resource. Supporting youth with getting on as many waiting lists as possible early on, assists in increasing their chances of accessing affordable housing. Affordable housing can be a particularly valuable resource for youth who are custodial parents.
## APPENDIX A: QUICK GLANCE KEY: HOUSING RESOURCES FOR CURRENT & FORMER FOSTER & OUT-OF-HOME CARE PROBATION YOUTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>ELIGIBLE YOUTH</th>
<th>SERVICES &amp; DURATION PROVIDED</th>
<th>LOCATE SERVICES &amp; MORE INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD)</td>
<td>Youth participating in extended foster care (non-minor dependents) age 18-21</td>
<td>Foster care placement—provides fully funded housing &amp; supportive services for up to 36 months (while in extended foster care)</td>
<td>Find a program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus)</td>
<td>Former foster &amp; out-of-home care probation youth age 18-24 (up to age 25 in counties that have opted into the THP-Plus extension for youth in school)</td>
<td>Provides affordable housing &amp; supportive services for up to 24 months (up to 36 months in counties that have opted into the THP-Plus extension for youth in school)</td>
<td>Find a program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers</td>
<td>Youth age 18-24 that have left foster care or will leave within 90 days, and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (includes out-of-home care probation youth)</td>
<td>Up to 36 months of subsidized housing &amp; up to 18 months of supportive services</td>
<td>Public Housing Authorities that administer FUP: &lt;br&gt;Awards all years &lt;br&gt;2020 Awards &lt;br&gt;More info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers</td>
<td>Youth age 18-24 that have left foster care or will leave within 90 days, and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (includes out-of-home care probation youth)</td>
<td>Up to 36 months of subsidized housing &amp; supportive services</td>
<td>No list yet available of Public Housing Authorities that administer FYI. &lt;br&gt;More info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State &amp; Federally Funded Homelessness Response</td>
<td>People are assessed through the local Coordinated Entry System</td>
<td>Varies; may include but not limited to shelter, transitional housing, Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, prevention services</td>
<td>Locate your community’s Homeless Continuum of Care &lt;br&gt;Find currently state-funded youth providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Affordable Housing</td>
<td>No youth-focused affordable housing developments; eligibility varies and is usually tied to income and sometimes special population status.</td>
<td>Whether services are provided and type vary across developments; generally no time limit on housing</td>
<td>No centralized entry / application process; waiting lists for housing developments open periodically. Identify affordable housing by county using this directory.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CHANGES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the state has taken several steps to protect youth in out-of-home care. In the area of placement and housing, the following temporary policies are in place.

Participation Condition Flexibility

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has instructed counties to continue assistance for Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs) who cannot meet any of the participation conditions of EFC due to COVID-19 impacts through June 30, 2021, or until federal Stafford Act flexibilities terminate, whichever is sooner. Social workers and probation officers must continue to work with the youth to assist them in meeting one of the existing EFC participation conditions; however if eligibility cannot be maintained within existing flexibilities, caseworkers must document the reasons in the case plan but maintain placement payments for the youth. In December 2020, new federal legislation extended federal Stafford Act flexibilities through the end of the federal fiscal year, September 30, 2021. Further state guidance about this extension has not yet been issued.

Changes to SILP Approval Process

Assembly Bill 79 authorized counties to complete Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) inspections through remote methods, and for FY 2020-21, allows a county to temporarily approve the SILP pending submission of required forms by the NMD, based on verbal or electronic agreement that the forms will be submitted. To approve SILP housing remotely without waiving safety concerns, CDSS has provided social workers and probation officers the option to, in addition to a phone call, accept photos of the youth’s placement; conduct a virtual tour of the placement during a videoconferencing call; request a copy of the lease agreement; and utilize any other methods deemed suitable by the county placing agency that reasonably assesses the NMD’s safety in the living arrangement.

Continued Assistance Payments and Case Management Support to Young Adults Turning 21

The FY 2020-21 state budget included $32 million to provide continued assistance payments and case management support to young adults turning 21 on or after April 17, 2020, until June 30, 2021. Counties that discontinued assistance payments for young adults turning 21 on or after April 17, 2020 were instructed on October 23, 2020 by CDSS in All County Letter 20-117E to make diligent efforts to contact those young adults no later than ten days from the release of the letter, in order to arrange to resume and make retroactive assistance payments.

Because upon turning 21 these young adults are no longer in extended foster care, they are not held to the participation requirements or the housing or placement approval requirements of NMDs. Payments may not be terminated due to the youth not participating in employment or education activities, or for living in unapproved housing.

If the young adult was residing with a placement provider, such as THP-NMD, the payment would be made to the provider. If the young adult did not remain in a provider-based setting, they are eligible for payment equivalent to the rate for a SILP, even if a housing location was not approved. Young adults may continue to reside in any type of eligible foster care placement or receive a payment equivalent to the SILP rate.

If a parenting young adult was receiving an infant supplement immediately prior to turning 21 years old, the infant supplement is continued to the provider or young adult as long as the child continues to reside with the parent. After a young adult turns 21, a new infant supplement may be approved based on a change of circumstances.

In December 2020, new federal legislation passed prohibiting states from exiting a youth from foster care due to age through September 30, 2021, however state guidance on the continuation of this assistance has not yet been issued.

Extension of THP-Plus Regardless of Age or Participation Duration

Effective July 1, 2020, Assembly Bill 79 provided counties the option to extend THP-Plus services to youth participating in THP-Plus as of July 1, 2020 without regard to THP-Plus age or length of time restrictions, until June 30, 2021. Unlike the extension provided by SB 1252, the extension provided by Assembly Bill 79 is not conditional upon participation in secondary or postsecondary education. If a county opts to extend THP-Plus without regard to age or length of time restrictions, it must be available to all former foster youth participating in the program in that county.

NOTE: For more information about continued assistance payments and case management support to young adults turning 21, refer to All County Letter 20-117E. For information about the other three policy changes, refer to All County Letter 20-112.

For the most up-to-date state guidance related to COVID-19, visit the letters and notices section on the CDSS website.
ENDNOTES

1 State legislation: Assembly Bill 12, Chapter 559 (Statutes of 2010).
2 Federal legislation: PL 110-351.
4 Welfare & Institutions Code § 300(d)(2)
5 Welfare & Institutions Code §§ 11400(z), 388(e), 366.31(c); All County Letter 12-12 (2012).
6 Welfare & Institutions Code § 14000(v)
7 Welfare & Institutions Code § 450 et seq.
8 Welfare & Institutions Code § 11403(b)(5); All County Letters 11-61 (2011) and 11-69 (2011).
9 Welfare & Institutions Code § 11403(b); All County Letter 11-69 (2011).
10 Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Chambers, J., Hammond, I., Ayat, N., Misirli, E., Hoerl, C., Yee, H., Flamson, T., Carpenter, W., Gonzalez, A., & Briones, E. (2020). CCWIP reports. Retrieved July 14, 2020, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: https://ccwip.berkeley.edu. NMDs on “runaway” status are not residing in an eligible placement, or their whereabouts are unknown to their probation officer. The other category in this chart collapses three categories from CCWIP into one: 1) Those included in the “other” category in CCWIP. For more information about what CCWIP’s “other” category consists of, visit https://ccwip.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/methodologies/default.aspx?definition=PlacementType&backReport=PLT&report=. 2) Those on trial home visits (very small number); and 3) Those entered as “non-foster care,” which, according to CCWIP occurs when the youth has had one or more placements in the same episode (very small number).
19 Ibid.
20 https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-fc-provider-roster/
25 Ibid.
26 California Department of Social Services. Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program Interim Licensing Standards,

27 More information about the Housing Navigators Program can be found at https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/hnp.shtml. Award amounts can be found at https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/hnp/docs/hnplistofawardees.pdf.


31 For more information about the THP-NMD Housing Supplement read a fact sheet developed by John Burton Advocates for Youth: https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-nmd-housing-supplement-fact-sheet/.

32 Welfare & Institutions Code §§ 607.3(e), 607.5


34 Counties that had opted into the THP-Plus extension as of FY 2019-20 are: Imperial, Kings, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Tulare, Ventura, Yolo and Yuba. This information is available on John Burton Advocates for Youth’s website: https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-plus-extension/.


36 Ibid.

37 To view a list of which counties accept out-of-county youth in their THP-Plus programs as of March 2019, visit https://www.jbaforyouth.org/out-of-county-youth-thp-plus/. To view a statewide roster of THP-Plus providers, visit https://www.jbaforyouth.org/thp-plus-provider-roster/.

38 More information about the Transitional Housing Program can be found at https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/thp.shtml. Award amounts can be found at https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/thp/docs/thp_list_of_awardees.pdf.


42 https://www.hcd.ca.gov/about/contact/affordable-housing-rental-directory/index.shtml

43 https://www.211ca.org/


45 Assembly Bill 79 (Human Services Omnibus). Chapter 11 (Statutes of 2020).


48 Assembly Bill 79 (Human Services Omnibus). Chapter 11 (Statutes of 2020).
