



**Office of Children  
and Family Services**

# **P.L. 116-260 Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021**

**May 17, 2021**

# Consolidated Appropriations Act Overview

- The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 was passed on December 27, 2020
- The major child welfare program provisions that impact older youth in foster care are in sections 3 and 4 of Division X
- The law provides states with flexibilities and assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- The law defines specific deadlines for implementation of each individual program area



# Section 3 of Division X NYS Funding

- NYS received **\$12,961,217** in additional funding for the John H. Chafee Program
- NYS received **\$1,883,898** in additional funding for the Education Training Voucher Program



# Chafee Program

# Chafee Overview

- The John H. Chafee Program offers assistance to help current and former foster care youth achieve self-sufficiency. The federal government has granted additional funding of \$12,961,217 to New York State for Chafee Funds, which will be available through September 30, 2022
- All additional Chafee funds will be provided directly to eligible young adults in the form of cash assistance

# Chafee Cash Assistance

Chafee Cash Assistance may be available for eligible young adults who experienced a COVID-19 related financial impact including but not limited to:

Housing/Homelessness

Transportation

Utilities

Technology Barriers

Child Care Challenges

Food Insecurity

Medical Expenses

Loss of Employment/reduced hours

Serious Illness of youth or family

Financial Instability

# Cash Assistance Direct to Young Adults

Young Adults may receive financial assistance after completing an online application and if it is determined they meet the eligibility requirements. Payment will be made using one of the following sources, chosen by the applicant:

- Direct Deposit
- PayPal
- Venmo
- Cash App
- Paper Check
- Visa Cash Card

# Who is Eligible for the additional Chafee Funding?

## Chafee cash assistance available to September 30, 2021, includes:

- Young adults, 18 through 26 years of age, who were in foster care in New York State at the age of 14 or older

## Chafee cash assistance available to September 30, 2022, includes:

- Young adults 18 through 20 years of age, who were in foster care in NYS at age 14 or older and otherwise eligible for Chafee funding in New York State. Currently, the maximum age to receive Chafee ends at 21 in NYS
- 20-year-olds in foster care will have access to the additional Chafee funds to support transition
- Other eligible youth in care should receive services, resources, and financial assistance through local counties annual Chafee allocations (21-LCM-OCFS-07)
- **NOTE: youth who received assistance through the Family First Transition Act (FFTA) between 3/1/20 – 3/31/21 will not be eligible for the additional Chafee cash awards**



# Chafee Online Portal

- An online Chafee application portal is under development where eligible young adults can apply for cash assistance. The portal will be managed by Welfare Research, Inc.
- Young adults can sign up on the OCFS CAA webpage to be added to the notification list
- Expected portal launch date late May 2021



# Cash Assistance and Impact for Recipients of Public Assistance



At this time, Chafee Cash Assistance recipients need to be aware the funds are not considered to be a disregard for public assistance benefits including but not limited to TANF and SNAP.

Recipients must report all direct Chafee cash assistance received as income to the county where the benefits were issued.



**Transportation and education expenses.**

# Youth Voice and Cash Assistance

OCFS has been working with the YAB regarding the distribution of the funds.

- Importance of direct cash assistance
- Impact the pandemic had on young adults that left foster care
- Empowering young adults to manage finances
- Notifying young adults about the Chafee Portal
- Youth Voice

# Education Training Vouchers



# Education and Training Voucher

## Timeframes

- Increases the maximum ETV amount from up to \$5000 to \$12,000
  - Student up to the age of 27 may receive an award up until September 30, 2021
  - Students up to age 23 may continue to receive the temporary additional award up until September 30, 2022
- Waives the requirement to make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward completing the program if a student is unable to do so due to COVID-19
  - SAP effective dates are April 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021
- ETV may be used to help support students to remain enrolled in college or vocational programs, including expenses that are not part of the cost of attendance (COA)
  - COA effective dates April 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021

# Supplemental Education Training Voucher Provisions

## New York Eligibility Criteria

- Must have initially applied for ETV prior to age 21 and
- Must have been enrolled and attending an accredited college or vocational program prior to age 21 and
- Have not reached the age of 27

Please note: No student may receive an ETV award for more than five years regardless if consecutive or not.

# Aging Out and Re-entry



# Re-entry and Aging Out

- Youth who aged out between January 27, 2020, and September 30, 2021, are eligible to re-enter foster care until September 2021
- Youth who are 21 and have left foster care during the above timeframe may re-enter foster care
- Youth who are currently in foster care may not be discharged solely due to age from December 27, 2020, to September 30, 2021
- Education and Employment requirements are waived until September 30, 2021, for youth remaining or returning to foster care
- The moratorium on aging out and reentry after age 21 ends September 30, 2021
- Reasonable efforts **MUST** be made and documented during the period of reentry



# Next Steps and Questions

We need your help reaching the older youth who have left foster care in the last several years.

## Resources Available:

[OCFS Consolidated Appropriation Act Website](#) (Get notified when portal becomes available)

- [21-OCFS-ADM-07 Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act](#)
- [21-OCFS-INF-02 Education and Training Voucher Application and Eligibility Requirements](#)
- [21-OCFS-LCM-07 Federal Fiscal Year 2021 John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood: Independent Living Allocations – Revised 5/7/21](#)
- [Reentry Brochure](#)

## [Education Training Voucher Application](#)

Contact: [Chafee@OCFS.NY.GOV](mailto:Chafee@OCFS.NY.GOV)