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Fully Utilizing Foster Youth to Independence Initiative Vouchers

On July 27, 2026, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development issued Notice PIH 2026-19 detailing the requirements of the *Melania Trump Foster Youth to Independence* Initiative (FYI), thoughtfully removing restrictions on the existing cap on the number of FYI vouchers that Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) can request each year, allowing PHAs to more easily draw down this critical rental subsidy for former foster youth.

The need in Los Angeles County (County) for this voucher program dedicated to youth connected to the child welfare system is well documented and significant. Approximately 1,200 youth exit the County child welfare system each year, more than half of whom will be 21 and ineligible for extended foster care.¹ Although the youth exiting care all have housing plans, these plans often change or fall through, leaving former foster

¹ *Report Back Regarding the November 18, 2025, Board Motion (Item No. 18) on Strengthening Housing Supports, Care, and Services for Former Youth and Those Exiting DCFS Care.* January 20, 2026: [1200204_DCFSReport-StrengtheningHousingSupports_Item18-Nov182025_012026.pdf](#)

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youth homeless with no system of support. These expanded FYI vouchers can be a consistent subsidy included in the housing continuum of care for transition aged youth with child welfare system history.

Additionally, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) reported that when they opened the FYI waitlist to screen for new, eligible youth, they received 1,200 applications in a two-week window for only 100 vouchers,² further evidencing the need for this resource and an established safety net for former foster youth. With the evidenced Countywide need coupled with the limited capacity of DCFS to appropriately assess this large pool of interested youth, the successful utilization of this newly expanded resource will require strong collaboration with DCFS, the Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH), and the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA).

Many of the PHAs are reticent to draw down the FYI vouchers based on prior experiences with voucher lease-up challenges or on old, now false, narratives about these challenges. With DCFS and HSH strengthening their partnership to build high performing systems to effectively administer the existing FYI program and to provide intense support for the youth participants, FYI has become a high performing program helping young people end their homelessness. This is the ideal moment to scale this program.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH), in partnership with the Los

² 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. May 19, 2026: [1209058_DCFSReport-StrengtheningHousingSupports_Item18-Nov182025_051926.pdf](#)

Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), to submit a written report back in the next 30 days that:

- a. Assesses the changes to the Foster Youth to Independence Initiative codified in HUD Notice PIH 2026-19;
 - b. Clearly defines each departments' role, capacity, and funding committed to the implementation of this voucher program; and
 - c. Determines the Countywide system capacity to inform the number of vouchers that can be requested from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, mindful of funding for housing navigation, unit location, stabilization services, and administrative costs to administer the program.
2. Request LACDA immediately draw down the maximum number of FYI vouchers balancing both with the system wide capacity and the need among youth for this subsidy, as determined from LACDA, DCFS, and HSH data.
3. Direct HSH and DCFS to partner with LACDA to engage with the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles and the other regional Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to build and expand partnerships and confirm the provision of County administered youth services in support of each PHA drawing down as many FYI vouchers as possible. HSH and DCFS should prepare and submit quarterly report-backs with progress updates to the Board of Supervisors for the next fiscal year.
4. Direct DCFS to report back in 60 days on the funding and staff capacity needed to perform timely and ongoing assessments of potential FYI applicants to determine eligibility and appropriateness for this voucher.

WE, FURTHER, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct DCFS and HSH to:

5. Report back in 90 days on a comprehensive continuum of care for Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) experiencing homelessness who have a history of child welfare involvement.
 - a. This should include all resources available to house TAY, how they can work together to provide the appropriate level of housing supports, and define the role of each department (and other relevant County departments) in ensuring an effective housing system.
6. Work together to refine the DCFS FYI application questions and screening process to increase efficiency and ensure that referrals to PHAs are made for all eligible youth.

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