



AB 2162 - Foster Youth Housing Voucher

SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 2162 ensures that counties can assist former foster youth issued federal housing vouchers with identifying, securing, and maintaining housing by increasing the age at which county welfare agencies can provide services through the state-funded Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program from age 24 to 28.

BACKGROUND

California has made measurable progress in reducing homelessness among youth formerly in foster care by investing in services that help them access federal Housing Choice Vouchers. These “Section 8” rental support vouchers are distributed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) through the Family Unification Program (FUP) and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative. As a condition of receiving FYI/FUP vouchers, PHAs must partner with Public Child Welfare Agencies, which verify eligibility and provide housing navigation and supportive services. These services are required by HUD and critical to youth securing housing with their voucher and maintaining ongoing stability.

The Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program (HNMP) is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and provides services for youth with FYI/FUP vouchers. Before 2022, county child welfare agencies lacked funding for these services, resulting in underutilization of federal FYI/FUP vouchers. Since HNMP’s expansion, California’s FYI/FUP vouchers have increased 136%, from 870 vouchers in 2021 to over 2,000 in 2024. For counties that participate in the state program, HCD requires annual reporting to ensure compliance. The state’s current annual investment of \$13.7 million in HNMP unlocks more than \$33 million in federal rental assistance each year for former foster youth in

communities across California. FYI/FUP was not included in any of the recently proposed federal cuts and was declared a priority by the First Lady.

PROBLEM

As of October 1, 2025, there were 7,422 young adults ages 18-20 participating in extended foster care in California. About 3,000 young people exit care each year without family support.

Young adults can receive rental assistance from an FYI/FUP voucher for up to five years. Youth who receive their voucher at age 24 — the age cap for initiating this federal assistance -may keep their voucher through age 28. However, HNMP services currently end at 24, leaving counties without resources to provide critical support to voucher holders beyond that age, including help pursuing education, employment, and other self-sufficiency goals.

For all housing grants that support Transition Age Youth (TAY), HCD requires counties to report how the funding is being used to their department. Additionally, HUD’s public data does not identify which vouchers serve youth, limiting community awareness and statewide understanding of which counties and PHAs participate in FYI/FUP and how many vouchers are in circulation. This creates obstacles to access and a lack of transparency about which communities are first to maximize federal funding before turning to state and local funding.

SOLUTION

To build on California’s track record of supporting former foster youth in achieving stable housing as they transition into adulthood, AB 2162 would:

- Expand the upper age limit for HNMP-funded services from 24 to 28.

- Requires two additional questions to the existing reporting form for counties that accept HNMP funding:
 - Which counties are or are not partnering with Public Housing Authorities, and why.
 - The number of FYI/FUP vouchers issued to young adults in the county.
- Require that HCD make this information publicly available.

SUPPORT

John Burton Advocates for Youth (Sponsor)

Downtown Women's Center (Sponsor)

Western Center on Law and Poverty (Co-Sponsor)

San Francisco Women's Housing Coalition

(Co-Sponsor)

Domestic Violence & Homeless Services Coalition

(Co-Sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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