

 <p>Children's Services Agency</p> <p>Communication Issuance</p> <p>20-031</p>	Subject/Title	COVID-19 Response-Youth in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care and Independent Living
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Distribution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSA Central Office Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS BSC and County Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDHHS Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Tribes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Workforce Development and Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Agency Child Welfare Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Abuse/Neglect Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residential Juvenile Justice Managers/Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

In response to the impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the State of Emergency declared by the Governor, MDHHS is committed to ensuring youth who are 18 and older have the resources available to meet their immediate needs. Effective immediately, changes to Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) and Youth In Transition (YIT) funded housing supports are available to eligible youth:

YAVFC:

Youth currently enrolled in YAVFC and have lost eligibility due to circumstances related to COVID-19 should remain in the program and not enter a grace period. This applies to youth who lose eligibility due to not meeting employment/volunteerism requirements for the month as a result of being quarantined or self-quarantined, or whose employment was reduced or lost due to the employer cutting back employment.

- For youth who have an approved 90-day review, no action needs to be taken.
- For a youth who has a 90-day review due and cannot meet policy requirements, the case worker or child welfare funding specialist (CWFS) would select 'The youth is incapable of doing any part of the employment or educational activities due to a medical condition' when completing the determination in MiSACWIS. A comment should be entered that due to the health emergency the youth is considered to be meeting the YAVFC requirements.
- If a youth enrolled in YAVFC relocates and the check is being mailed directly to the youth, the case worker must update the address in the youth's profile to ensure there is no disruption in payment.
- Questions regarding YAVFC eligibility can be forwarded to MDHHS-YAVFC@michigan.gov

Youth in Independent Living with Housing Needs:

If a youth in out of home placement at age 18 and older, loses their housing or is at risk of losing housing due to loss of employment or school closure due to COVID-19, Chafee (YIT) funds can be used to (re)establish housing or pay rent that is due.

- Policy office will make a policy exception to exceed the lifetime limit if the youth previously accessed and exhausted their lifetime limit, or if funds are needed to cover rent due to loss of employment. An exception request should be made for monthly rent. This request should be submitted through the established procedures using the DHS-720 to MDHHS-YouthInTransition@michigan.gov
 - If the youth hasn't previously accessed YIT for housing per policy, an exception request is not needed.
- Youth currently enrolled in institutions of higher education have likely transitioned to all online course work. While most colleges and universities have kept dorms available to youth, case workers should remain in close contact with youth and be prepared to offer assistance to identify alternative housing if needed.
- In all circumstances, child welfare staff must be attentive to youth affected by these circumstances and act with a sense of urgency to reach out and support youth not only with housing, but also accessing food, health care and emotional support.

**Please note that all COVID-19 related communications will be revisited, at minimum, every two weeks, unless additional interim guidance is needed.*