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TO RETURN TO THIS PAGE

[CLICK HERE FOR DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES' REPORT DATED JANUARY 20, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HEALTH'S REPORT DATED FEBRUARY 17, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION'S REPORT DATED MARCH 17, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION'S REPORT DATED MAY 18, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE DIRECTOR OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENTS' REPORT DATED MAY 18, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES' REPORT DATED MAY 19, 2026](#)



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DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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January 20, 2026

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Brandon T. Nichols
Director

REPORT BACK REGARDING THE NOVEMBER 18, 2025, BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 18) ON STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING DCFS CARE

On November 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Horvath and Solis directing the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report back in 60 days on the following directives:

- 1e. An assessment within 30 days to determine the estimated number of foster youths aging out of care due to age in 2026, including demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity), and by zip code or region/Service Planning Area (SPA); and
- 8a. Direct Homeless Services and Housing (HSH) and DCFS to report back in 60 days on the protocol to ensure that all youth receiving the vouchers receive HSH Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS).

This serves as the Department's 60-day report back on the above-mentioned directives.

BACKGROUND

Transition Age Youth (TAY) represent one of the most vulnerable populations in Los Angeles County. Research by RAND, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and Good River/UCLA has consistently shown that young people aging out of foster care face disproportionate risks of homelessness, unemployment and instability. RAND's recent analysis highlights that despite targeted investments, housing insecurity among TAY

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

remains high. The Hilton Foundation's Foster Youth Initiative reports that each year more than 1,100 youth exit foster care in Los Angeles County, with up to 40 percent experiencing homelessness soon after.

Rising homelessness rates, increased reliance on emergency services and long-term economic costs affect all residents. Additionally, Los Angeles is facing the following unprecedented economic pressures:

- Rising costs of living
- Stark job market
- Housing affordability crisis
- Insufficient housing stock

These conditions compound the vulnerability identified in the RAND, Hilton, and Good River/UCLA reports.

CURRENT EFFORTS

Directive 1e: An assessment within 30 days to determine the estimated number of foster youths aging out of care due to age in 2026, including demographics (age, gender, race/ethnicity), and by zip code or region/SPA.

DCFS estimates that the number of TAY who will age out of foster care in 2026 between the ages of 18 to 21 will be 1,245, of which 509 TAY are between the ages of 18-20 and may be eligible for extended foster care. The remaining 736 TAY will be 21 and no longer eligible for extended foster care. It is important to note that Non-minor Dependents (NMDs) in a Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) may remain in this placement until age 21. Additionally, any NMD who exits DCFS between the ages of 18 and 20 may re-enter and be placed in a SILP, if appropriate, up until their 21st birthday.

The tables below provide a breakdown of the 1,245 TAY by SPA and demographics.

Table 1: Estimated Number of TAY Aging Out in 2026 by SPA

SPA	Count
SPA 1	125
SPA 2	151
SPA 3	189
SPA 4	85
SPA 5	26
SPA 6	279
SPA 7	130
SPA 8	148
Specialized Programs*	112
TOTAL	1,245

Data Source: Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) Datamart as of 12/8/2025.

**Specialized Programs include Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, American Indian Unit, Asian Pacific Unit, Deaf Services Unit, Medical Case Management Services, Youth Engagement Section, and Juvenile Court Services & Adoption. Data includes TAY with a designated case component of Supportive Transition in CWS/CMS.*

Table 2: Estimated Number of TAY Aging Out in 2026 by Demographics

Category	Count
AGE*	
18 Years	185
19 Years	122
20 Years	202
21 Years	736
TOTAL	1,245
GENDER	
Male	544
Female	662
Unknown	39
TOTAL	1,245

(continued)

Table 2: Estimated Number of TAY Aging Out in 2026 by Demographics (continued)

Category	Count
ETHNICITY	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4
Asian Pacific Islander	32
Black	313
Hispanic	685
Other	111
White	100
TOTAL	1,245

Data Source: CWS/CMS Datamart as of 12/8/2025.

*Age as of the case end date.

Additionally, the table below provides a breakdown of the housing plans for youth who exited care at the age of 21 during Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25.

Table 3: Housing Plan for Youth Who Exited Care at Age 21 (FY 2024-25)

Category	Count
HOUSING PLAN TYPE	
NMDs accepted into THP-Plus* Programs	23
Transitional Living Placement	27
College Dorms	30
NMD in own Apartment	82
Former Foster Parents/Caregivers	76
Out-of-State Living on their Own/Family/Friends	18
Regional Center Placement	18
Military/Job Corps	8
NMD Remains with Family/Friends/Legal Guardian/Support System	371
Stepping Stones	6
Treatment Program	1
Incarcerated**	5
Shelter	2
Hotel	1
Unknown***	3
TOTAL	671

Data Source: DCFS Monthly Report on Youth Exiting Care.

*Transitional Housing Program-Plus.

**At the time of exit, youth was still incarcerated.

***Housing plan unknown due to the youth being AWOL.

Directive 8a: Direct HSH and DCFS to report back in 60 days on the protocol to ensure that all youth receiving the vouchers receive HSH ICMS.

ICMS is a voluntary service offered to TAY to promote long-term housing stability and personal well-being. It is designed to provide individualized wraparound support to TAY transitioning into housing. These services can include assistance with housing navigation, life skills development, mental health and substance use support and linkages to community-based resources.

While HSH and DCFS ensure every TAY Foster Youth to Independence voucher holder is referred for ICMS, participation in services cannot be mandated. However, the Continuum of Care system ensures every youth is notified of and referred to ICMS. TAY may decline services, but they retain the option to engage later if they choose to do so. It is important to note that at this stage for this particular process, TAY are no longer legal dependents and their child welfare cases are closed.

The existing protocol between HSH and DCFS' Supportive Housing Division ensures that TAY are connected to ICMS at the earliest possible stage of the voucher process. The steps are as follows:



Voucher Anticipation by Public Housing Authority

When a Public Housing Authority (PHA) anticipates receiving housing vouchers, they request a list of eligible youth from DCFS. The latter department sends the names to the PHA.

PHA Sends Names to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development

The PHA sends a list of names to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), notifying HUD to request a voucher for those on the list.

Referral Prior to Voucher Issuance

Simultaneously, the same list of names sent to the PHAs are sent to HSH as a referral to ICMS for pre-match.

Dual Notification of ICMS Services

All TAY are informed of ICMS twice during the process. The first time is during their initial interview with DCFS staff. The second time is when they are notified via email that they have been matched to a PHA and will be issued a voucher. This dual notification (verbal and email) reinforces awareness of the service and encourages participation.

NEXT STEPS

In closing, DCFS will continue to collaborate with existing partners, as well as leverage new partnerships and opportunities, to further support and improve the work around addressing the housing needs of TAY exiting DCFS care.

We thank the Board for its ongoing support and commitment to ensuring that the needs of TAY are met. We look forward to updating the Board on our collective efforts in future reports.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Liaison, at (213) 371-6052.

BTN:JF:CMM
APP:ZS:ec

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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LISA H. WONG, Psy.D.
Director

Curley L. Bonds, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

Rimmi Hundal, M.A.
Chief Deputy Director

February 17, 2026

TO: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D.
Director

SUBJECT: **STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES
FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING DCFS CARE-
DIRECTIVE 11 (ITEM NO. 18, AGENDA OF NOVEMBER 18, 2025)**

On November 18, 2025, your Board approved the motion directing the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to work in collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to improve coordination, communication, and service alignment between DMH's Office of Transition Age Youth (TAY), Housing and Job Development Division (now "Housing Division"), and DCFS. This report outlines actions taken to date, describes existing and emerging cross-departmental partnerships, and presents considerations and strategies to strengthen outreach, engagement, housing access, and retention for DCFS-impacted youth and young adults, including the targeted use of Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) housing resources. This report serves as the response to Directive 11.

Workplan for Improved Collaboration, Coordination, and Communication

Establishment of the DMH Office of TAY

In November 2025, DMH launched the Office of TAY, serving youth and young adults ages 16–25. The Office of TAY was created to expand innovative and youth-centered approaches to mental health and wellbeing while recognizing the importance of holistic stability, including housing, education, and workforce supports. The Office of TAY is aligned with DCFS Youth Development Services (YDS) in mission, which aims to provide

comprehensive services and resources to assist TAY successful transition into adulthood while supporting their wellbeing and holistic needs

New opportunities incorporated into DMH programming for TAY include:

1. Increased Outreach and Engagement

- Expanded field-based outreach and engagement through specialized TAY teams, including the upcoming Youth Bridges Outpatient Field-Based program.
- Youth Bridges will focus on outreach, engagement, and direct service provision for disconnected youth ages 18–25 in need of specialty mental health and/or co-occurring substance use disorder services and/or support with school, internships, and workforce opportunities. DMH will work closely with the DCFS YDS Division to ensure that outreach and engagement begin before youth exit foster care through the use of a co-designed referral pathway.
- Youth with lived experience have been embedded as Mental Health Advocates (MHA), providing outreach and engagement as part of multidisciplinary treatment teams (please note that this entry position sits on a Community Health Worker [CHW] item that the TAY with lived experience will be eligible to promote to after a six-month tenure in the MHA position).
- The 2026 goals include a multi-phased approach that consists of hiring an additional two MHA's that will bring the Office of TAY's total to five MHA/CHW's by the end of 2026 and Phase II would add at least three additional MHA/CHW staff that would be positioned to cover all eight Service Areas (SA's) throughout Los Angeles County by the end of 2027.

2. Enhanced Internal DMH Coordination

- Increased coordination among the Office of TAY and DMH divisions, including:
 - Specialized Foster Care
 - Child/Youth Outpatient Community Services (OCS)
 - Juvenile Justice (including the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children [CSEC] Unit)
 - School-Based Community Access Points (SBCAP)
 - Housing Division (formerly known as the Housing and Job Development Division)
- Coordination is facilitated through regularly scheduled meetings, trainings, and structured sharing of resources.

3. Strengthened Interdepartmental Coordination

- Increased coordination with DCFS and the Department of Youth Development (DYD) through standing meetings, trainings, and shared resources.
- Implementation of monthly high-level leadership meetings to align policy and operational decision-making.
- With DCFS specifically, engagement of supportive housing teams through roundtable presentations and discussions to establish referral mechanisms and workflows.

4. Development of Career Pathways and Youth Leadership

Career pathways and professional development opportunities for youth leaders have been established within the Office of TAY. Initiation of career pathways and professional development opportunities for TAY, include:

- Internship opportunities with community colleges and universities.
- Collaborations with Los Angeles City YouthSource Centers, Public Works Alliance, and the Department of Economic Opportunity.
- Embedding youth leadership within DMH through MHA positions.
- Current staffing includes:
 - Three MHAs hired (with two additional hires in process).
 - Two student interns (one Master of Social Work [MSW]) student and one community college intern).

MHAs support outreach, engagement, system navigation, and trust-building with housing-eligible youth. Through shared lived experience, peer mentors are uniquely positioned to:

- Improve engagement with youth who may be hesitant to access traditional services.
- Support successful housing placement through warm handoffs and ongoing support.

Promote housing stability and retention by maintaining consistent, youth-centered engagement.

Countywide Collaboration and Youth-Serving Partnerships

A foundational component of DMH's and DCFS' approach to serving TAY is sustained countywide collaboration with youth-serving agency partners, community-based organizations, youth leader and housing networks, and TAY coordinating bodies. DMH and DCFS are actively involved in, or lead, countywide initiatives supporting TAY and youth homelessness, including:

- Los Angeles Prevention & Promotion Systems Governing Committee (PPSGC)
- Los Angeles County Children and Youth System of Care
- TAY Table Co-Leads (Countywide Coordinating Body)
- Youth Commission's Youth Engagement Committee (YEC)
- One Roof 2.0, Steering Comm. Member (Los Angeles County Coordinating Body, designed to improve housing stability for systems-impacted youth and young adults)
- Youth Homelessness Systems Improvement (YHSI)

Targeted Collaboration Between DMH Office of TAY and Interim Housing Program (IHP)

In early 2025, as DMH expanded support for TAY, the Office of TAY and the Housing Division's IHP identified the need for targeted internal collaboration. Efforts focused on:

- Sharing resources and information.
- Establishing regular coordination meetings.
- Formalizing workflows between divisions.

Enhanced Coordination with DCFS and Housing-Related Training

Engagement and Capacity-Building

In September 2025, DMH Office of TAY assisted the Housing Division's IHP in connecting with key DCFS programs serving TAY. Beginning in October 2025:

- DMH IHP initiated coordination meetings with DCFS managers.
- DMH IHP provided trainings to approximately 345 DCFS staff.

Each training included:

- An overview of the interim housing landscape in Los Angeles County.
- Services provided at DMH IHP sites.

- Program expansion and newly opened sites.
- Eligibility criteria and referral processes.
- Communication protocols with IHP.
- Additional interim housing resources.

DCFS staff were encouraged to refer youth to DMH IHP beds either through existing DMH providers or by submitting referrals directly to IHP.

Meetings and Presentations

DMH IHP engagement with DCFS included:

DATE	TYPE	DCFS PARTNER / UNIT	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
October 3, 2025	Coordination Meeting	• Out-of-Home Care Management Division: Quality Assurance Section	Managers Meeting
October 9, 2025	Coordination Meeting	• YDS Division/ • Authentic Youth Engagement (AYE), Youth Engagement Section (YES)/ • Children and TAY Bureau	Managers Meeting
October 21, 2025	Presentation	• DCFS High Risk Section (Children and TAY Bureau, High Risk Services, Residential Care Liaison)	Approx. 22
October 28, 2025	Presentation	• AB12 Champions Meeting	Approx. 191
November 20, 2025	Presentation	• Supportive Housing Division	Approx. 23
January 9, 2026	Presentation	• Foster Family Agency (FFA) • Short-Term Residential Treatment Program (STRTP)	Approx. 109
January 21, 2026	Presentation/Coordination	• Supportive Housing Division	Approx. 23

Increase in DMH Interim Housing Beds for TAY

In August and September 2025, DMH IHP opened **95 additional interim housing beds for TAY** across five new sites using Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) program funding. This expansion included **11 family units** designated for TAY heads of household and their minor children.

Foster Youth Prioritization, Interim Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing Considerations

DMH examined the feasibility of holding IHP beds exclusively for foster youth and former foster youth, as well as strategies to improve identification and prioritization of DCFS-impacted TAY across interim and permanent housing resources.

Interim Housing Program

- DMH has not historically designated IHP beds exclusively for former foster youth.
- Foster youth status is not currently collected on the IHP referral form, which is used jointly by DMH, the Homeless Services and Housing (HSH) Department, and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).
- Based on program experience, population-specific bed set-asides have often resulted in higher vacancy rates, particularly when eligibility is dependent on documentation or self-disclosure.

Considerations and Potential Path Forward

- DMH is open to prioritizing foster youth and former foster youth for IHP beds rather than establishing fixed bed set-asides.
- Implementing such prioritization would require:
 - Modifying the IHP referral form to collect foster youth status.
 - Incorporating this data element into the DMH IHP data system.
- It is important to note that some TAY may be hesitant to self-disclose foster care involvement, which may present equity and access concerns and could unintentionally disadvantage youth who choose not to disclose.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and Coordinated Entry System (CES)

- DMH is required to utilize the CES to match individuals with PSH units.
- Current CES prioritization policies do not include foster youth or former foster youth as a priority population.

- Any change to CES prioritization criteria would require review and action by the CES Policy Council.

Additional Considerations

- Similar to interim housing, prioritization based on foster youth status within CES may inadvertently favor youth willing to self-disclose over those who are not.
- BHSA-funded interim and bridge housing resources provide an important mechanism to support DCFS-impacted TAY while permanent housing pathways are pursued.

Next Steps

In closing, through the establishment of the Office of TAY, expanded interim housing capacity, strengthened interdepartmental collaboration, and the integration of youth with lived experience as MHAs, DMH has made meaningful progress toward strengthening supports for young adults in Los Angeles County, especially those exiting care.

DMH remains committed to continued partnership with DCFS, County departments, and community stakeholders to strengthen referral pathways, improve identification of DCFS-impacted youth, and enhance engagement and housing stability outcomes. As implementation efforts continue, DMH will also leverage available BHSA resources, where feasible and allowable, to support housing interventions for TAY, particularly those aging out of foster care—while maintaining alignment with Countywide housing policies and CES requirements. DMH will continue to report back to the Board as coordination efforts advance and additional opportunities for system improvement are identified in the workplan.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me, or staff can contact Mary R. Barraza, at (213) 948-2262 or maryrbarraza@dmh.lacounty.gov

LHW:MB:lm

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
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ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 17, 2026

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Alaina Moonves-Leb, Acting Executive Director
Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection (OCP)

Alaina Moonves-Leb

REPORT-BACK ON THE NOVEMBER 18, 2025, BOARD MOTION (AGENDA ITEM 18)— STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES for FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES' CARE, DIRECTIVE 9

On November 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Horvath and Solis that directed the LA County TAY Table of the System of Care, through the OCP in partnership with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Department of Youth Development (DYD), the Los Angeles County Youth Commission, Homeless Services and Housing (HSH), the LA Emissary and other groups of youth with lived experience, to:

Report back in 120 days with a comprehensive list of all the tables working to end youth homelessness and recommendations to minimize the number of groups (by combining, consolidating and cutting efforts), reduce duplicative efforts, and identify clearly defined, distinct scopes of work for each remaining entity.

SUMMARY

Methodology for Listing of Youth Homelessness-Focused Tables

The scope and scale of youth homelessness is vast, and myriad existing groups focus on addressing aspects of this issue. These entities include but are not limited to, public sector and local jurisdictional agencies, regional governing bodies, County

commissions, non-profits and advocacy organizations, and faith-based organizations, all of whom play a critical role in the collective youth homelessness response system.

Given the breadth and volume of groups that strive to address youth homelessness, this report limits analysis to groups that 1.) focus on youth homelessness exclusively and 2.) target a significant portion of the population.

This report also analyzes the distinct functional roles these groups play within the youth homelessness response system, including cross-system coordination, service provider collaboration, youth leadership and lived-experience engagement, advocacy and systems change, research and data analysis, and prevention strategies.

Recommendations to Reduce Duplication and Strengthen Coordination

Based on stakeholder input and review of existing structures, the report identifies opportunities to strengthen coordination, clarify scopes of work, and reduce duplicative engagement, particularly in the areas of youth participation and lived-experience leadership.

The report recommends aligning and coordinating existing efforts where appropriate, rather than deleting or creating new bodies. Specifically, it recommends designating the Youth Homeless Systems Improvement (YHSI) Cross System Leadership Table as the central governance structure for coordinating youth lived-experience engagement and strengthening alignment across youth homelessness initiatives.

Together, these actions will help streamline collaboration, reduce unnecessary duplication, and ensure Los Angeles County's (LA County) youth homelessness response remains coordinated and youth-centered, while maintaining progress toward the shared goal of achieving functional zero youth homelessness in LA County.

OVERVIEW, SCOPES OF WORK, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALIGNMENT

Introduction

LA County has several collaborative bodies and initiatives focused on preventing and ending homelessness among youth and young adults, including those who are in or have been impacted by the foster and probation systems.

While their missions are generally aligned, these groups in many ways serve distinct and complementary functions within the youth homelessness ecosystem. Their work largely falls into the following categories: cross-system coordination, service provider

collaboration, community organizing, advocacy and systems change, research and data analysis, and training/education.

Together, these efforts form a multi-layered infrastructure dedicated to youth housing stability, supporting both system-level planning and service implementation. This structure helps ensure LA County's homelessness response includes strategies tailored to the unique pathways and service needs associated with youth and young adult homelessness.

Why Multiple Tables Exist

The presence of multiple collaborative groups reflects the cross-system and regional nature of youth homelessness, and the abundance of diverse stakeholders with interest in this subject. Young people experiencing housing instability often interact with multiple systems, including child welfare, education, workforce development, behavioral health, and housing, which requires coordination across agencies, service providers, and community partners. Additionally, the geographic scale and diversity of LA County necessitates collaboration across multiple regions.

Many of these groups emerged over time to address different aspects of the youth homelessness response, including policy coordination, service delivery collaboration, youth leadership, research and data analysis, and regional partnership.

While some overlap in membership or topics has naturally developed, stakeholders consistently emphasized that these spaces are largely complementary rather than duplicative. However, they also identified opportunities to strengthen coordination, clarify roles, and reduce duplicative engagement, particularly in the area of youth participation and lived-experience leadership.

Youth Homelessness-Focused Tables

Attachment 1 provides a list of collaborative groups in LA County whose primary focus is youth housing instability and homelessness, including key information about their purpose, leadership structure, group composition, County role, and scope of work.

For the purposes of this report, only groups whose primary focus included both youth/young adults and housing or homelessness were included.

Comparative Analysis of Youth Homelessness Tables

The tables included in this analysis share the common goal of addressing youth homelessness, but they differ across several dimensions documented in the chart, including:

- Focal population (all youth vs. current/former youth in the foster care or probation systems)
- Leadership structure (youth-led, partner-led, County-led)
- Participant composition (community advocates, system representatives, local government, service providers, lived experts)
- Primary focus of work (advocacy/policy, service delivery, community organizing, training/education, or systems coordination)
- Geographic focus (countywide, or focused on specific regions or communities)

Reviewing the combinations of these characteristics helps clarify how the tables overlap and where they serve distinct roles within the youth homelessness ecosystem.

Below is a comparison of how each group relates to others and what makes its combination of roles and participants unique.

- **AB 12 Housing Stability Subcommittee**: Subcommittee of the LA County AB 12 Steering Committee and focuses on addressing housing-related issues for Non-Minor Dependents.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other groups, this table includes community advocates, systems representatives, service providers, and lived experts and focuses on policy and advocacy related to housing stability among youth.

Distinct Combination

This table is distinguished by its focus on youth currently under the supervision of the Department of Children and Family Services and/or the Probation Department, while also bringing together systems representatives and service providers to address policy issues affecting this population.

- **Gateway Cities Council of Governments TAY Housing Coalition**: Established to coordinate on the TAY Housing and employment pilot project.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like the LAHSA CES TAY Subcommittee (detailed below) and other cross-system groups, this coalition includes system representatives, local government partners, service providers, and lived experts.

Distinct Combination

This group has a unique regional collaboration structure, and leadership of local government partners. It is also working on a specific employment project related to housing.

- **Greater LA Coalition on Homelessness**: Works to expand homeless services and immediate assistance for people in need, while also addressing the root causes of homelessness.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other collaboratives, this coalition includes community advocates and service providers and focuses on advocacy and policy recommendations related to homelessness.

Distinct Combination

This group uniquely combines community advocates, local government participation, and service providers with a focus on policy advocacy affecting the broader youth population, rather than system-involved youth specifically.

- **Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership (HHYP)**: Strategic alliance of youth-serving agencies working together to prevent and end homelessness among youth and young adults in Hollywood.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other groups, HHYP focuses on youth experiencing homelessness broadly and includes service providers working directly with youth.

Distinct Combination

HHYP is one of the few groups that combines policy advocacy and direct service delivery perspectives, bringing service providers together to address youth homelessness from both policy and practice perspectives. This group is also uniquely focused on a specific geographic region.

- **Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles (HYFLA)**: Works to end youth homelessness in LA County by centering the voices of youth with lived expertise in decision-making on program development, funding, policy making, and program and system performance evaluation.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like LA Emissary (detailed below) and several other collaboratives, HYFLA centers community advocates and lived experts in discussions about youth homelessness.

Distinct Combination

HYFLA is distinguished by being youth-led and including system representatives and lived experts alongside community advocates while focusing on advocacy and policy recommendations affecting youth experiencing homelessness broadly.

- **LA Emissary (YYA Pooled Fund)**: Works to prevent and end youth homelessness in LA County by positioning youth and young adult leaders with lived experience with homelessness and systems involvement as co-decision makers within the homeless response system; training a network of young people across LA County with skills needed to become advocates around funding and policy priorities related to homelessness; and engaging in collaborative decision making to address youth homelessness with young people, funders, providers, County, and system partners.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like HYFLA and other youth-centered initiatives, LA Emissary includes lived experts and community advocates and is youth-led.

Distinct Combination

LA Emissary stands out by combining youth leadership, lived expertise, community organizing, advocacy, and training/education activities, giving it a broader set of engagement strategies compared with other youth-led tables.

- **Los Angeles Housing Services Authority (LAHSA) Coordinated Entry System (CES) Policy Council TAY Subcommittee**: Network that aligns homeless services in LA County together to ensure that resources are efficiently and equitably distributed to support people experiencing homelessness. The TAY subcommittee focuses on youth services and funding allocation.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several cross-system collaboratives, this group includes community advocates, system representatives, local government participants, service providers, and lived experts.

Distinct Combination

This table combines broad stakeholder representation with a focus on service delivery and systems coordination, positioning it as one of the groups that directly addresses system-level processes affecting youth housing access. It is also connected directly with the CES system, which addresses distribution of resources.

- **Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles – We Are LA Children & Youth Program:** Prevents Angelenos from falling into homelessness through partnerships with community organizations providing access to eviction prevention services and support such as legal services and healthcare. This program connects Non-Minor Dependents to housing and supportive resources. The program is being expanded this year to include additional provider organizations and the purchase of 60 to 75 housing units dedicated to young adults aging out of the system at 21.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other collaboratives, this initiative includes community advocates, system representatives, and local government participation.

Distinct Combination

This group is distinct in that it focuses on youth involved in the foster care or probation systems, while combining policy advocacy, service delivery strategies, and training/education efforts. It is also unique in its work directly connecting non-minor dependents to housing and services.

- **One Roof 2.0:** A collective action table working to identify strategies to align systems to prevent homelessness for transitional age youth with a specific focus on youth exiting foster care and disconnected youth.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table and other multi-stakeholder groups, One Roof includes community advocates, system representatives, County departments, other local government partners, service providers, and lived experts.

Distinct Combination

One Roof is one of the few groups that combines broad stakeholder representation with youth leadership and systems coordination, while also incorporating training and education activities in addition to policy work. It also includes a key leadership role for the County in partnership with other stakeholders.

- **TAY Housing Advocates:** Brings together advocates and the LAHSA - DCFS/Probation liaisons to share best practices, address complex problems, and raise common/systemic issues.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other groups, this table includes community advocates, service providers, and lived experts working on youth housing issues.

Distinct Combination

This group focuses specifically on youth in foster care or probation systems and emphasizes service delivery and direct service coordination, distinguishing it from groups focused primarily on policy advocacy.

- **Young People to the Front:** A research and policy lab that specializes in understanding and addressing youth homelessness in LA. Their mission is to bolster the capacity of our community through data-driven insights, and foster a platform that transforms strategic communication into action.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like several other initiatives, this group includes community advocates, service providers, and lived experts and focuses on policy and advocacy related to youth homelessness.

Distinct Combination

This group uniquely combines advocacy, community organizing, and training/education activities, along with participation from service providers and lived experts, giving it a broader engagement approach than many policy-focused tables. It also has a distinct focus on research that is unique among groups. Unique projects, such as their TAY Podcast series invite creative ways for young people to engage with this work.

- **Youth Homeless Systems Improvement (YHSI) Cross System Leadership Table (CSLT):** Creates strategies around supporting TAY and foster youth impacted by the housing and homelessness system via a collective of lived experts, County partners, and community-based organizations.

Similarities to Other Tables

Like One Roof and several other collaboratives, the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table includes community advocates, system representatives, local government participants, and lived experts.

Distinct Combination

This group is distinguished by combining youth leadership with cross-system representation and systems coordination functions, while also supporting advocacy, community organizing, and training/education efforts. Their County

lived expert leadership and representation from each Service Provider Area and several different organizations makes them an important place for collaboration.

Select Related Tables Addressing Youth and Housing

Several additional groups were identified by stakeholders as having interest in youth and housing, but were not included in the core analysis because their primary focus is not youth homelessness or housing. These groups include:

- Coalition for Supportive Housing
- Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking
- LA County Leadership Table for Regional Homeless Alignment
- LA County Probation Department-Child Trafficking Unit
- LA County Youth Commission
- National Foster Youth Initiative-Los Angeles Chapter

These entities, and others, represent additional opportunities for coordination and partnership as LA County advances strategies addressing youth homelessness.

Overlap and Opportunities for Alignment

As the youth homelessness field has expanded, overlap in membership, meeting topics, and youth participation has emerged across several groups.

Stakeholders, including youth leaders, lived experts, service providers, and system partners, consistently indicated that these groups were created for different purposes and continue to serve important roles. Stakeholders also raised the fact that it can be important to have spaces with different combinations of members, including some that do not involve County representatives for different types of discussion. However, they also emphasized the need to:

- Strengthen coordination across groups
- Clarify distinct scopes of work
- Reduce duplicative requests for youth participation
- Improve pathways for translating recommendations into system action

Importantly, stakeholders noted that creating an additional coordinating body, or sunseting existing bodies would not address these challenges. Instead, the priority should be aligning and coordinating existing structures.

Much of this is already happening, particularly with One Roof 2.0, which regularly brings together and connects different efforts across LA County. For example, their newsletter was lifted up as an example of the ways that organizations can help the different groups

stay better informed and coordinate without needing the same individuals to attend every meeting.

The need for improved coordination is most pronounced in the area of youth and lived-experience participation. LA County has made meaningful progress in centering youth voice; however, current engagement structures can result in:

- Fragmented youth engagement efforts
- Repeated participation requests to the same youth leaders
- Limited clarity regarding how youth recommendations translate into system change

Youth and young adults with lived experience—particularly those who are current or former foster youth, LGBTQIA+, Black, Indigenous, parenting, justice-involved, undocumented, or disabled—are frequently asked to participate in multiple spaces without consistent alignment, compensation, or feedback.

System partners similarly expressed the need for a coordinated governance structure capable of representing youth voice across the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Formally Designate the Youth Homeless Systems Improvement (YHSI) Cross-Systems Leadership Table (CSLT) as LA County’s central governance structure for coordinating youth lived-experience engagement and aligning youth homelessness efforts across LA County. Rather than creating a new entity, this approach builds upon an existing structure that already includes youth leaders, County departments, service providers, and philanthropic partners.

Proposed Purpose

As the central governing structure, the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table would work to ensure youth input is aligned, meaningful, and actionable across policy, funding, systems design, and implementation efforts by:

- Centering youth and young adults with lived experience
- Reducing siloing and duplicative engagement across tables
- Clarifying roles and scopes of work across youth homelessness collaboratives
- Strengthening coordination between youth leaders and system partners
- Supporting countywide progress toward long-term solutions

Positioning YHSI as the central governance structure will:

- Reduce duplication across youth engagement efforts
- Provide system partners with a clear point of coordination
- Minimize repeated requests for youth participation
- Strengthen communication and accountability across tables

This alignment work is already underway with the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table actively building coordination across partners.

Proposed Core Participants

Core participants of the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table, chaired by the Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH) and LA Emissary, governing structure would include:

System Leadership

- Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH)
- Department of Mental Health (DMH)
- Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)
- Long Beach Continuum of Care
- University of Southern California, Homeless Policy Research Institute
- Additional system partners added over time as the work evolves

Youth Leadership

- 30 youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness
- Representation across Service Planning Areas
- Representation of diverse identities and lived experiences

Youth members participate in shared decision-making and receive meaningful compensation for their contributions.

Reducing Duplication and Strengthening Coordination

Positioning YHSI as the central governance structure will:

- Reduce duplication across youth engagement efforts
- Provide system partners with a clear point of coordination
- Minimize repeated requests for youth participation
- Strengthen communication and accountability across tables
- Ensure County leadership and engagement, as HSH is a lead

This alignment work is already underway, with YHSI actively building coordination across partners, including ensuring direct alignment and collaboration with One Roof 2.0.

2. Align Existing Youth Engagement Efforts Under the New Structure

Based on engagement and input from existing youth-led and youth-centered tables, YHSI should align them within their governance framework while preserving their unique purposes.

3. Establish Clear Pathways from Youth Input to System Action

Formal processes should ensure youth recommendations are reviewed, acted upon where appropriate, and communicated back transparently.

4. Standardize Compensation and Support for Youth Participation

YHSI, LA Emissary and others already provide compensation and training for youth participation. However, consistent standards should be established for compensation, trauma-informed practices, training/preparation for engagement opportunities, and administrative support across youth engagement opportunities.

5. Strengthen Cross-System Coordination Through YHSI

County departments, service providers, and philanthropic partners should coordinate youth engagement through YHSI when developing youth homelessness policies and initiatives.

6. Develop Plans for Ongoing Sustainability in Coordination with Other Groups

YHSI has already begun working on sustainability by utilizing grant, philanthropic and ongoing HSH funds to support this work. HSH and YHSI should coordinate youth-led and youth-centered tables to develop plans for ongoing sustainability of this work, including youth compensation and backbone support.

7. Align All Governance Efforts Toward Functional Zero

Youth homelessness governance efforts should remain aligned with the shared goal of achieving functional zero youth homelessness in LA County.

Conclusion

LA County has developed a strong network of collaborative groups working to prevent and end youth homelessness. These groups reflect the complexity of the issue and LA County's commitment to cross-system collaboration, youth leadership, and targeted strategies for vulnerable young people. Leaders of these groups should remain vigilant and continue to monitor for the need to and benefits of consolidating efforts to leverage resources, disrupt silos, and improve service delivery and support to young people.

At the same time, the growth of this current ecosystem presents opportunities to clarify roles, strengthen coordination, and reduce duplicative engagement, particularly in the area of youth lived-experience participation.

By designating the YHSI Cross System Leadership Table as the central governance structure for youth engagement, the County can streamline coordination, preserve the strengths of existing groups, and ensure youth voices remain central to policy and system design.

Through this approach, LA County can strengthen alignment across its youth homelessness response and continue advancing toward the shared goal of achieving functional zero youth homelessness.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me by email at amoonves-leb@ocp.lacounty.gov.

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Office
 Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
 Children and Family Services
 Commission for Children and Families
 County Counsel
 Homeless Services and Housing
 LA Emissary
 Mental Health
 Parks and Recreation
 Probation
 Youth Commission
 Youth Development

Attachment 1: Los Angeles County Tables Focused on Youth Homelessness and Housing

Name of Group	Purpose / Mission	Focal Population		Leaders	Youth Led	County Role	Funding Source	Group Composition					Primary Focus				
		All Youth	Foster/Prob. Youth					Community/ Advocates	Systems Reps	Local Jurisdiction	Service Providers	Lived Experts	Advocacy/ Policy Recs	Community Organizing	Service Delivery	Training/ Education	Systems Align./ Coord.
AB 12 Housing Stability Subcommittee	Subcommittee of the bi-monthly LA County AB 12 Steering Committee and focuses on addressing housing-related issues for Non-Minor Dependents.		X	Public Counsel and Children's Law Center		Collaborator (though currently not participating)	Not specified	X	X		X	X	X				
Greater LA Coalition on Homelessness	Working to expand homeless services and immediate assistance for people in need, while also addressing the root causes of homelessness.	X		Consultant		Collaborator, when invited	Not specified	X		X	X		X				
Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership (HHYP)	Strategic alliance of youth-serving agencies working together to prevent and end homelessness among youth and young adults in Hollywood.	X		The Alliance		Collaborator, when invited	Not specified				X		X		X		
Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles (HYFLA)	Works to end youth homelessness in Los Angeles County by centering the voices of youth with lived expertise in decision-making on program development, funding, policy making, and program and system performance evaluation	X		LAHSA	X	Collaborator, Funder through FY 25-26	Hilton Foundation, CEO-HI, LAHSA-Systems and Planning	X	X			X	X				
LA Emissary (LAE) (YYA Pooled Fund)	Works to prevent and end youth homelessness in LA County by positioning youth and young adult leaders with lived experience of homelessness and system involvement as co-decision makers within the homeless response system; training a network of young people across LA County with skills needed to become advocates around funding and policy priorities related to homelessness; and engaging in collaborative decision making to address youth homelessness with young people, funders, providers, county, and system partners.	X		LA Emissary	X	Collaborator, Funder	Pooled Philanthropic-fund, YHSL, Hilton	X				X	X	X		X	
Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles' We Are LA Children & Youth Program	Prevents Angelenos from falling into homelessness through partnerships with community organizations providing access to eviction prevention services, and support such as legal services and healthcare. This program connects non-minor dependents to housing and supportive resources. The program is being expanded this year to include additional provider organizations and the purchase of 60 to 75 housing units dedicated to young adults aging out of the system at 21.		X	Conway Collis, Mayor's Fund		Collaborator	Not specified	X	X	X			X		X	X	

One Roof 2.0	Collective action table working to identify strategies to align systems to prevent homelessness for transitional age youth with a specific focus on youth exiting foster care.	X		Center for Strategic Partnership - Backbone DCFS and HSH - Co-Chairs	X	Lead	Philanthropic	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Young People to the Front	A research and policy lab that specializes in understanding and addressing youth homelessness in Los Angeles: Our mission is to bolster the capacity of our community through data-driven insights, and foster a platform that transforms strategic communication into action.	X		Young People to the Front		Collaborator, when invited	Privately Funded	X			X	X	X	X		X	
Cross System Leadership Table (a part of Youth Homelessness Systems Improvement (YHSI))	Creates strategies around supporting TAY and foster youth impacted by the housing and homelessness system via a collective of lived experts, county partners, and community-based organizations.	X		Youth, HSH, LAE, System Partners	X	Co-Lead	HUD YHSI Grant, Cedar Sinai, County (HSH) staff time leveraged	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
TAY Housing Advocates	To bring together advocates and the LAHSA - DCFS/probation liaisons to share best practices, address complex problems, and raise common/systemic issues.		X	Public Counsel		None	Not specified	X			X	X			X		
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Coordinated Entry System Policy Council TAY Subcommittee	The Los Angeles County Coordinated Entry System (CES) is the Network that aligns homeless services in the County together to ensure that resources are efficiently and equitably distributed to support people experiencing homelessness. The TAY subcommittee focuses on youth services and funding allocation.	X		LAHSA		Participant	Not specified	X	X	X	X	X			X		X
Gateway Cities Council of Government (COG) TAY Housing Coalition Meeting	Established to coordinate on TAY Housing and employment pilot project.		X	Gateway COG		Collaborator	Not specified	X	X	X	X	X			X		X



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ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 18, 2026

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Alaina Moonves-Leb, Acting Executive Director *Alaina Moonves-Leb*
Los Angeles County Office of Child, Youth, and Family Well-Being (OCFW)

**REPORT BACK REGARDING THE NOVEMBER 18, 2025, BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 18)
ON STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES FOR FORMER
FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING DCFS CARE**

On November 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion directing the Department of Youth Development (DYD), in collaboration with the TAY Table and County partners, through the Office of Child Protection (OCP)¹, to report back in 180 days on the following directives:

7a. To assess the feasibility of a “Fast Pass” protocol to prioritize navigation support for current and former foster youth through age 26 who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This directive called for an evaluation of how existing County-administered services can be more effectively coordinated to improve access and should include, but not be limited to, the following array of supports and services:

- i. Care coordination/navigation
- ii. Housing, including immediate interim housing
- iii. Intensive case management
- iv. Mental and behavioral health
- v. Substance use services
- vi. Concrete supports
- vii. Education and education-related supports

¹ Since this motion, a subsequent motion dated March 17, 2026, changed OCP’s name to the Office of Child, Youth, and Family Well-Being (OCFW). The remainder of this report will refer to the OCFW.

- viii. Workforce development, including vocational training and apprenticeships
- ix. Mentoring and coaching
- x. Age-appropriate life skills development, including financial literacy
- xi. Targeted services and supports for parenting young people

7b. To assess data-sharing challenges and plans to ensure data can be shared safely and securely between County departments.

7c. To outline a strategy for Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to provide problem-solving support to help current and former foster youth navigate the complex system and access needed services, supports, and benefits.

7d. To include feedback from young people on alignment with youth needs.

This serves as the 180-day report back on the above-mentioned directives from the Office of Child, Youth, and Family Well-Being (OCFW), coordinated with departments that are part of the TAY Table.

OCFW, in partnership with DYD and the TAY Table, worked with County departments to survey programs serving current/former foster youth through age 26 and to assess the feasibility of a “Fast Pass” approach that would categorically prioritize them for a designated array of services and supports, as identified in 7a.i.-xi.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Departmental responses and youth input indicate that the feasibility of prioritizing current and former foster youth varies significantly across programs based on program design, eligibility requirements, operational considerations, and legal/regulatory constraints. Departments identified a broad range of services that align with the support categories outlined in the motion, while noting that the ability to prioritize youth differs considerably depending on how programs are structured and administered.

Overall, findings suggest that prioritization is more feasible in programs with flexible service models, targeted populations, and built-in navigation or case management functions, while other programs identified operational, funding, staffing, or regulatory barriers that would require additional exploration before prioritization could be considered. Responses also highlighted the importance of strengthening identification methods, referral pathways and outreach strategies, warm handoffs across systems, and data-sharing practices to improve service connection and coordination.

Departmental responses further indicate that implementation considerations vary across four broad program categories: programs with fewer operational barriers to prioritization; programs where prioritization may be feasible with additional coordination; programs that serve primarily as trusted access points and referral partners; and programs that are structurally constrained by statutory, regulatory, or funding requirements. For some departments, advancing prioritization may also require additional staffing capacity, operational resources, policy or legislative changes, or funding support.

Youth input reinforced that any prioritization efforts should be transparent, needs-based, and responsive to lived experience. Youth emphasized the importance of timely access, clear communication, proactive outreach, and relationship-based support, underscoring that meaningful service connection depends not only on prioritization, but also on coordinated systems that are easier to navigate and responsive to youth and young people's needs.

Collectively, departmental responses and youth feedback indicate that improving access for current and former foster youth will require continued coordination across systems, alignment with existing County initiatives, and careful consideration of operational realities within individual programs.

CURRENT EFFORTS

Directive 7a. An assessment within 180-days to determine the feasibility of creating and implementing a protocol or "Fast Pass" to prioritize navigation support for current and former foster youth through age 26 who are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness for County administered and/or funded services and supports.

To carry out this directive, youth- and adult-serving departments whose programs were named in the Board directive were asked in two phases to:

Phase I: Identify and describe all services and supports aligned with 7a.i.-xi. that are directly administered and/or funded by their department utilizing a standardized template.

Phase II: Assess the feasibility of categorically prioritizing current and former foster youth through age 26 for these services and provide rationale to support their feasibility assessment utilizing a standardized template. This assessment was only conducted for departments explicitly named in the directive.

This approach was employed because each department has the requisite programmatic, fiscal, and regulatory expertise in the programs that it funds and/or administers to accurately assess feasibility. County Counsel was engaged as needed throughout this process.

Departmental responses are summarized in Attachment A. **It should be noted that services and supports that are solely for current/former foster youth, or already prioritized for this population, are not included in the table or this analysis.**

Analysis of departmental responses shows that the current feasibility of implementing a Fast Pass approach varies. Factors impacting feasibility include:

- **Implications for fairness** - Prioritizing this population is not currently feasible because it could create equity concerns for other vulnerable populations served by the department.
- **Capacity to identify the target population** – Prioritizing this population is not currently feasible or is complicated by the department's ability to identify the population. This includes limited data-sharing capabilities as well as a reluctance on the part of youth and young people to self-identify.

- **Program design and/or infrastructure** - Prioritizing this population is not currently feasible because it would require significant shifts to the program's current design and/or infrastructure.
- **State and/or federal regulation** – Prioritizing this population is not currently feasible due to state and/or federal regulations.
- **Staffing needs** - Prioritizing this population would require shifts to the program that would necessitate additional staffing.
- **Funding needs** - Prioritizing this population would require shifts to the program, operations, and/or infrastructure that would necessitate additional funding.
- **Policy constraints** - Prioritizing this population would require changing current federal, state, or local policy to allow for direct prioritization.
- **Capacity for cross-departmental coordination** - Prioritizing this population would require support in coordinating with other relevant departments.

Summary of Departmental Self-Assessment Findings

Phase I: Identifying Services and Resources

The Phase I inventory indicated that nearly all youth- and young adult-serving departments administer directly and/or fund at least one service that aligns with those identified by the Board in 7a.i.-xi. and that can be accessed by current and/or former foster youth through age 26.

Phase II: Feasibility Assessment

Prioritizing is Feasible

Most responding departments indicated that prioritization of current/former foster youth for select programs (as indicated in Attachment A) through age 26, is feasible. Increased capacity to identify current/former foster youth, additional funding, and cross-departmental coordination were cited most frequently as the type of support needed to implement prioritization.

Departments consistently noted that the absence of a standardized method for identifying and promoting services to this population limits the ability to apply prioritization or track service connections. Improving capacity to identify current/former foster youth is foundational to this prioritization effort.

Prioritizing is Not Feasible

Of departments that indicated that prioritization is not feasible, most cited concerns about unfairly disadvantaging the other vulnerable groups that they serve by prioritizing one over another.

Departments also cited structural constraints, such as data systems, federal or state mandates, funding or eligibility requirements, or universal access models. Although the assessment determined that prioritization was not feasible in these cases, DPSS, for example, identified operational strategies such as expedited eligibility determinations, rapid assessments, and targeted referrals that support timely access and function as a form of indirect prioritization via enhanced navigation support within program rules. See the response to directive 7c.

Similarly, some departments noted that this feasibility assessment has led to a willingness to track data differently to gain more granular insights into the needs of TAY.

Recommended Next Steps

1. Consider beginning development of a pilot Fast Pass prioritization processes with departments that have identified low-cost, or cost-neutral support needs to advance this strategy. This includes, but is not limited to, programs funded and/or administered by the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, Youth Development, and Parks and Recreation. This report back should be used to help inform subsequent feasibility conversations and exploration with relevant departments.

Fast Pass implementation strategies should include focus on:

- Developing and/or strengthening cross-systems navigation and referral processes, including by establishing clear points of contact and strengthening “warm handoff” practices to support continuity of care. This should also include building feedback loops and being responsive to youth needs, such as after-hours supports. This may include community-based care coordination models similar to the pilot model outlined by DYD in the report back for Directive 5 of this Board motion.
 - Developing trauma-informed methods to identify youth and young people not directly referred by a department. This should include establishing processes to confirm current/former foster youth status, where necessary, without stigmatizing the young person.
 - Leveraging existing County data-sharing initiatives, such as the Community Information Exchange, the Countywide Information Hub, and consent-based data-sharing tools to advance Fast Pass implementation goals. These efforts may also be well positioned to facilitate a “no wrong door” approach. Information regarding challenges and opportunities associated with current data-sharing efforts is described in response to Directive 7b. of this report.
 - Aligning intake practices, exploring shared indicators that support more consistent identification across systems, and shared outreach strategies to increase awareness of services would benefit relevant departments, including those responsible for child welfare, data systems, and service delivery. Cross-training of staff and capacity building could also support this work.
 - Aligning with ongoing youth homelessness system work to avoid creating a parallel pathway disconnected from existing homeless services infrastructure.
2. Before implementing a Fast Pass process for a specific program attached to a particular funding stream, law, or regulation, departments should work with County Counsel to ensure that doing so is legally permissible.
 3. Finally, all youth- and young adult-serving departments should leverage existing collaborative spaces, such as the TAY Table and System of Care, to strengthen cross-departmental collaboration, coordination, and alignment of resources to support this

uniquely vulnerable population in navigating complex County systems, regardless of their capacity to implement a Fast Pass process at this time. Data on risk of homelessness should help to inform investments into implementing a Fast Pass prioritization process for critical services and resources should additional funding become available.

Directive 7b. An analysis within 180-days of data sharing challenges and plans to ensure data can be shared safely and securely between County departments.

Departmental responses to Directive 7 consistently identified data sharing as one of the most significant barriers to implementing a coordinated Fast Pass approach. Across systems, responses reflect that limitations in identifying, tracking, and sharing information about current and former foster youth constrain their ability to prioritize services, coordinate care, and ensure timely connections to supports.

Challenges:

A primary challenge identified is the lack of a consistent and efficient **cross-department method for identifying or promoting services to youth with foster care history**. Many programs rely on self-disclosure or program-specific intake processes, which result in inconsistent identification and limit the ability to apply prioritization in a systematic and equitable manner. As reflected in Attachment A, this challenge affects both programs that are otherwise able to prioritize and those that require coordination to do so, as identification is a foundational prerequisite for any prioritization approach.

In addition to identification challenges, departments reported limited **interoperability across data systems**. Information collected within one department is not readily accessible to others, resulting in fragmented service delivery and limited visibility into whether youth are connected to multiple services. Departments also noted that the absence of shared referral-tracking mechanisms limits the ability to monitor whether referrals result in successful service connections, contributing to gaps in follow-through and accountability.

Legal and privacy considerations further shape the current data-sharing environment. Departments must comply with federal and state requirements governing the protection of sensitive information, including juvenile case, health, behavioral health, and educational records. In many cases, sharing information across systems also requires client consent through release-of-information authorizations or similar processes before information can be disclosed. While these protections are essential, departments indicated that navigating these requirements can limit the ability to share information in real time and coordinate care across systems.

Opportunities:

At the same time, departments and County partners have identified ongoing efforts and opportunities to address these challenges. Work underway through Directive 2 of the motion provides a foundation for enhancing data sharing in a manner that is compliant with legal requirements while improving coordination across systems.

Through this work, County departments are collaborating to strengthen **consent-based information sharing**, including the development of standardized authorization forms that allow youth and young adults to consent to the sharing of health and social services information across participating departments and providers. This work is being led through the Chief Executive Office's **Policy Implementation and Alignment Branch (PIAB)**, in partnership with County Counsel and participating departments, with the **Chief Information Office (CIO)** supporting development of an electronic consent management system that will clarify what information can be shared, with whom, and under what conditions. Together, these efforts are intended to support care coordination while ensuring that individuals maintain control over their information.

In parallel, the **Chief Information Office (CIO)**, through the **Countywide Information Hub (CWIH)**, is advancing Countywide data integration to support analysis, planning, and coordination across departments. By linking client and program data, the CWIH enables departments to better understand service utilization patterns, identify gaps, and support cross-system coordination. Through the TAY Table's Integrated Data Workgroup, co-led by OCFW and CIO, departments are also identifying additional data points and use cases that may strengthen coordination for transition-age youth.

Efforts to improve referral and navigation systems are also underway through development of the **Community Information Exchange (CIE)**, led by the **Chief Information Office (CIO)** in partnership with the Chief Executive Office and County departments. The CIE is being designed to support service navigation, referral tracking, consent-based information sharing, and coordination across County departments and community providers through a "no wrong door" approach. When fully implemented, the CIE will provide shared infrastructure for closed-loop referrals, warm handoffs, and more coordinated service delivery. The CIE is intended to work in tandem with the CWIH, providing both real-time service coordination and broader system-level visibility.

In addition, the TAY Table is leading the development of a web-based **TAY Resource Hub**, which will serve as a centralized platform for information about County departmental services, programs, and resources available to transition-age youth. Integration of this hub with the CIE will further support navigation, referrals, and coordination. This resource is anticipated to be implemented in Fall 2026.

Collectively, these efforts reflect a broader shift toward a more integrated, consent-based, and coordinated data-sharing approach across the County's system of care. While these systems are still in development and implementation phases, they represent critical infrastructure for enabling a Fast Pass approach.

Youth feedback further reinforces the importance of addressing data sharing as part of Fast Pass implementation. Youth emphasized the need for transparency, accountability, and clear timelines for service connection, noting that without the ability to track referrals and outcomes, prioritization may not translate into meaningful access. Youth also consistently emphasized the importance of consent when sharing their data. These perspectives highlight that data-sharing improvements

are not only a technical requirement, but also essential to building trust and ensuring that systems are responsive to youth needs.

Overall, departmental responses and ongoing County efforts indicate that while significant challenges remain, there are clear opportunities to strengthen data sharing in support of a coordinated Fast Pass approach. Advancing this work will require continued collaboration across departments, alignment with existing data initiatives, and careful consideration of privacy and consent requirements to ensure that improvements in coordination are achieved in a manner that protects the rights of youth and young adults. The TAY Table's Integrated Data Workgroup, co-led by OCFW and the Chief Information Office, provides an existing vehicle for cross-department collaboration, ongoing coordination, and continued discussion of data-sharing opportunities that may strengthen service connection and care coordination for transition-age youth.

Directive 7c. Outline a strategy within 180-days for DPSS to provide problem-solving support to help current and former foster youth navigate the complex system and access needed services, supports, and benefits. **This portion of the report back, in response to Directive 7c, was provided directly by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).*

DPSS provides a comprehensive continuum of programs and benefits to support families, single adults, transitional age youth, children, and older adults. While DPSS programs are governed by federal and state requirements that limit the ability to prioritize specific populations such as current or former foster youth, the Department plays a critical role in facilitating access through navigation, coordination, and expedited service delivery.

In alignment with the Board motion, "Strengthening Housing Supports, Care, and Services for Former Foster Youth and those Exiting DCFS Care," DPSS has explored strategies to enhance problem-solving supports that assist current and former foster youth navigating and accessing available services, benefits and resources.

DPSS does not collect data specifically on former foster youth status, as self-identification is voluntary and does not affect program eligibility. However, the Department does collect data on Transition-Age Youth (TAY) experiencing homelessness. DPSS defines TAY as youth who are ages 18-24. In March 2026, 31,108 TAY were served across all programs. The distribution across core programs is as follows:

- CalWORKs: 2,886
- General Relief: 7,811
- CalFresh: 11,169
- Medi-Cal: 9,242

It is important to note that DPSS applies a broad definition of homelessness. This population includes both former foster youth and non-system involved youth who are unsheltered, temporarily staying with friends or relatives, or residing in motels or hotels.

DPSS explored several existing mechanisms that can support former foster youth experiencing homelessness, including accelerated eligibility processing via a “fast pass” system, rapid housing assistance evaluations, and expedited referrals into supportive services through the GAIN/Welfare-to-Work system. In the development of a “fast pass” system through the department’s Customer Service Call Center, DPSS is currently assessing the feasibility of implementing technology that would enable callers to use Interactive Voice Response system to enter a PIN and receive expedited access to an Eligibility Worker. Potential implementation costs have been identified; however, there is no current budget allocation for this project at this time. DPSS will explore and evaluate Customer Service Call Center enhancement opportunities in the upcoming fiscal year.

DPSS also explored the role of the Linkages GAIN Social Workers (LGSWs), who coordinate with DCFS to support identification, engagement, and service connection for CalWORKs families. These LGSWs represent a viable bridge across systems and provide a model for strengthening cross-department coordination. However, the LGSW classification holds specific duties connected to CalWORKs-eligible families. Leveraging these staff to work specifically with former foster youth or youth exiting foster care would require additional resources and changes in duties and responsibilities.

DPSS also identified opportunities to enhance its role, including:

- Expanding trauma-informed and cross-system training for staff
- Strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations
- Improving coordination with housing and workforce programs
- Exploring enhancements to existing business processes to reduce procedural barriers

These findings reinforce that DPSS’s role in a Fast Pass approach is best understood not as a direct prioritization mechanism, but as a critical navigation and problem-solving partner that helps youth access and move through complex systems.

Directive 7d. Include feedback from young people on alignment with youth needs for a Fast Pass protocol.

Consistent with the Board’s directive, this report incorporates input from youth and young people with lived experience, including feedback from the Los Angeles County Youth Commission and youth advisory partners, including the Department of Children and Family Services Director’s Youth Advisory Council.

Overall, youth and young people expressed strong support for the intent of a Fast Pass approach, while emphasizing that its effectiveness will depend on whether it results in real, measurable improvements in access to services. Youth and young people noted that without clear timelines, transparency, and accountability, Fast Pass risks becoming symbolic rather than meaningfully accelerating service connection.

As one youth noted, *“it has to actually help us get services faster, not just say we’re prioritized.”*

Youth and young people consistently emphasized that prioritization should be needs-based rather than solely age-based, highlighting factors such as housing instability, disconnection from education or employment, parenting status, and justice system involvement. They also raised concerns that expanding eligibility without sufficient capacity could create unintended delays or inequities, reinforcing the importance of aligning prioritization with both need and system capacity.

In addition, youth and young people reinforced that stability requires more than housing alone. They described the need for coordinated access to workforce opportunities, mentorship, life skills development, and ongoing follow-up, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive and connected system of support that extends beyond initial service connection.

Youth and young people also emphasized the importance of proactive outreach and clear navigation, noting that access should not depend on a young person’s ability to independently identify and navigate services. They highlighted the need for trusted access points, simplified referral pathways, and consistent points of contact, further reinforcing the importance of a coordinated, “no wrong door” approach across systems.

Finally, youth and young people stressed the importance of ongoing engagement and accountability, including incorporating youth voice into implementation, ensuring transparency in how prioritization is applied, and maintaining responsiveness to evolving needs. Additional feedback highlighted opportunities to strengthen healthcare navigation, expand workforce and civic engagement opportunities, better support justice-involved youth, and ensure warm handoffs as youth transition across age thresholds.

Youth and young people’s input reinforces that a Fast Pass approach must function as a transparent, accountable, and relationship-centered system of access, ensuring that prioritization leads to timely, equitable, and meaningful service connection.

CONCLUSION

Los Angeles County maintains a broad and diverse system of services to support transition-age youth; however, fragmentation across systems and variability in program structure limit consistent and timely access. While services exist across all required domains, youth continue to face challenges navigating multiple uncoordinated systems.

Findings demonstrate that feasibility for prioritization varies significantly by program structure. Some programs identified fewer operational barriers to prioritization, while others require strengthened coordination, and some are constrained by statutory and regulatory requirements. Across departments, common barriers include inconsistent identification of current and former foster youth, limited data sharing and interoperability, fragmented referral pathways, and capacity constraints related to navigation and follow-up support.

At the same time, departments identified clear opportunities to improve access within existing systems, including strengthening coordination, enhancing navigation, leveraging trusted access

points, and advancing data-sharing efforts. Youth input reinforces that these efforts must result in timely, transparent, and meaningful service connection.

Overall, improving outcomes for transition-age youth will depend on strengthening coordination, navigation, and system connectivity across programs. Continued coordination across systems, aligned with existing system structures and operational realities, will be essential to ensure that prioritization leads to timely, equitable, and effective access to services.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me by email at amoonves-leb@ocp.lacounty.gov.

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Office
 Chief Information Office
 Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
 Arts and Culture
 Auditor-Controller
 Children and Family Services
 Commission for Children and Families
 County Counsel
 Economic Opportunity
 Health Services
 Homeless Services and Housing
 Justice, Care and Opportunities
 Library
 Los Angeles County Office of Education
 Mental Health
 Parks and Recreation
 Probation
 Public Health
 Public Social Services
 Youth Commission
 Youth Development

Attachment A: Departmental Self-Assessment of Fast Pass Feasibility

Office of Violence Prevention							x	x			x			x						
Department of Youth Development																				
Youth Diversion	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x						x
BLOOM (School-Based)				x			x			x							x			x
Reentry Action for Youth (RAY)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x							x		x	
Heart of Youth Justice Reimagined			x	x		x	x	x		x										x
Lead On			x		x		x			x							x			
Rooted (School-Based)				x		x				x							x			
Safe Healing Centers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x							x		x	
Youth Development Networks		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x							x		x	x
Justice Care and Opportunity Department																				
Los Angeles County Training Center										x									x	
DOORS										x									x	
SECTOR										x									x	
JCOD Care Management										x									x	
Reentry Interim Housing										x									x	
Justice Connect Support Center										x									x	
Department of Parks and Recreation																				
Our SPOT Teen Centers			x	x			x	x			x			x	x					
Safe Passages				x	x		x	x			x			x	x					
Youth@Work			x				x	x			x			x	x					
Every Body Plays				x			x	x			x			x	x					
Los Angeles County Office of Education																				
Homeless Education Program	x		x	x	x			x												
Poverty Alleviation Initiative																				
VITA Free Tax Preparation		x								x										x
Department of Children and Family Services																				
Prevention and Aftercare Networks										x										
Department of Public Social Services																				
CalWORKs Homeless Assistance																				
Los Angeles County Supplemental Housing Assistance Programs	x	x	x	x	x	x					x		x							
General Relief Housing Subsidy and Case Management Program	x										x		x							
CalWORKS Benefits		x	x								x		x	x	x	x				

Attachment A: Departmental Self-Assessment of Fast Pass Feasiblity

Note: Programs that already prioritize this population or only serve this population are not included in this analysis.

*DPH indicated that feasibility is N/A for Substance Abuse Prevention and Control because they have sufficient capacity within their network to serve all youth/former foster youth.

LEGEND

Fairness Implications - Prioritizing this population is not feasible because it would be unfair to other vulnerable groups.
Program Design/Infrastructure - Prioritizing this population is not feasible because it would require significant shifts to the program's design and/or infrastructure.
Can't/Don't Identify - Prioritizing this population is not possible because the program does not or cannot identify members.
Local Policy - Prioritizing this population is not feasible because it is prohibited by local policy.
State/Federal Policy - Prioritizing this population is not feasible because it is prohibited by state or federal policy.
Identifying Population - Prioritizing this population is feasible with support with identifying members.
Staffing - Prioritizing this population is feasible with additional staffing support.
Funding - Prioritizing this population is feasible with additional funding.
Local Policy Change - Prioritizing this population is feasible with support in changing local policy.
Coord. w/Depts. - Prioritizing this population is feasible with support in coordinating with relevant departments.



DAVID J. CARROLL
Director

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

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May 18, 2026

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair Supervisor
Holly J. Mitchell, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: David J. Carroll 
Director

**REPORT BACK ON STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES FOR
FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING DCFS CARE (ITEM NO. 18, NOVEMBER 18, 2025)**

On November 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion to address critical gaps “in supports for young people who have exited DCFS care and find themselves unhoused or facing homelessness.” This motion instructs the Department of Youth Development (DYD) to report back in 180 days on Directive 5: a plan to expand their scope and infrastructure to develop support for former foster youth through age 26, including youth who may not be ILP eligible, including:

- a. A plan to engage with community-based organizations to holistically support young people to achieve security and stability;
- b. Identify County, State or Federal Funding sources currently available to support this work;
- c. A discussion of a demonstration project, using a mentor model like Reentry Action for Youth (RAY), that can be launched more immediately; and
- d. Informed by young people with lived experience and the Los Angeles County Youth Commission to ensure that the services and referral system proposed align with their needs.

This memo provides the Board with an overview of DYD’s proposed model to support care coordination for former foster youth, a phased implementation plan, additional funding needs, and an overview of next steps. Attachments A-C include a more detailed overview of the proposed program design.

Background

Research by RAND found that young people in Los Angeles County experience heightened risk of homelessness. The Hilton Foundation’s Foster Youth Initiative reports that up to 40% of youth who exit foster care in Los Angeles County experience homelessness soon after.

Data from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) estimates that 1,254 young people will exit foster care in 2026. Of those young people, 736 (59%) will exit at 21 and are ineligible for

“Supporting the Equitable Development of Young People in Los Angeles County”

extended foster care services. Youth exiting foster care are disproportionately African American and Latino/a/e making up 25% and 55% respectively. 22% of youth exiting the foster care system in 2026 reside in Service Planning Area 6 in Supervisorial District 2.

Many former foster youth may experience an end to case management services and certain benefits upon aging out of child welfare services. Conversations with providers, youth, and community-based organizations, as well as review of existing research indicate several systemic gaps for adequately serving this population including:

- Limited centralized coordination.
- Lack of dedicated funding streams.
- Lack of data to identify former foster youth once they have exited the system.
- Difficulties navigating the adult system of social services and drop-off in support.
- Rising economic pressures including, but not limited to, rising cost of living, stark job market, housing affordability crisis, and insufficient housing stock.
- Disconnection from supportive systems or networks to aid in processing loss, grief, trauma, uncertainty and fear that accompanies this life transition.
- Lack of clear housing system entry or re-entry pathways for former foster youth

DYD is uniquely positioned to provide high-level care to this population by braiding strategies of youth development, stabilizing support, and transitional mentorship to best meet the needs of these youth and add value to the County's existing TAY services. DYD's continuum of care provides a model for system navigation services for youth who experience barriers to accessing youth development services. DYD is currently piloting referrals from 3 DCFS offices to its Diversion program to provide care coordination and this partnership can provide a foundation for an adapted model to support former foster youth in response to this motion.

Overview of Proposed Program

DYD proposes the creation of a 3-year demonstration project for a low-barrier support system for former foster youth. This approach centers on contracting with community-based providers and partnering with DCFS and other County departments to enhance existing services and streamline support, with a focus on youth and young people ages 21–26 who are no longer under child welfare jurisdiction. DYD's proposed My Life, My Way Program creates wraparound support through robust partnerships that equip young people exiting foster care with the tools and resources to emerge into adulthood with the support needed to successfully achieve independence, safety, and stability.

The goals of the program are as follows:

1. Create a streamlined handoff and continuum of care concentrating on TAY over 21 exiting foster (and extended foster) care.
2. Create pathways for economic and social stability.
3. Increase access to concrete supports and stable housing for former foster care TAY between the ages of 21-26.
4. Build or identify a central data sharing, tracking and case management system to support cross-referrals, quality improvement, and outcome evaluation.

The program uses core components of DYD's RAY model as a foundation, including monthly stipends, emergency support funds, mentors, clinical supervision, and low staff to client ratios (1:10). These elements are considered best practices for the justice impacted population being served and can be readily adapted to the specific needs of former foster youth. The My Life, My Way Model braids integrated transition planning and hand-off from DCFS supports, Bridges Transitions Framework Counseling (process of acknowledging grief of loss, identifying of throughline supports, uplifting hopes and envisioning a future)^a, continuous coaching support and navigation, and the co-creation of the My Life, My Way Blueprint to build a comprehensive and robust bridge to the independent life a young person envisions for themselves.

For detailed descriptions and logic model, see Attachment A-C.

Analysis of Available Funding

DYD has identified the costs and staffing needed to implement the proposed My Life, My Way model for three different scenarios. Attachment D includes detailed breakdowns of the 3 options.

1. Small pilot program serving 25 former foster youth per year for early intervention care coordination and peer support, without capacity for tailored wrap-around services by leveraging existing resources (no additional funding required);
2. Demonstration project to support 100 former foster youth with fidelity and develop proof of concept for the model (\$6M total required over 3 years); and
3. Costs to fully implement the program countywide and serve all former foster youth (\$24M required per year to serve 1,254 youth).

The proposed budget includes costs to cover contracts with community-based organizations, including staffing, monthly stipends for participants, economic relief support funds, and peer support; and DYD infrastructure costs including data system expansion, Program Manager staff, and Youth Advisory Board meeting costs. The proposed staffing budget is calculated in alignment with RAY program costs. Costs for permanent supportive housing or other viable housing solutions via HSH or local public housing authorities are not included although they should be considered to ensure stable housing supports for former foster youth.

DYD proactively requested funding for staff to manage the proposed My Life, My Way program during the recommended budget cycle but unfortunately that request was denied. DYD has also requested philanthropic funding and is coordinating with the Center for Strategic Partnerships to follow-up with interested foundations. DYD will explore future county funding opportunities, for example, CFCI, to support the program.

^a Nesmith A. A. (2024). Managing Major Life Changes: An Exploratory Study Using the Bridges Transitions Framework to Help Foster Youth Prepare for Discharge. *Children (Basel, Switzerland)*, 12(1), 22.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/children12010022>

Additionally, DYD is exploring the possibility of MediCal Enhanced Care Management (ECM) as a potential long-term funding source and exploring partnerships with other departments that currently integrate ECM in their funding streams, though it will take a couple of years to build infrastructure to implement.

Proposed Timeline

The proposed timeline is dependent upon date of Board approval and confirmation of funding.

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	ESTIMATED TIMING
Pre-Implementation	Identify funding for 3-year demonstration project; collaborate with DCFS and other partners to finalize protocols (referrals, data sharing, etc); hire staff to coordinate; develop youth led marketing and outreach; and finalize scope of work	July 2026 – September 2026
Phase 1	Identify and onboard provider(s); develop and implement training modules for participating agencies.	September 2026
Phase 2	Establish structure for ongoing stakeholder advisory committee convenings and determine advisory committee participants.	October 2026- November 2026
Phase 3	Contracting and program launch.	November 2026 – January 2027

Overview of Youth and Interdepartmental Engagement

DYD is grateful for the time and support of County departments, youth leaders, foster care focused nonprofit organizations, and the TAY Table who were instrumental to the creation of this model. Meetings with county partners include: DCFS, DMH, LACOE, JCOD, DPSS, DPH, and HSH. Youth and Community insights were provided from: DCFS' Directors Youth Advisory Council (DYAC), Youth Mentoring Nexus Visionaries (YMNv), Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC), California Youth Connection (CYC), Los Angeles County Youth Commission, and others. Ongoing relationships have been established to provide guidance should this project be implemented.

Specifically, with the assistance of DCFS, DYD has gained a more thorough working understanding of the population, needs, and available support networks and services for youth over 18 that have been in the child welfare system. From housing to community supports, DCFS has shared their programming, past and present, as well as their desire to improve available services, the importance of youth choice and the necessity of youth voice in making decisions that affect them. Through DMH, DYD gained knowledge of the value of crisis intervention and Youth Commission Executive Director emphasized the importance of collaborative work countywide to optimize outcomes. Finally, some of the most valuable engagement we received was from Youth. Their input allowed us to build out a more robust program,

Each Supervisor
May 18, 2026
Page 5

consider what accountability looks like and the ways in which continued input could add value to the demonstration project. Youth will continue to play a role in guiding the project, including an intention to gather Youth Commission feedback during the implementation phase.

Next Steps

DYD will continue to explore funding and resource options for the proposed My Life, My Way demonstration project, collaborate with DCFS and other partner departments to refine the plan, and keep the Board informed as resources are identified.

My Life, My Way is a youth-centered model, grounded in research, informed by lived experience, and strengthened through deep collaboration with DCFS and other partners. Although there has not yet been funding identified to support the full implementation of this model, DYD is hopeful that the short-term funding needed to support a demonstration project will be identified in Fiscal Year 26-27.

With the necessary resources and support, DYD stands ready to launch the demonstration project, advance a more seamless and compassionate system of care, and help ensure that every young person exiting foster care has the opportunity to build the safe, self-directed future they deserve.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 584-4331 or dcarroll@dyd.lacounty.gov.

DC:wmw

Attachments:

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Department of Children and Family Services
Office of Child Protection
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Department of Economic Opportunities
Department of Health Services
Department of Homeless Services and Housing
Department of Mental Health
County Public Library
Department of Public Health
Department of Public Social Services

Former Foster Care Transition Aged Youth Program Design Overview

1. Executive Summary: Responding to the Transition Crisis

The transition from the foster care system in Los Angeles County has historically functioned as a "cliff" rather than a bridge. As identified in the LA County Board Motion (11-18-25), youth exiting care face a catastrophic withdrawal of support at age 21. This program design serves as a high-level strategic response to Directive 5 of that Motion, outlining a new architecture of independence designed to eliminate service gaps. To meet this mandate, the Department of Youth Development (DYD) will expand its scope to provide a low-barrier throughline of support for at-risk former foster youth through age 26, including those ineligible for the Independent Living Program (ILP).

The necessity of this expansion is validated by a recent RAND study, which reveals that 40% of youth exiting the foster care system experience homelessness shortly after exit. In 2026 alone, an estimated 1,254 youth will exit the system; 736 will exit at 21 and thus ineligible for extended foster care. An architected response must prioritize equity: the crisis disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, with 55% identifying as Hispanic and 25% as Black, and a significant 22% originating from SPA 6. The "My Life, My Way" Blueprint serves as the foundational throughline connecting system-led care to true, sustainable stability, ensuring no young person is "exited to homelessness."

2. Operational Architecture: Intake, Overlap, Throughline Coaching, and Graduation

The One-Year Transitional Overlap is the central mechanism for bridging the service gap. It ensures that a change in legal jurisdiction does not result in a change in support.

Entry Points and Matching

- **DCFS Referral:** Initiated 12 months prior to exiting care to allow for relationship building.
- **Community Referral:** For youth who have already exited; managed by DYD with a mandated **24-hour matching turnaround** to ensure immediate stabilization.

The Warm Handoff Timeline

- **12 Months Pre-Exit:** Introduction and integration. DCFS refers the youth to DYD to begin relationship building.
- **6 Months Pre-Exit:** Knowledge transfer to ensure youth do not have to repeat their trauma to new providers.
- **Exit Day:** A seamless continuation of the already-established coaching relationship.
- **2 Years Post-Exit:** Sustained enrollment and engagement in My Life My Way programming supported by coach, peers, and network of community-based organizations and County partners.

- **Alumni Ecosystem:** Post-graduation, youth can become peer mentors, coaches, or facilitators, training the next generation.

3. The Coaching Continuum- Tiered Delivery Models: To provide tailored support, the Blueprint is delivered through a fluid coaching model. Support is not a fixed destination but a responsive service that moves back and forth based on real-time life disruptions.

Tier Name	Cadence	Focus
High-Touch (Intensive)	Weekly or bi-weekly	Immediate crisis response, intensive case management, housing linkages, and Safety Planning.
Hybrid (Transitional)	Periodic monthly schedule	Goal achievement, professional and community skill building, and maintaining balanced connection vs. autonomy.
Independent (Maintenance)	Quarterly or 6-month check-ins	Highly self-directed growth: support remains on "standby" for unforeseen life disruptions.

Support never "expires." The Independent tier is designed as a safety net, allowing youth to return to High-Touch or Hybrid support immediately following a job loss, health crisis, or housing disruption.

4. The Coach's Toolbox for Comprehensive Intervention

The Coach's Toolbox transforms service delivery from simple referral to active care coordination. This toolbox is the primary mechanism for preventing inflow into the homeless services system.

The Four Components of Intervention:

- 1) **Financial & Concrete Support:** Utilization of monthly participation stipends and flexible "Basic Income" budgets to alleviate economic stress (food, utilities, transportation).
- 2) **Peer & Community Spaces:** Access to virtual/in-person meetups to build community, co-learn, and work on their blueprints together.
- 3) **Specialized Coaching Skills:** Coaches must be proficient in Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Trauma-Informed Care, Life Transitions Counseling (Grief/Loss), Motivational Interviewing, System Navigation, and Health/Social Drivers of Health.
- 4) **Supportive Services Ecosystem Navigation:** Mandatory "Warm Handoff" protocols and use of a central data-sharing system to ensure no information is lost during departmental transitions.

5. Supportive Services Ecosystem Integration and Multi-Departmental Partners

This program is only successful with the strategic partnership and coordination of the full ecosystem of County-administered support services needed by former foster TAY. My Life, My Way coaches serve as central navigators to identify and connect young people to the services they could benefit from. This creates a wrap-around approach to the service areas addressed in the motion of “care coordination/navigation, housing and immediate interim housing, intensive case management, mental and behavioral health, substance use services, concrete supports, education and education-related supports, workforce development, mentoring and coaching, age-appropriate life skills development, targeted services and supports for parenting young people”. Primary partnerships instrumental to this program include but are not limited to:

Partner Agency	Supportive Services
DCFS	Referrals, concrete supports, and supports for parenting young people.
Dept. of Public Health (DPH)	Health education, connection to substance use prevention and treatment programs, community support for parenting young people, violence prevention and healthy relationships, and school-based well-being center programs
Dept. of Health Services (DHS)	Healthcare, and medical care services.
Homeless Services & Housing (HSH)	Interim housing, permanent housing, intensive case management, and linkage to supportive housing programs.
Dept. of Mental Health (DMH)	Mental and behavioral health, substance use services, support for parenting young people, specialized TAY beds, crisis response, and peer outreach.
Dept. of Economic Opportunity (DEO)	Workforce development, vocational training, financial literacy, and apprenticeships.
Dept. Public Social Services (DPSS)	CalFresh, Medi-Cal, General Relief, concrete supports, and problem-solving support.
Dept. of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA)	Legal support, financial protection, financial literacy, and identity theft resolution.
Probation	Coordination for justice-involved youth to ensure non-duplicative care.
Justice Care Opportunities Department (JCOD)	Connection to adult services when eligible or transitioning out of program (workforce development, housing, etc.).
LA County Office of Education (LACOE)	Coordination with school districts, alignment with initiatives like Community Schools.
Library	Education support, tutoring, parenting young people support, community meeting spaces and programs.
Parks and Recreation	Safe spaces, life skill development, creational and cultural programs, and crisis response programs.
Chief Executive Office (CEO)	Strategic partnership and cross departmental coordination.

6. Data Tracking and Accountability

The program mandates a centralized case management system that accommodates the "My Life, My Way" Blueprint's format. This system will allow for real-time progress tracking and cross-departmental care coordination while maintaining strict data safeguards. DYD's case management system has the capability to meet the needs of this program through system build out and expanded user capacity.

7. Provider Support and Supervision

Provider wellbeing is instrumental to providing compassionate care. Coaches will be asked to draw on their expertise and lived experience to provide individualized support and be responsive to emergent needs. Coaches are supported by:

- 1) **Maintaining Manageable Caseloads:** Caseloads will be limited to 10 youth per coach to ensure a high level of comprehensive care is delivered reliably and responsibly. This is consistent with the Reentry Action for Youth (RAY) program at DYD.
- 2) **Regular Clinical Supervision:** Coaches will have access to weekly clinical supervision to review cases, get advice, and seek support for individual wellbeing
- 3) **Cohort Based Support:** Coaches across the county will be convened to workshop challenges, share experiences, and create a community of practice on how to best serve this population.

8. Crisis Response

- **Urgent Services Network:** A listing of services that youth can connect to urgently when in need of immediate support on weekends, holidays or after hours. This listing should include, but not be limited to, emergency housing inclusive of shelters, substance abuse supports, suicide helplines, intimate partner violence supports and more. This information would be vetted, assembled in a manner that can be shared widely via all varieties of media and through all the departments that are TAY serving, as well as countywide public facing platforms.
- **Connection to Emergency Resources:** Coaches would have knowledge of how to refer youth in crisis to mental health and/or emergency housing resources immediately. For crises that can be resolved with concrete supports, the coach would have access to a fund that could be used to provide a quick and adequate response.
- **Off-hours Coverage:** On-call evening/weekend shifts ensures availability of crisis care at extended times.

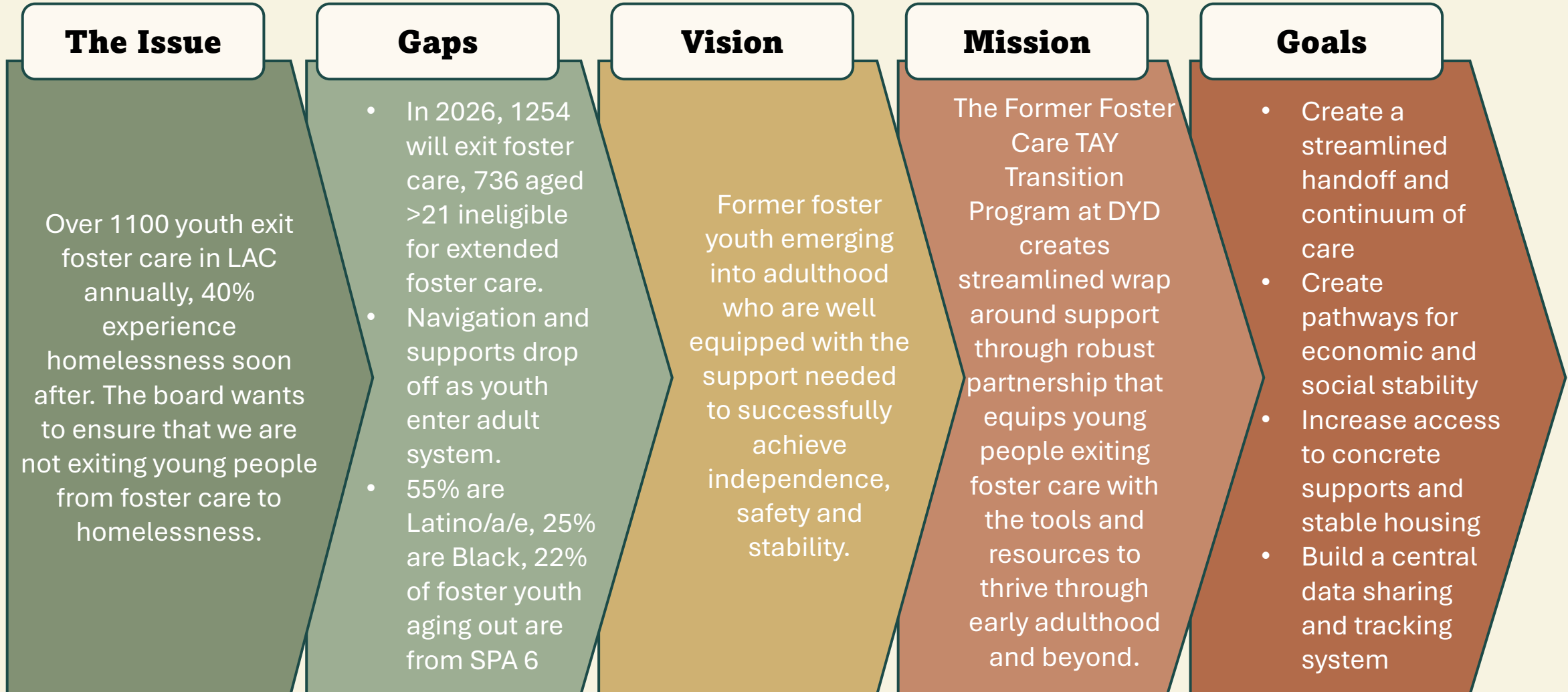
9. Ongoing Youth and Community Engagement

Two advisory boards of compensated representatives will provide ongoing guidance and oversight of the program once launched

- **Youth Advisory Committee:** This committee would represent the population being served would provide program oversight and ongoing input to ensure
- **Stakeholder Advisory Committee:** This committee would include individuals in community as well as those that are subject matter experts on various program, elements, to provide ongoing input on the program structure and operations and provide solution-oriented responses if operational challenges arise.

The ultimate goal of this program model is to replace systemic service fall-off with a robust, holistic architecture. By equipping former foster youth with both the of tangible support fortified by the supports of relational care, Los Angeles County creates a bridge that will ensure these young adults achieve lasting independence, safety, and stability.

Former Foster Care TAY Program at DYD



Logic Model

Former Foster TAY Facing Service Drop-off

Inputs

- Data infrastructure
- Referral Process
- Staffing
- CBO Partnership
- Funding
- Youth Advisory Board
- Community Feedback
- Overlapping transition planning with DCFS

Activities

- Throughline coaching, case management and navigation
- Co-created My Life, My Way Blueprint living document
- Peer-led community spaces
- Monthly stipends and economic support funds
- Housing support
- Service linkage to robust CBO and County provider agreements
- Crisis Response

Outputs

Direct:
Care coordination, mentoring, intensive case management, life skills development, youth development

In partnership:
Housing (HSH), Parenting Support (DCFS), Mental and Behavioral Support (DMH), Substance Use Services (DMH, DPH), Concrete Supports (DPSS), Workforce Development (DEO, Library, LACOE, JCOD)

Outcomes

Short Term

- Seamless connection & continuation of care
- Completion of goals in the My Life, My Way Blueprint and ongoing goal setting and achievement

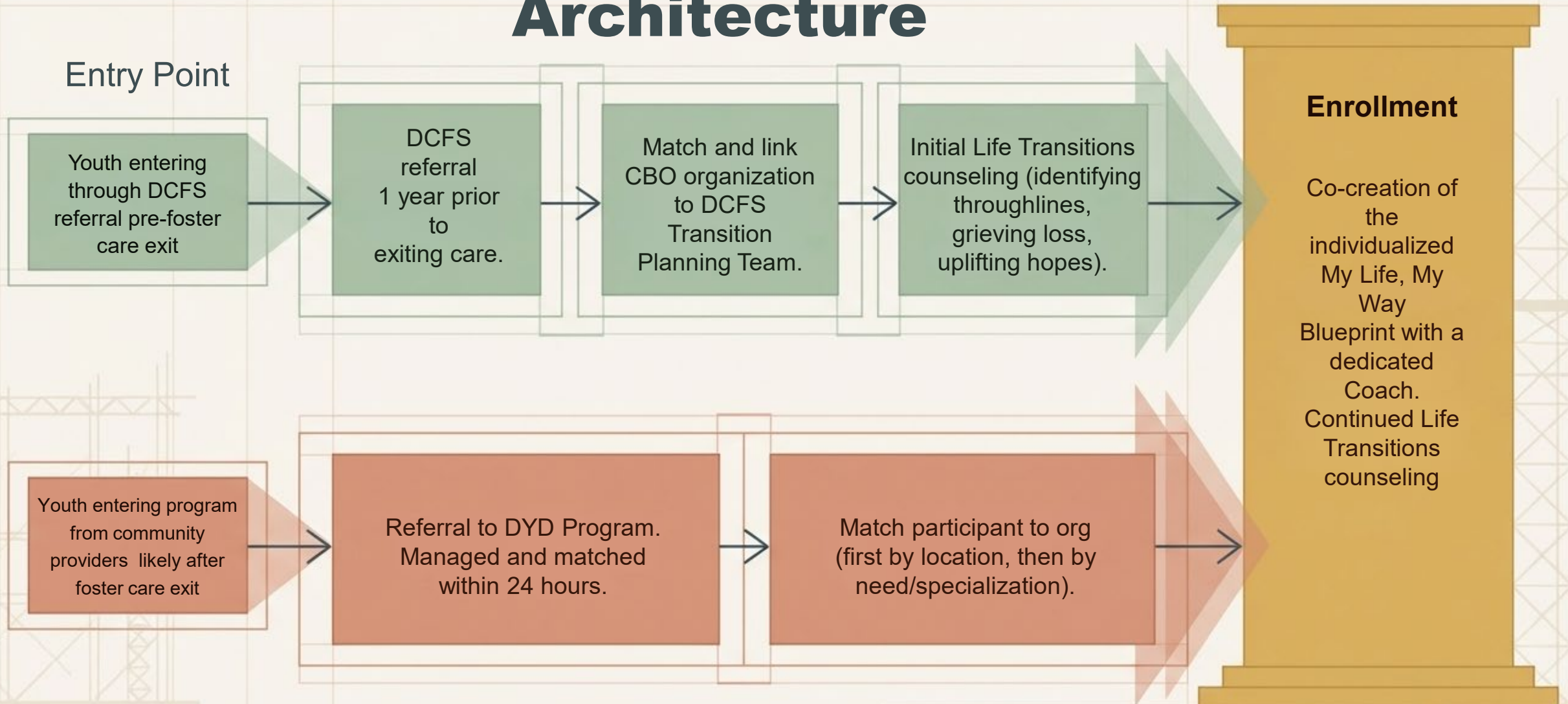
Long Term

- Increased access to long term housing supports tailored to the needs of former foster care TAY
- Increased employment and post-secondary education enrollment and completion

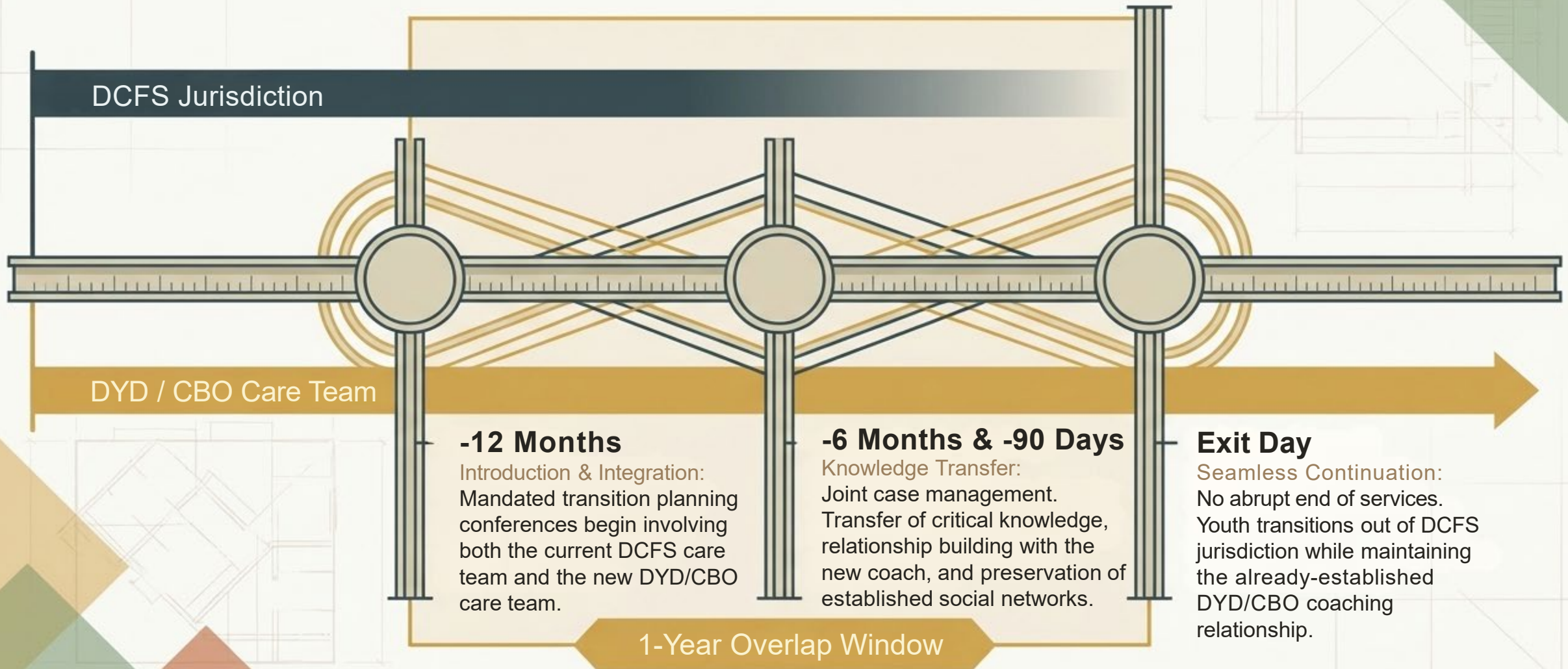
Impact

- Increased number of youth living independently
- Decreased number of TAY experiencing housing instability and houselessness
- Successful continuum of care bridging youth, community providers, interdepartmental coordination, and broader support systems

Pathways to Partnership: The Intake Architecture



The Warm Handoff: A One-Year Overlap Protocol



Attachment D

FORMER FOSTER CARE TAY PROGRAM

	100 Youth Demonstration Project		400 Youth Model		800 Youth Model		1300 Youth Model	
Budget Category	Per Youth	Total	Per Youth	Total	Per Youth	Total	Per Youth	Total
1. Salaries: Mentorship, Case Management, Navigation, and Program Services	\$ 11,477	\$ 1,147,661	\$ 11,477	\$ 4,590,643	\$ 11,487	\$ 9,189,523	\$ 11,487	\$ 14,932,975
2. Support Funds	\$ 3,500	\$ 350,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 4,550,000
3. Monthly Stipends	\$ 2,400	\$ 240,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 960,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 1,920,000	\$ 2,400	\$ 3,120,000
Total Allocated to CBOs	\$ 17,377	\$ 1,737,661	\$ 17,377	\$ 6,950,643	\$ 17,387	\$ 13,909,523	\$ 17,387	\$ 22,602,975
4. Salaries: DYD Administration	\$ 1,754	\$ 175,422	\$ 1,754	\$ 701,688	\$ 877	\$ 701,688	\$ 540	\$ 701,688
5. Data System	\$ 150	\$ 15,000	\$ 75	\$ 30,000	\$ 63	\$ 50,000	\$ 58	\$ 75,000
6. Marketing/Outreach	\$ 1,333	\$ 200,000	\$ 500	\$ 200,000	\$ 250	\$ 200,000	\$ 154	\$ 200,000
7. Youth Advisory Board/Peer Facilitator Compensation and Meeting Costs	\$ 156	\$ 15,600	\$ 359	\$ 143,700	\$ 180	\$ 143,700	\$ 111	\$ 143,700
Total Allocated to DYD	\$ 3,394	\$ 406,022	\$ 2,688	\$ 1,075,388	\$ 1,369	\$ 1,095,388	\$ 862	\$ 1,120,388
Maximum Annual Amount	\$ 20,770	\$ 2,143,683	\$ 20,065	\$ 8,026,031	\$ 18,756	\$ 15,004,911	\$ 18,249	\$ 23,723,363



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DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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HILDA L. SOLIS

First District

HOLLY J. MITCHELL

Second District

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Third District

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Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER

Fifth District

May 19, 2026

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Kathryn Barger
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Brandon T. Nichols
Director

REPORT BACK TO THE NOVEMBER 18, 2025, BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 18) ON STRENGTHENING HOUSING SUPPORTS, CARE, AND SERVICES FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND THOSE EXITING DCFS CARE

On November 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Horvath and Solis directing the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report back in 90 and 120 days on the following directives:

1. Build on the capacity assessments provided in the “Enhancing the Continuum of Care for Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting DCFS Care” report back by conducting a real-time and multi-year forecast housing type gap analysis, inclusive of the number of beds that are actually needed of each bed type to adequately meet the housing and service needs of the youth needing placement/housing, to be submitted in a written report back to the Board in 120 days. This should be done by assessing the needs of each young person and identifying the best housing program to fit their needs, and include:
 - a. A strategy for conducting a placement/housing capacity assessment and gap analysis on an annual basis to inform policy and funding decisions.
 - b. A discussion on how they plan to enhance the THPP-NMD programs, and THP+ programs based on feedback from youth, providers, and advocates including:
 - i. Revising the contracts and contracting process to the extent legally permissible and in line with state requirements to increase flexibility and accessibility for providers.
 - ii. Cost projections and strategies for increasing THPP-NMD capacity.

“To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service”

- c. A discussion of the Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP) program, and plans for improving alignment of SILP placements with youth readiness and support needs to ensure that youth appropriate for this placement type are in SILPs, as well as providing enhanced case management support to youth placed in SILPs. This plan should include increased THPP-NMD capacity.
 - d. A discussion of Project HOPEBridge and plans for sustainable funding and expansion.
2. In collaboration with the Chief Information Office (CIO), Probation, Office of Child Protection (OCP), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH), Department of Economic Development (DEO), Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Department of Youth Development (DYD), and local Housing Authorities, report-back in 120-days on plans to enhance data collection and sharing, ensuring data safeguards for youth, as allowable under law to support youth's streamlined connection to available resources and to allow for an effective, cross-department coordination of care.
3. Fund the two non-budgeted Children Services Administrator II (CSA II) items already included in the ordinance for the Auditor-Controller to expand the Children's Service Ombudsperson's office to serve young people in transitional housing placements, like THPP-NMD. This should include prioritizing candidates with lived experience with Los Angeles County's foster care system and THPP-NMD for one of the positions, where feasible.
4. Report back, in partnership with DYD, in 90 days on how to implement enhanced strategies outlined in the August 28, 2025, "Report Back on Enhancing the Continuum of Care of Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting Department of Children and Families Services' Care," to ensure transition planning for young people placed in SILPs to ensure housing stability once they exit care. This report back should identify how to do a warm-handoff to DYD and additional partners, the feasibility of a near-peer mentor model, and any additional supports young people placed in SILPs need to be successful once their SILP payment stops at age 21. These strategies should be developed in collaboration with current and former foster youth, relevant County departments, and other non-County stakeholders.
6. Direct HSH to work with DCFS to explore transitioning the Stepping Stones program, which provides emergency shelter and support to youth exiting care without housing, to the new Department of Homeless Services and Housing by July 1, 2026. This should include a discussion of how to ensure the funding stream can move with the program, staffing needs, and a quick referral process with DCFS.

8. Direct DCFS and HSH to work with the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) to execute an MOU in 120 days documenting that only DCFS will refer youth for FYI and FUP vouchers, consistent with HUD guidelines.
 - b. This report back should also include DCFS's plans to open a system for taking on new applicants for the FYI and FUP vouchers on a rolling basis.

This serves as the Department's combined 90- and 120-day report back on the above-mentioned directives.

BACKGROUND

Transition Age Youth (TAY) represent one of the most vulnerable populations in Los Angeles County. Research by RAND, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and Good River/UCLA has consistently shown that young people aging out of foster care face disproportionate risks of homelessness, unemployment, and instability. RAND's recent analysis highlights that despite targeted investments, housing insecurity among TAY remains high. The Hilton Foundation's Foster Youth Initiative reports that each year, more than 1,100 youth exit foster care in Los Angeles County, with up to 40 percent experiencing homelessness soon after.

Rising homelessness rates, increased reliance on emergency services and long-term economic costs affect all residents. Additionally, Los Angeles is facing unprecedented economic pressures:

- Rising costs of living
- Competitive job market
- Housing affordability constraints
- Insufficient housing stock

These conditions compound the vulnerability identified in the RAND, Hilton, and Good River/UCLA reports.

CURRENT EFFORTS

Directive 1: Build on the capacity assessments provided in the "Enhancing the Continuum of Care for Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting DCFS Care" report back by conducting a real-time and multi-year forecast housing type gap analysis, inclusive of the number of beds that are actually needed of each bed type to adequately meet the housing and service needs of the youth needing placement/housing, to be submitted in a written report back to the Board in 120 days. This should be done by assessing the needs of each young person and identifying the best housing program to fit their needs.

The August 22, 2025, report back to the Board motion titled, "Enhancing the Continuum of Care for Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting DCFS Care" detailed the following data regarding housing capacity:

Table 1. Existing Resources for TAY Exiting Care

Name of Program	Bed Capacity ^a	Utilization Rates	Type of Housing
Justice Care and Opportunities Department			
Re-entry Interim Housing	136	91%	IH
Women in Reentry	144	83%	IH
Emergency Housing	25	100%	EH
Breaking Barriers	200	70%	PH
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority			
Transitional Housing	587		IH
Host Home	55		IH
Bridge Housing	239		IH
Crisis Housing	163		EH
Crisis Housing – Unaccompanied Minors	12		EH
Joint Transitional Housing-Time Limited Subsidies	45		PH
DCFS			
THPP-NMD (18-21)	412	94%	IH
SILP (18-21)	1031 ^b	-	IH
ILP-THP (18-21)	91	69%	IH
THP+	201	94%	IH
Optimist	40	30%	EH
Stepping Stones	20	10%	EH
Project HopeBridge	15	100%	IH
DMH			
TAY-Dedicated Permanent Supportive Housing Units (18-25)	353	89%	PH
EESP	110	90-95% fill rate	IH, EH
ERS Program	486	89%	IH
CRTP	252	80%	EH

Note. Data as of April 2025. PH = Permanent Housing; IH = Interim Housing; EH = Emergency Housing; SILP = Supervised Independent Living Program; ILP = Independent Living Program; ERS = Enhanced Residential Services; CRTP = Crisis Residential Treatment Program. Only the County departments listed above responded to requests to contribute to the report. DCFS recognizes that other departments may also have beds available.

^a The bed capacity numbers reported by the County departments above are for individuals ages 18-24, unless otherwise indicated. Not all departments collect, track and report information for young people exiting care up to age 21 as the Board motion requests. These figures represent how departments segment, track, and report information in the ordinary course of business.

^b SILP data is for the month of July 2025. This number reflects NMDs who have identified a place to live independently or with a friend, relative, parent, or roommate(s).

Table 2. Existing Resources for Former Foster Youth

Name of Program	Bed Capacity ^a	Utilization Rates	Type of Housing
JCOD			
Reentry Interim Housing	136	91%	IH
Women in Reentry	144	83%	IH
Emergency Housing	25	100%	EH
Breaking Barriers	200	70%	PH
LAHSA			
Transitional Housing	587		IH
Host Home	55		IH
Bridge Housing	239		IH
Crisis Housing	163		EH
Crisis Housing – Unaccompanied Minors	12		EH
Joint Transitional Housing- Time Limited Subsidies	45		PH
DCFS			
THP+	201	94%	IH
Project HopeBridge	15	100%	IH
DMH			
TAY-Dedicated Permanent Supportive Housing Units (18-25)	353	89%	PH
EESP	110	90-95% fill rate	IH, EH
ERS Program	486	89%	IH
CRTP	252	80%	EH

Note. Data represents a point-in-time snapshot as of April 2025. PH = Permanent Housing; IH = Interim Housing; EH = Emergency Housing; SILP = Supervised Independent Living Program; ILP = Independent Living Program; ERS = Enhanced Residential Services; CRTP = Crisis Residential Treatment Program. Only the County departments listed above responded to requests to contribute to the board motion. DCFS recognizes that other departments may also have available beds.

^a The bed capacity numbers reported by the County departments above are for individuals ages 18-24, unless otherwise indicated. Not all departments collect, track, and report information by former foster youth ages 21-26 as the Board motion requests. These figures represent how departments segment, track, and report information in the ordinary course of business. In most County departments, individuals aged 18+ are included in the adult system.

The current DCFS vacancy rates are provided in the table below.

Table 3. Current DCFS Vacancy Rates

Name of Program	Licensed Capacity	Actual Capacity	Total Vacancies	Vacancy Rate Per Actual Capacity
THPP-NMD	745	486	28	5.8%
ILP THP	N/A	73	17	23.3%
THP-Plus	N/A	202	0	0.0%

Note. Data represents a point-in-time snapshot as of March 2026.

Directive 1a: A strategy for conducting a placement/housing capacity assessment and gap analysis on an annual basis to inform policy and funding decisions.

To support an ongoing capacity assessment that will inform policy and funding decisions, DCFS, in partnership with the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP), will hire a consultant to assist with developing a tool that will provide an annual gap analysis. The consultant is expected to start work in spring 2026.

Directive 1b: A discussion on how they plan to enhance the THPP-NMD programs, and THP+ programs based on feedback from youth, providers, and advocates.

THPP-NMD Provider Feedback

On January 13, 2026, the Supportive Housing Division (SHD) held a listening session with THPP-NMD providers to gather feedback on enhancing the program. Results from the listening session included the below areas:

Program Strengths

A consistent theme in provider feedback was that the program does well in providing relationship-based services, particularly through the role of life coaches, case managers, and peer support specialists in building trust with young adults. Providers noted that these relationships help youth engage more meaningfully in services and strengthen their readiness for independent living.

Peer support models were also identified as a significant strength. Programs that incorporate certified peer support specialists reported improved engagement with youth, as individuals with lived experience are often able to connect with participants in ways that traditional service roles cannot. Providers also highlighted the effectiveness of education and employment coordinators and life skills instructors who deliver both group and individualized learning opportunities that reinforce independent living skills.

Furthermore, providers noted that the collaboration with SHD has improved in recent years. Agencies reported positive experiences with case consultations, contract monitoring support, and increased responsiveness from County staff when addressing complex participant situations. The collaboration has helped providers navigate program challenges and identify solutions that prioritize youth stability and success.

Program Considerations

One recurring issue is related to Emotional Support Animals (ESAs). Providers expressed uncertainty regarding program expectations for ESA ownership, including limits on the number of animals, breed restrictions, responsibility for training and liability for property damage.

Another consideration relates to childcare access for parenting youth. Providers noted that existing requirements for childcare eligibility, such as proof of employment or school enrollment, create barriers for youth who are actively seeking work but cannot secure employment without first arranging childcare.

In addition, providers noted opportunities for greater clarity around program priorities and expectations, including how to balance life skills development, case management activities, and Transitional Independent Living Plan goals.

Program Opportunities

Many agencies noted that youth entering THPP-NMD programs today present with higher levels of need, including mental health challenges, developmental delays, and limited independent living experience. Providers emphasized the importance of additional clinical and supportive resources to better meet these needs.

Agencies also highlighted the need for greater flexibility in addressing property damage, behavioral accountability, and higher-acuity participants. Providers recommended exploring alternative approaches that promote accountability while maintaining housing stability.

Finally, providers emphasized the importance of improved coordination across systems, particularly between Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs and THPP-NMD programs. Earlier communication and transition planning between programs could help ensure youth are better prepared for independent living settings and reduce disruptions.

THP-Plus Provider Feedback

On January 13, 2026, THP-Plus providers serving TAY aging out of foster care shared feedback highlighting opportunities to strengthen housing stability, improve program operations, and better align resources with the evolving needs of youth. Providers

emphasized that the population entering THP-Plus increasingly presents with higher levels of need, including mental health challenges, limited independent living experience, and histories of placement instability. As youth age out of DCFS and transition from certain supports, THP-Plus can play a critical role in supporting their progression to full independence.

A key theme raised by providers is the need for stronger pathways to long-term housing beyond the time-limited THP-Plus model. Youth exiting the program at age 24 often continue to build financial stability, education, and employment well into their late twenties. Providers noted that abrupt transitions from structured housing support can increase the likelihood of housing instability. To assist with smoother transitions, DCFS:

- Continues to expand its partnerships with various Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), resulting in additional use of Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers, which continue to be a critical resource in supporting long-term housing stability for eligible young adults.
- Incorporates a financial readiness component in which participants contribute a portion of rent that is held in savings and returned to them upon program completion. Providers also contribute an additional monthly deposit on behalf of participants. Within the THP-Plus program, providers are responsible for implementing tapering subsidy structures, which are intended to gradually transition young adults toward full financial independence.

Providers also identified opportunities to improve referral and placement coordination across systems. In particular, stronger alignment between Probation and THP-Plus placement timelines could help support smoother transitions for NMDs without interruptions in funding or housing access. In support of provider concerns, DCFS will:

- Assess the need to enhance the current application process to incorporate additional readiness assessment indicators, as appropriate.
- Encourage providers to maintain ongoing communication with young adults throughout the application process to ensure that key information is current and accurately reflected.

Funding and rate structures were also discussed. Providers noted that LA County's rates are lower than those offered in several other California counties, while operating costs and participant needs continue to increase. Providers reported that current funding levels may not fully reflect participant acuity, rising housing costs, or the additional expenses associated with serving parenting youth. In alignment with these considerations, DCFS is exploring enhancing the current THP-Plus rate.

Contracts/Contracting Process

Administrative and contracting processes were also identified as an area for improvement. Providers noted that recent procurement timelines extended more than a year from solicitation to award, creating operational uncertainty when planning program capacity. The timeline is driven by Board mandates and government funding rules. Each phase of the solicitation process, including the evaluation, selection, protest process, contract development, Board approval, and contract execution, requires careful review to ensure fairness and compliance with County contracting policies.

According to the THP-Plus Statement of Work (SOW), there are no restrictions on serving pregnant or parenting youth, including when youth are requesting to move between Service Planning Areas (SPAs) or relocate to be closer to their preferred support systems. However, bed availability across SPAs may limit mobility in practice.

In addition, the THP-Plus application allows youth to indicate preferred locations. Providers must submit a proposal for each SPA they wish to serve, and beds are contracted based in part on achieving an even distribution across SPAs. This structure promotes more equitable access to housing resources and prevents overconcentration in certain SPAs.

Mental Health Support

Providers also identified opportunities to strengthen supports that may affect youth stability, including broader access to mental health support after age 21.

On March 20, 2026, SHD met with DMH to address opportunities to strengthen youth mental health support after age 21. As an alternative to in-home services, DMH's Office of TAY indicated that it may be possible to assign staff members from their Youth Bridges Team to THP-Plus providers based on the provider's location or the community they serve. This approach would require review by their executive team to confirm feasibility and next steps.

Additionally, the Office of TAY emphasized that strong engagement is critical to successful mental health intervention, noting that many youth face challenges in accepting services. To address this, DMH and DCFS will be working to offer targeted training for providers (including perspectives from youth with lived experience) that focus on strategies to more effectively introduce mental health topics and encourage youth participation.

To better serve young adults with disabilities, DCFS launched the THPP-NMD for Regional Center participants. Operated by Hillsides, this program specializes in serving young adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities and/or those who are medically fragile. The model of care is centered around a dedicated multidisciplinary team that provides 24/7 case management, housing support and health and well-being services.

Young Adult Feedback

On January 20, 2026 and February 17, 2026, DCFS' Youth Engagement Section (YES) and SHD held listening sessions with the Director's Youth Advisory Council (DYAC) powered by the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC) Young Leaders.

This collaboration centered on lived expertise to inform recommendations that strengthen housing stability infrastructure and cross-departmental coordination. Youth emphasized the importance of autonomy, meaningful support, and true choice within the housing continuum. These recommendations therefore advance a personalized needs-based approach, ensuring sufficient supply across placement types, aligning housing decisions with individual readiness, and layering financial, relational, and coaching supports regardless of model. Housing type alone does not determine stability, support intensity and coordinated systems do.

These conversations highlighted that youth want the THPP-NMD and THP-Plus programs to reflect emerging adulthood by being supportive without feeling institutional, flexible enough to reflect real-life circumstances, and aligned with individual readiness rather than bed availability alone. Strengthening these programs require consistent quality oversight, practical independence preparation, and an expanded housing supply that allows youth to remain near school, work, and supportive relationships.

Strengthen Consistency and Effectiveness of Stabilization and Discharge Protections

Youth described variability in service delivery, unclear expectations, and limited transparency in grievance processes. While many programs provide meaningful support, variation in implementation can affect trust and housing stability.

Actions DCFS can take to strengthen implementation and oversight include reinforcing practices already in place within both the THPP-NMD and THP-Plus programs. THPP-NMD currently monitors provider compliance with required case conferences, staffing meetings and stabilization plans. Although THP-Plus cases are closed with DCFS, providers may elevate concerns to SHD and utilize the quarterly provider meetings as a forum for reviewing case conference practices, staffing expectations and stabilization planning. THP-Plus also verifies that providers have clear housing plan processes in place and meet with young adults at least twice per month, consistent with the SOW, while recognizing that youth must also make themselves available for engagement.

Both programs ensure that young adults receive grievance information at entry. THP-Plus young adults receive a grievance document in their entry packet, and when conflicts arise, providers are directed to follow their internal grievance process before escalating to SHD. If escalation occurs, SHD program managers meet with the parties and regularly remind providers of this process. THPP-NMD young adults are similarly informed of their

grievance rights at entry, and providers often attach grievance documents when communicating with young adults about their right to grieve. To strengthen restorative responses to behavioral or clinical considerations, DCFS will collaborate with DMH's Office of TAY to expand mental health training and support for providers. Finally, to sustain and expand quality improvement efforts — including reviewing patterns of discharge, emergency removals, and grievances — additional SHD staffing will be necessary to ensure oversight and improvements above and beyond what is currently implemented.

Redesign Life Skills Curriculum to Be Practical and Individualized

The DYAC reports that while the THPP-NMD SOW requires formal life skills assessments and training, young adults often experience programming as repetitive, generic, or disconnected from real-world independence. To strengthen individualized and practical preparation, the Department can build on existing practices across both the THPP-NMD and THP-Plus programs. THP-Plus monthly meetings already allow providers to tailor life skills support to each young adult's goals, and to regularly discuss what is working, what is not, and which community partnerships are most effective. These current practices will be reinforced at provider meetings to ensure consistent implementation across agencies. In addition, provider meetings will include opportunities for peer mentorship to share and discuss how current practices are implemented at their respective agencies, thereby increasing shared learning and consistency of approach.

In the THPP-NMD program, providers report meeting youth where they are developmentally, using day-to-day situations as teaching moments. THPP-NMD young adults also have access to Assembly Bill (AB) 12 Children's Social Workers (CSWs) who can assist with life skills development. These practices will also be reinforced through provider meetings and peer learning opportunities to support consistent application and continuous improvement across providers.

To further enhance practical skill-building, SHD will continue to encourage providers to individualize life skills instruction based on assessment results and identified goals.

Align Capacity & Housing Models with Needs-Based Placement

Young adults emphasized limited availability and geographic mismatch that often result in placements influenced by bed availability rather than readiness or long-term stability. They cautioned that expanding the THPP-NMD and THP-Plus programs should not create a hierarchy over SILP and instead called for parallel investment across housing models to ensure real choice and needs-based placement.

DCFS currently operates scattered-site THP-Plus options, typically in shared two-bedroom units, with some providers offering houses used for transitional housing. For NMDs, there are two to three one-unit placements available, which limits the ability to

offer more independent options. Rising housing costs continue to challenge providers' ability to expand scattered-site units and secure placements in youth-preferred neighborhoods.

In alignment with youth feedback, DCFS is developing a data-informed capacity plan, tied to the housing gap analysis under Directive 1a, to ensure that the THPP-NMD and THP-Plus program capacity grows in proportion to need. In addition, DCFS is exploring more flexible housing models to better match youth preferences and developmental readiness. To further assist SILP participants, SHD will implement the Rapid Engagement Housing Program using a provider to offer services, including securing prospective landlords with affordable rental properties, case management, employment referrals, and educational and supportive services. Services are starting this year.

Simultaneously, DCFS is committed to strengthening SILP supports so that expanding transitional housing does not create a hierarchy over SILP but instead ensures that young adults who are ready for more independent living receive appropriate preparation and stabilization.

Strengthen Youth-Informed Compatibility & Conflict Resolution Practices

Youth reported that roommate conflict and unclear expectations can destabilize otherwise promising placements. They emphasized the need for more intentional youth-informed matching and stronger early conflict resolution practices to prevent avoidable disruptions.

For THP-Plus, matching is often constrained by limited vacancies and the need to place young adults quickly; thus, decisions are frequently based on bed availability rather than a full compatibility process. For THPP-NMD, providers conduct pre-move-in meetings to discuss living preferences, routines, communication styles, and boundaries. When roommate conflicts arise, providers intervene early and make efforts to resolve issues before they escalate. SHD continues to reinforce consistent mediation practices and clarify distinctions between immediate safety issues requiring urgent action, interpersonal conflict, and clinical needs that may benefit from mental health support. Additionally, DMH will provide training to providers to strengthen their mental health knowledge and skills.

Responsive Case Management

Young adults shared that the most destabilizing moments often occur at entry into placement and in the months leading up to exit. They emphasized that support intensity should flex during these critical transition periods rather than remain static throughout placement. In addition, youth shared that while referrals to education, employment, legal, and health resources are provided, these connections can feel informational rather than integrated. Many described being given phone numbers or brochures without coordinated follow-through, resulting in fragmented access across systems.

DCFS will maintain THP-Plus' twice-a-month contact requirement, along with the 1:15 case manager-to-participant ratio, which includes weekly contact and daily check-ins with NMDs. These expectations support consistent engagement and safety monitoring. All required support remains available to youth; however, participation from the young adult is essential for services to be effective. For THPP-NMD, the case manager-to-participant ratio is 1:12.

Increased funding capacity will also be explored as part of broader program planning.

DCFS' Contract Compliance Division conducts oversight aligned with provider feedback. Additionally, the SOW requires providers to meet with a clinical supervisor, ensuring clinical issues are addressed promptly and appropriately. Providers may also bring clinical concerns to provider meetings where they can receive technical assistance and guidance.

Modernizing Success Benchmarks

Young adults expressed that independence should be measured meaningfully and individually, not administratively. They emphasized that "graduation" should reflect real stability, confidence, and readiness, not simply age, length of stay, or program completion timelines.

The Department will continue bringing resources to provider meetings to support youth-centered transition planning and reinforce the realities of the high cost of living in Los Angeles when evaluating youth progress and readiness. The Department will also encourage providers to integrate youth-defined goals into transition planning, promote the use of youth feedback tools to strengthen program quality, and support a strength-based interpretation of employment, education, and savings indicators. Additionally, the Department will explore opportunities to incorporate housing sustainability measures into future program expectations and quality improvement efforts, ensuring that success benchmarks reflect real-world stability and the developmental needs of young people.

Directive 1b.i: Revising the contracts and contracting process to the extent legally permissible and in line with state requirements to increase flexibility and accessibility for providers.

Contracting Process

As previously mentioned, administrative and contracting processes were also identified as an area for improvement. Providers noted that recent procurement timelines extended more than a year from solicitation to award, creating operational uncertainty when planning program capacity. Based on a conversation with our Contract Development Division, the timeline is driven by Board mandates and government funding rules. Each phase of the solicitation process, including the evaluation, selection, protest process,

contract development, Board approval, and contract execution — requires careful review to ensure fairness and compliance with the County contracting process.

THP-Plus

During the February 10, 2026 provider meeting, agencies raised various considerations about contract terms, including restrictive language related to serving parenting youth, limited flexibility for youth moving between SPAs and SPA-specific contracting requirements. The following reiterates and provides clarification on these topics:

- According to the THP-Plus SOW, there are no restrictions on serving pregnant or parenting youth, particularly when youth need to move between SPAs or relocate to be closer to their preferred support system. However, bed availability when requested to move between SPAs might provide barriers to a young adult being able to move.
- There are no SPA restrictions for youth in the program. The THP-Plus application asks youth where they want to live. Providers must submit a proposal for each SPA they wish to serve. Beds are contracted based on even distribution. This structure ensures equitable distribution of housing resources and prevents overconcentration in certain SPAs.

THPP-NMD

Request for Statement of Qualifications Changes 2025

The 2025 Request for Statement of Qualifications included several important updates designed to strengthen service quality, improve transparency and support provider success:

- Higher Minimum Experience Requirements: DCFS increased the required experience level to ensure all contracted providers bring strong, hands-on expertise. Although the solicitation remains non-evaluated, the raised baseline promotes higher-quality service delivery.
- Flexibility for Licensing in Progress: Providers awaiting final licensing may now submit documentation showing they are in the process of becoming licensed, giving agencies more time and preventing unnecessary exclusion.
- Clear Communication of Requirements: All updates were detailed in the solicitation materials and reinforced during the provider conference to ensure transparency and equal access.
- State-Level Nonprofit Verification: A new verification step was added, which confirms nonprofit status at the state level for accuracy and compliance.
- More Formalized Provider History Review: The Department strengthened its vetting of provider history, including past performance and compliance.

- Financial Accountability Clause: New language was added to reinforce fiscal responsibility and clearer expectations for financial documentation and reporting.
- Enhanced Budget Transparency: Providers must now submit more detailed and transparent budget information.
- More Specific Insurance Requirements: Insurance coverage expectations have been clarified to support consistent compliance.
- Expanded Support Resources: Additional guidance and tools were added to the appendices to help nonprofit providers understand and meet requirements.
- Incentives for Timely Vendor Payments: Updates encourage faster payments to support provider stability.
- Increased Alignment with County Equity Initiatives
- More Structured Dispute Resolution
- Stronger Enforcement of Lobbyist Ordinance
- GAIN/START Employment as a Threshold Requirement with Mentoring Access

Contract Changes

Providers shared several considerations regarding current contract requirements, and DCFS will consider these areas in the next solicitation cycle. One key issue involves the Stop Payment policy, which currently requires payment to cease if a provider does not hear from a youth within three days. DCFS is exploring extending this timeframe to 14 days to better reflect communication realities and reduce potential disruptions.

Another consideration relates to the belief that CSW approval is required before a youth can move into a unit. CSW approval is not required at move-in, as units are already certified and NMDs have the right to view the unit upon arrival. This will be further clarified and reinforced at the next provider meeting to ensure all providers understand the correct process and requirements.

Providers also noted considerations related to SPA-specific slot allocations. While these allocations are driven by funding limitations and the need to distribute resources equitably across the County, the Department emphasized that flexibility is built into the system. As vacancies arise, NMDs may be relocated closer to employment, education, or support systems. Concerns were also raised about outdated or burdensome requirements. Long-distance phone plans remain a state licensing requirement; however, providers may request exceptions through the Community Care Licensing and the County will honor approved exceptions. Additionally, certain garments have been removed from the clothing list. DCFS remains open to reviewing other items for modernization.

Directive 1b.ii: Cost projections and strategies for increasing THPP-NMD capacity

DCFS has strengthened its fiscal planning and forecasting processes to better anticipate program needs, including incorporating rate adjustments, promoting opportunities for

provider expansion and assessing the financial and workload impacts of capacity building to ensure alignment with available resources.

To expand capacity and improve placement availability, DCFS has engaged in the following strategies:

- Implemented the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) increase in rate from \$4,707 (non-parenting)/\$5,441(parenting) to \$4,866 (non-parenting)/\$5,634 (parenting).
- Onboarded three additional providers, increasing SPA coverage and placement availability.
- Expanded SPA capacity among existing providers, with four providers taking on additional SPAs.

Directive 1c. A discussion of the SILP program, and plans for improving alignment of SILP placements with youth readiness and support needs to ensure that youth appropriate for this placement type are in SILPs, as well as providing enhanced case management support to youth placed in SILPs. This plan should include increased THPP-NMD capacity.

The SILP program is a critical component of Extended Foster Care (EFC), supporting AB12 NMDs, from the age of 18 up until their 21st birthday, in developing independent living skills while maintaining case management support.

According to the DCFS SILP Policy #0100-5600.40, SILP is a flexible, non-licensed foster care placement available to NMDs participating in the EFC program. It is intended to provide NMDs with the opportunity for highly independent living experiences while they receive foster care payments and Supportive Transition services. SILP placements are for NMDs who are developmentally ready to live independently and in a less restrictive environment.

Options for SILPs include:

- Apartments, alone or with roommates.
- Single Room Occupancies, which may have shared bathrooms and/or kitchens.
- A rented room, including from a former caregiver/relative.
- Grounded Mobile Home.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit – Building and Safety Permit Required.
- Converted Garage – Building and Safety Permit Required.
- Recreational Vehicle – Temporary Basis, limited circumstances, and in alignment with city ordinances.
- Shipping Metal Container – Building and Safety Permit Required and in alignment with California regulations and standards.
- Home of Parent or Guardian.

- Job Corps, Tribally Approved Homes and Dorms/University Housing, including those out-of-state.

SILP payment logistics are as follows:

- All NMDs living in a SILP receive the California basic foster care rate (\$1,301) plus the applicable County clothing allowance (\$256), and are the payee of the SILP, unless an alternate/designated payee is indicated.
- The NMD will receive the first SILP payment 60 days after the SILP approval.
- Prior to a unit being approved as a SILP, the NMD can utilize the prospective SILP unit as a temporary living setting (TLS) and receive Supervised Independent Living (SIL) funding while awaiting SILP approval.
- The start date of the SILP payment to the NMD cannot be initiated any earlier than the date of the approved physical inspection documented on the SOC 157B.
- NMDs need to be informed that any days they reside in an unapproved site will not qualify for payments.
- Parenting NMDs can receive the infant supplement while residing in a SILP (\$900). The expectant parenting payment and infant supplement shall be paid directly to the NMD.

In any case where it has been established that an NMD is not ready to receive their payment directly and therefore an alternate payee is required, the NMD's parent is not allowed to act as the alternate payee for the foster care payment.

As part of the Department's commitment to authentic youth engagement, safety, and long-term stability, the DCFS Youth Development Services Division (YDSD) remains committed to strengthening alignment between youth readiness, safety considerations, and expanding enhanced case management supports through our collaboration with the YES, regional staff and our legal partners.

SILP placements are intended for NMDs who demonstrate readiness for independent living and who have the necessary supports, life skills, and stability to successfully maintain independence. YDSD and YES continue to strengthen readiness assessments and ongoing practices by furthering NMD engagement efforts that would improve the CSW's knowledge of the NMD's readiness in the following areas:

- Housing stability.
- Financial readiness and income consistency.
- Life skills and daily living capacity.
- Supportive relationships and community connections.
- Mental health and behavioral health needs.
- Educational or employment engagement.
- History of trauma and prior safety concerns.

- Parenting Skills (Expecting and Parenting Youth).

YDSD also emphasizes that readiness for SILP placement is not static. NMDs' needs and circumstances may change, requiring ongoing evaluation and flexibility in placement planning. This continuous assessment approach could help reduce the likelihood of youth being placed in SILPs without sufficient support.

Additionally, while NMDs, as legal adults, maintain the right to make decisions regarding where they reside, DCFS has an ongoing responsibility to assess safety and document concerns, particularly when the requested SILP location was previously deemed unsafe. When an NMD desires to reside in a home where they previously experienced abuse or neglect, DCFS maintains responsibility to:

- Conduct a thorough safety assessment
- Review prior removal reasons and documented abuse history
- Assess current household dynamics and protective factors
- Evaluate potential risks and safety planning needs
- Engage the NMD in informed decision-making discussions

YDSD emphasizes that youth autonomy must be balanced with informed decision-making and safety considerations. Even when a court determines that a youth's placement choice is viable, DCFS continues to:

- Provide safety planning and risk mitigation strategies.
- Offer alternative placement options, including THPP-NMD and other supportive housing resources.
- Maintain enhanced case management and monitoring.
- Continue to assess the youth's well-being and stability.

As a result, YDSD and YES continue to provide enhanced case management support for NMDs placed in SILPs, particularly those with elevated risk factors or limited support systems. Enhanced case management can help ensure that youth placed in SILPs are not navigating independence in isolation and that early intervention can occur when challenges arise.

Enhanced supports may include:

- Increased frequency of face-to-face or virtual contacts.
- Regular safety check-ins and stability assessments.
- Coordinated care planning with service providers.
- Connection to financial literacy and life skills coaching.
- Employment and education support.
- Mental and behavioral health referrals and follow-up.

- Peer mentoring and supportive adult relationships.

DCFS remains committed to expanding THPP-NMD programming and capacity and exploring additional housing models for NMDs. As previously stated in Directive 1b, implementing the CDSS rate increases and onboarding additional providers will support capacity and placement availability for the THPP-NMD program. Moreover, by strengthening readiness assessments, maintaining safety oversight, expanding THPP-NMD program capacity, and enhancing case management supports, NMDs will be better equipped to navigate independence while maintaining safety, stability, and long-term success.

Directive 1d. A discussion of Project HOPEBridge and plans for sustainable funding and expansion.

Project HopeBridge (PH) is an innovative demonstration project operated by the Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD). PH provides up to two years (2024 - 2026) of rapid rehousing and workforce development support to young people exiting the child welfare system in SPA 6. This project is a collaboration between CRCD, LACDA, CSP, and DCFS. PH builds on the lessons learned from the 2021 housing cliff and the Stepping Stones demonstration project.

As of March 2026, PH's impact included, but was not limited to, the following:

- Maintained a 100 percent retention rate of the participants admitted in the first cohort.
- Two program participants exited the program after having secured FYI vouchers (these participants still receive case management services from CRCD staff).
- Successfully established positive relationships with landlords who are dedicated to providing safe and stable housing to TAY.
- Eight participants secured part- or full-time employment.
- Three participants enrolled in school.
- One participant is parenting.

All participants receive case management and workforce development services to encourage financial independence and long-term housing stability.

PH is funded by LACDA's Permanent Local Housing Allocation (PLHA), which provides funding to local governments in California for housing-related projects and programs that assist in addressing the unmet housing needs of their local communities. In addition, CSP funds some of the workforce development efforts. The program costs approximately \$1.1M over two years, serving 15 young adults. The annual cost per participant is approximately \$37,500, inclusive of housing, workforce development services, damage mitigation, and administrative costs.

PH partners meet monthly to discuss program logistics and sustainability plans. LACDA has committed to providing an additional round of PLHA funds from 2026 to 2028. This will allow CRCDC to serve an additional 10 young adults in SPA 6. This second cohort is scheduled to start in quarter two of 2026 with an estimated program cost of \$740,791 over two years. The decrease in real estate transactions, which fund the PLHA, is the reason for the drop in funding amount. An investment of \$375,000 would allow for an increase of five participants, totaling 15 young adults for the second cohort.

Conversations about sustainability continue monthly. PH partners plan to connect with the following entities to discuss potential PH investments and impact:

- Measure A Local Solutions Funds*
- Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH)*
- Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee/Prevention and Promotion Coordination Implementation Team*
- Philanthropy

*

The goal of PH is to provide young adults with tools and resources to successfully transition from the child welfare system to sustainable long-term housing. Additional investment in PH would allow for the program's continued impact and the expansion of its capacity and existing goals.

Directive 2: In collaboration with the CIO, Probation, OCP, DMH, HSH, DEO, DPH, DHS, DPSS, DYD, and local Housing Authorities, report-back in 120-days on plans to enhance data collection and sharing, ensuring data safeguards for youth, as allowable under law to support youth's streamlined connection to available resources and to allow for an effective, cross-department coordination of care.

DCFS is partnering with the CIO, Chief Executive Office (CEO), Office of Child, Youth, and Family Wellbeing (OCYFW), County Counsel, and youth and young adult-serving County departments to enhance information and data sharing across the County's system of care. Improved information and data sharing will support effective, cross-departmental coordination of care for current and former foster youth up to age 26. It is important to note that the steps described in this section also align with Directive 7b¹ as it relates to addressing information and data sharing processes that can support a "Fast Pass" protocol for current and former foster youth who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

* It is important to note that the County is experiencing a spending freeze that may provide limitations on investment opportunities until the freeze is lifted.

¹ Directive 7b directs the DYD and the LA County TAY Table of the System of Care to explore the feasibility of creating and implementing a protocol or "Fast Pass" to prioritize navigation support for current and former foster youth through age 26, and should include a discussion of data sharing challenges and plans to ensure data can be shared safely and securely between County departments.

DCFS and the aforementioned partner departments are collaborating to: 1) enhance information sharing consent protocols for current and former foster youth up to age 26; 2) identify use cases and leverage platforms like the CIO's Countywide Information Hub (CWIH), to connect client and program data across departments; and 3) develop platforms like the CIO's Community Information Exchange and the TAY Table's web-based TAY Resource Hub to support resource navigation, closed-loop referrals, and warm handoffs to services for TAY.

Informed Consent for Information Sharing

The CEO Policy Implementation and Alignment Branch (PIAB) partnered with DMH, DHS, DPH, DPSS, HSH, the Justice, Care and Opportunities Department, and County Counsel to develop two versions of an "Authorization for the Use and Disclosure of Health and Social Services Information" form — one for adults and one for youth — to share health and social services information across these departments and their contracted providers as part of the implementation of the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal Justice-Involved Initiative mandated by the California Department of Health Care Services. This initiative directs counties to provide 90-day pre-release services to Medi-Cal eligible incarcerated adults and youth and to connect these individuals to supports within their communities prior to their release.

PIAB is expanding this work to potentially include other departments and their partners, as permissible by law. This includes expanding the two consent forms to include additional departments and use cases that will include other individuals served by the County who would also benefit from care coordination opportunities in addition to TAY. The CIO will develop an electronic consent management system that enables care coordinators and providers to quickly determine who has provided consent for their information to be shared (and any limitations to their consent), as well as know when someone's consent has been revoked, or has expired.

This approach respects the rights of participants and is the best first step in enhancing information and data sharing across the County's system of care to support care coordination. PIAB is also working with County Counsel to explore additional options for critical information to be shared that may not be covered by this approach and will include relevant departments as progress is made. A phased implementation will be used so that information can start to be shared where appropriate as other alternatives are explored further.

In addition, the TAY Table Integrated Data Subcommittee — inclusive of County representatives, lived experts and community partners — will continue ongoing discussions about the best ways to engage young people around consent and data sharing, ensuring their rights and privacy are respected while improving service coordination and delivery.

Linking Client and Program Data

The CWIH is Los Angeles County's centralized platform for data integration and analytics. By aggregating information across multiple departments, the CWIH provides a comprehensive view of how residents interact with County services. This system is designed to improve strategic planning, care coordination, and outcome measurements by reducing data silos and providing authorized staff with secure access to integrated information for service delivery and decision making.

Examples of current applications of the CWIH include:

- **DPSS Service Integration:** DPSS utilizes CWIH data to analyze patterns among CalWORKs recipients, specifically tracking their concurrent use of homeless, health, and behavioral health services. This helps identify service gaps and compare outcomes between CalWORKs participants and the broader population.
- **Poverty Alleviation and Food Security:** The Poverty Alleviation Initiative utilizes CWIH data to map the geographic density of CalFresh and CalWORKs recipients. By identifying these concentrations at the Supervisorial District level, the County can more effectively coordinate food distribution and resource allocation.

While many youth and young adult-serving departments already share client and program data with the CWIH through the TAY Table's Integrated Data Workgroup, co-led by the OCYFW and CIO, departments are working to identify additional data points and use cases to better coordinate care across the system of care for TAY. Departments are also continuing to work with the CIO to enhance data integration through the CWIH.

Enhancing Resource Navigation and Referral Platforms

The CIO is developing the Community Information Exchange (CIE) — a shared system for information, referrals, and service coordination — that, when fully implemented, will help Los Angeles County departments and community providers connect residents to the right services through a “no wrong door” approach. It is a platform that will support provider service searches, referrals, consent-based information sharing, and service-provision tracking. The purpose of the CIE is to improve care service delivery, strengthen coordination among County and non-County providers, and improve follow-through for residents with multiple or complex needs.

The CIE and CWIH are intended to work together as complementary parts of Los Angeles County's service-delivery model while adhering to security and privacy requirements. The CIE component will connect people to services and help call centers, service navigators, departments, and community providers make referrals, share consent-based information, and coordinate services through a “no wrong door” approach. The CWIH component is the underlying data and analytics platform that will integrate information across systems,

and it will allow the County to link and de-identify records, track, analyze and measure service outcomes, and provide broader cross-system visibility.

The CIE will be a critical resource to support the TAY population once implemented, as it will provide a Countywide platform for streamlined resource information, navigation and closed-loop referrals for services as well as support robust cross-systems care coordination for the youth and young adults we serve. Concurrently, the TAY Table is leading the development of a web-based TAY Resource Hub, which will provide consolidated access to curated youth and young adult-focused resources and share information on County initiatives, programming, and events. The integration of the TAY Resource Hub with the CIE will be a second-phase deliverable once both platforms are developed and implemented. The Internal Services Department will develop the TAY Resource Hub, utilizing initial funding from the OCYFW, and the DYD will manage its development — which will include a strategy for youth input and engagement — and provide ongoing monitoring and oversight after its launch scheduled for Fall 2026.

Directive 3: Fund the two non-budgeted Children Services Administrator II (CSA II) items already included in the ordinance for the Auditor-Controller to expand the Children’s Service Ombudsperson’s office to serve young people in transitional housing placements, like THPP-NMD. This should include prioritizing candidates with lived experience with Los Angeles County’s foster care system and THPP-NMD, for one of the positions, where feasible.

DCFS will fund the two CSA II items to expand the Children’s Services Ombudsperson’s office to assist young people in transitional housing placements. The Department has submitted a request for these items to the CEO as part of the Final Change Budget.

Directive 4: Report back, in partnership with DYD, in 90 days on how to implement enhanced strategies outlined in the August 28, 2025, “Report Back on Enhancing the Continuum of Care of Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting Department of Children and Families Services’ Care,” to ensure transition planning for young people placed in SILPs to ensure housing stability once they exit care. This report back should identify how to do a warm handoff to DYD and additional partners, the feasibility of a near-peer mentor model and any additional supports young people placed in SILPs need to be successful once their SILP payment stops at age 21. These strategies should be developed in collaboration with current and former foster youth, relevant County departments, and other non-County stakeholders.

On March 26, 2026, the DCFS Children and TAY Bureau held a listening session with staff from various service bureaus, which highlighted the importance of ensuring that NMDs placed in SILPs can demonstrate readiness for independent living and that they receive enhanced case management support.

DCFS staff will be developing and implementing a specialized training curriculum on youth engagement. This training will involve AB12 staff to strengthen their understanding of the complexities of assisting NMDs exiting EFC.

The training will focus on topics including, but not limited to, the following:

- Reviewing Wrap-Around/Holistic Life Planning with NMDs (i.e., housing, education, vocation, employment, mentorship/supportive relationship building, financial education/literacy).
- Building authentic relationships with NMDs beyond compliance-based interactions.
- Understanding housing fundamentals (i.e., leasing agreements, credit scores, security deposits, income and budgeting).
- Understanding rules and regulations of government-assisted housing (i.e., Housing Choice Vouchers).
- Engaging NMDs and their support networks in realistic housing planning and contingency planning for after EFC.
- Understanding and engaging Community-Based Organizations.
- Utilizing DCFS Funding Options (i.e., STOP Funds, Special Payments, ILP Funding).

To ensure that transition planning leads to housing stability, CSWs are conducting transition planning conferences as early as age 20, and will be encouraging contingency planning through the following avenues and strategies:

- 90-Day Child and Family Team Meetings.
- 6-Month Transition Plans.
- 90-Day Transition Plans.
- Ongoing reassessments.
- Backup housing planning.
- Including the Independent Living Transition Coordinator and SHD representatives in transition conferences.
- Inviting Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) liaisons to transition conferences (there is one assigned to every region).
- Utilizing the DCFS Placement Support Division to help stabilize SILPs.

DCFS also conducts warm handoffs to the following stakeholders:

- Regional Centers
- Community organizations
- THP-Plus program
- LAHSA programs

In addition, DCFS is exploring opportunities to further encourage lived experience mentorship for TAY. This includes releasing a Request for Information regarding peer mentorship for youth, as well as continuing to partner with other systems partners, including DMH, DPH Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, and managed care plans on how peer support can be better incorporated into services like high fidelity wraparound and other behavioral health supports.

To reduce potential disruptions in service and support for NMDs exiting EFC, DCFS is in communication with DYD to establish a referral pathway. It is important to note that the strategies described in this section also align Directive 5² and Directive 7³.

Directive 6: Direct HSH to work with DCFS to explore transitioning the Stepping Stones program, which provides emergency shelter and support to youth exiting care without housing, to the new Department of Homeless Services and Housing by July 1, 2026. This should include a discussion of how to ensure the funding stream can move with the program, staffing needs, and a quick referral process with DCFS.

On February 9, 2026, DCFS convened a meeting with HSH staff members to review the history of the Stepping Stones program and its status. DCFS is in support of Stepping Stones moving to HSH, but the funding supporting Stepping Stones will be concluding at the end of this fiscal year due to the full expenditure of the allocated funds.

Directive 8b: Direct DCFS and HSH to work with LACDA to execute an MOU in 120 days documenting that only DCFS will refer youth for FYI and FUP vouchers, consistent with HUD guidelines. This report back should also include DCFS' plans to open a system for taking on new applicants for the FYI and FUP vouchers on a rolling basis.

DCFS recognizes the importance of maintaining access to screening for Family Unification Program (FUP) and FYI vouchers for youth and families and understands the interest in having an open system for new applicants. Nonetheless, maintaining a continuously open intake process presents operational challenges given the SHD's current staff capacity and limited number of vouchers anticipated to be available in 2026.

At this time, it is estimated that 100 FYI vouchers are expected in 2026. In anticipation of this availability, DCFS opened the system for screening the eligibility of new applicants

² Directive 5 directs the DYD to develop a plan to expand their scope and infrastructure to include provision, coordination, and oversight support for at-risk former foster youth who have exited foster care, through age 26, including youth who may not be ILP eligible.

³ Directive 7 directs the DYD and the LA County TAY Table of the System of Care to explore the feasibility of creating and implementing a protocol or "Fast Pass" to prioritize navigation support for current and former foster youth through age 26.

this year as a proactive strategy to build a viable pool and prepare for expected voucher allocation. During a two-week period, approximately 1,200 individuals submitted screening applications. This response highlights the significant need for housing resources, but it also highlights the challenge of sustaining an open system when demand substantially exceeds available resources. As such, a continuously open intake process under these conditions could create delays in screening, follow-up, and communication with applicants, while also placing significant strain on the SHD's limited staff capacity.

To determine an appropriate fit, SHD staff will conduct interviews with eligible applicants, which are expected to begin this spring and projected to take 9-12 months to complete based on staff capacity. DCFS will continue to assess its staffing capacity, voucher availability and demand to determine whether and when future intake periods may be opened.

NEXT STEPS

In closing, DCFS will continue to collaborate with existing partners, as well as leverage new partnerships and opportunities, to further support and improve the work around addressing the housing needs of TAY exiting DCFS care.

We thank the Board for its ongoing support and commitment to ensuring that the needs of TAY are met. We look forward to updating the Board on our collective efforts in future reports.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Liaison, at (213) 371-6052.

BTN:JF:CMM
APP:ZS:ec

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors