

AGING OUT TIMELINE

View details for each of these steps inside the brochure

AGE

15
16

- Set goals for yourself.** Start thinking about what you want to do when you leave the foster care system and make a plan to get yourself there.

17

- Get an identification card,** such as a DC nondriver's identification card.
- Start saving your money.** Open a savings account.
- Get a driver's learning permit.**
- Think about your education.** Make a plan to finish high school or earn your GED.

18

- Start driving.** Sign up for CFSA's driver's education program and get your driver's license.
- Keep saving money!**
- Ask for a YTP meeting.** Meet with your GAL, SW and team to discuss your goals.
- Get a copy of your credit report.**
- Complete or continue your education plan.** Including obtaining a high school diploma, GED, vocational training or college.
- Write a resume and cover letter.** Practice interviewing with you GAL. Get a job.

19

- Work toward transition.** Make sure that you are participating in your YTP meetings.

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YTP meetings should occur AT LEAST every 3 months.

- Develop a housing plan.** Work with your GAL and social worker to decide where you will live.
- Schedule all of your medical appointments** – physical, dental, vision, OBGYN, surgeries, etc.
- Secure important documentation.**
- Get a DC Combined Application.** Apply for benefits – DC Medicaid, food stamps, and TANF.
- Mental Health Services.** Apply for services such as therapy and medication management.

STRATEGIES & TIPS

Don't wait until the last minute; it is never too early to start planning how you will live on your own when your case closes.

Don't just go along with the program. Make sure the plan that is being developed will work for you. If it doesn't, tell your GAL and help them create a plan that does.

Don't skip meetings. Participate in your meetings because it is YOUR future that is being planned.

Aging out can be both scary and overwhelming. If you start to feel this way let someone know. Your plan can be broken down into small steps that you can do one at a time.

FOLLOW UP RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Credit Reports

www.annualcreditreport.com

www.smartcredittips.com

Emergency Housing

Covenant House offers short-term (90 days) structured housing program for homeless youth ages 18 – 24.

www.covenanthousedc.org

AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE



Important Information for Teens

dc's
**CHILDREN'S
LAW CENTER**
teen task force

Children's Law Center
616 H Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20001
www.childrenslawcenter.org

15/16 YEARS OLD

What are your goals for yourself?

Start thinking about what you want to do when you leave the foster care system and make a plan to get yourself there. Write down where you want to live, work, go to school, and share this information with your social worker and Guardian *ad Litem* (GAL). ITILP's should be occurring every 6 months.

17 YEARS OLD

Get an identification card.

A DC nondriver's identification card contains your picture, address and birth date. You will need the ID to apply for jobs, prove your identity if stopped by the police, etc.

Start saving your money.

The first step is to open a bank account. There are different types of bank accounts. You should start with a savings account.

The easiest way to save money is to start with a little bit at a time. When you earn money from your group home stipend, allowance and/or Summer Youth Employment make sure you put some money in your savings account **BEFORE** you start spending it.

Get a driver's learning permit.

CFSA has a program that will pay for driving lessons when you turn 18 years old.

Start early, and get your permit now so you will be ready. You can get a learner's permit at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Ask your social worker and GAL to help you.

Think about your education.

Make a plan to finish high school or earn your GED. Apply for scholarships and fill out FAFSA, ETV and other financial aid forms.

18 YEARS OLD

Start driving.

Sign up for CFSA's driver's education program and get your driver's license. **DO NOT** drive without a license.

Legal Issues.

Expunge juvenile record and check for warrants.

Keep saving money!

You should have some money in your bank account since you started saving last year.

Ask for a YTP meeting.

Meet with your GAL, SW and team to discuss your goals when you leave foster care. Focus on where you will live, work and your education. YTP's should occur every 6 months.

Get a copy of your credit report.

A credit report includes information on where you live, how you pay your bills and whether you've been sued. Since you have just turned 18, you should probably have a clean slate.

If someone has obtained credit in your name, your GAL can help you clear this up.

Education.

Complete or continue your education plan which includes obtaining a high school diploma, GED, vocational training or college.

Employment.

You should have a resume and cover letter. Practice interviewing with you GAL. Get a job.

19 YEARS OLD

Work toward transition.

Make sure that you are participating in your YTP meetings. You know best what you want out of life. Express your feelings and make sure your GAL knows what you want.

Planning should focus especially on housing, education, employment and finances.

20 YEARS OLD

YTP meetings should occur AT LEAST every 3 months.

Develop a housing plan.

Work with your GAL and social worker to decide where you will live when you case closes.

- Do you have a job and enough money to get your own apartment?
- Are you going to rent a room?
- Do you have a family member or friend who you can live with?

Medical Appointments.

Make sure you schedule and attend all of your medical appointments: physical, dental, vision, OBGYN, surgeries, etc. It is important to complete these appointments **BEFORE** your case closes.

Secure important documentation.

You will need:

- Birth certificate
- Social security card
- Copy of lease
- Transcript/Copy of diploma/GED/IEP
- Financial Aid Documents
- Proof of commitment—final court order closing case
- Medical and immunization records
- Credit report
- Resume/Cover Letter/References

Get a DC Combined Application.

Apply for benefits - DC Medicaid, food stamps, and TANF (if you are a teen parent).

Mental Health Services.

Apply for services such as therapy and medication management through the Department of Mental Health.*

Check with OYE to make sure ETV/continuing education funds are in place for post-emancipation.

* For more information, see CLC's *Obtaining Mental Health Services brochure*.