

Youth Law Center Housing Resources (2020-present)

This resource provides an overview of housing options for current and former foster youth in California, and an index of all housing-related resources and trainings by the Youth Law Center from 2020 through September 2024.

Homelessness and housing/placement instability for current foster youth, youth in extended foster care and former foster youth, are critical issues facing transition-aged youth (TAY) (ages 16-25) in California. Despite broad protections and housing/placement entitlements for youth, many youth are involuntarily exited from transitional housing before reaching the maximum age or duration of participation.¹ Many of the stated reasons for involuntary exits—interpersonal conflict, behavior-related violations of program rules, failure to meet program requirements, etc.—can be addressed through trauma-informed programming and individualized service delivery, rather than through involuntary exits. Youth Law Center’s (YLC’s) work, in partnership with direct service attorneys, is directed towards creating solutions to maintain housing for youth.

The information provided in this resource and the referenced materials do not constitute legal advice. All content is for general informational purposes only. We make every attempt to update these resources regularly; however, it's possible that some information provided here and in the referenced materials may be out of date. This resource was last updated in September 2024. For any questions related to this resource, please contact info@ylc.org.

Housing Resources for Current and Former Foster Youth

| Program Name | Basic Program Overview and Eligibility | YLC Resources | Resource Descriptions |
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| Transitional Housing Placement Program for Minors (THP-M) | Program Overview: THP-M is a transitional housing program that provides housing and supportive services to minor foster youth. THP-M agencies are licensed as children’s | Fact Sheet: Transitional Housing Placement Program for Minors (THP-M) | This fact sheet provides an overview of the THP-M program, including licensing requirements, funding for placement, requirements to remove a youth from the program, and strategies advocates can |

¹ When we use the term involuntary exit, we mean any exit that is not initiated by the youth from either the transitional housing program or the housing unit.

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| | <p>residential facilities by the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).</p> <p>Ages: 16-18</p> <p>Duration: No maximum duration so long as age requirements are met.</p> <p>Status of Foster Care Case: CASE OPEN - Must have an order for foster care placement under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court as a dependent or ward, including minors under transition jurisdiction.</p> | <p>Community Care Licensing (CCL) Complaints: An Overview for Advocates²</p> <p>Template Community Care Licensing Complaint</p> | <p>pursue if the youth is experiencing difficulties with the THP-M provider or the youth believes that their rights have been violated.</p> <p>The Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is responsible for licensing children’s community care facilities and for enforcing the licensing standards for these facilities. This resource provides an overview about CCL complaints, including what they are, how to make one, the process of the investigation, and potential outcomes.</p> <p>This template serves as an example of a complaint letter attorneys may file on behalf of their clients residing in Children’s Residential Facilities, including THP-M and THP-NMD.</p> |
| <p>Transitional Housing Placement Program for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD)</p> | <p>Program Overview: THP-NMD is a transitional housing program that provides housing and supportive services to nonminor dependent foster youth. THP-NMD agencies are licensed as children’s residential facilities by the Community Care Licensing Division</p> | <p>Fact Sheet: Transitional Housing Placement Program for Non-Minor Dependents (THP-NMD)</p> | <p>This fact sheet provides an overview of the THP-NMD program including licensing requirements, funding for placement, requirements to remove a youth from the program or housing, and strategies advocates can pursue if the youth is experiencing difficulties with the</p> |

² Note: the information in this resource and the Template Community Care Licensing Complaint resource are also applicable to the Transitional Housing Placement Program for Nonminor Dependents (THP-NMD) and other licensed children’s community care facilities.

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| | <p>(CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).</p> <p>Ages: 18-21</p> <p>Duration: No maximum duration so long as age requirements are met.</p> <p>Status of Foster Care Case: CASE OPEN - Must be under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court as a non-minor dependent (NMD) or ward, including NMDs under transition jurisdiction, or under the placement and care authority of the county placing agency pursuant to a Voluntary Reentry Agreement.</p> | <p>THP-NMD: An Advocacy Guide to Preventing Involuntary Exits</p> <p>Advocacy Strategies for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD: A Presentation of the Youth Law Center</p> <p>Hypotheticals: A Supplement to Youth Law Center's Presentation: Advocacy Strategies for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD</p> <p>Glossary of Terms: A Supplement to Youth Law Center's Presentation: Advocacy Strategies</p> | <p>THP-NMD program or housing or the youth believes that their rights have been violated.</p> <p>The purpose of this advocacy guide is to point youth and their advocates to legal information and strategies to help stabilize housing and prevent involuntary exits from THP-NMD.</p> <p>This presentation provides an overview of the THP-NMD Advocacy Guide and introduces advocates to legal information and strategies to stabilize housing and prevent involuntary exits from THP-NMD.</p> <p>This supplement to the YLC Presentation: <i>Advocacy Strategies for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD</i> provides advocacy considerations and answers to the hypotheticals and questions presented in Slides 45-51.</p> <p>This supplement to the YLC Presentation: <i>Advocacy Strategies for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD</i> provides a glossary of key terms used in the presentation, including legal citations and</p> |
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| | | for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD | sources of law. |
| Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus) | <p>Program Overview: THP-Plus is a transitional housing program that provides housing and supportive services to former foster youth. Note: THP-Plus programs are not licensed by the state. Instead, they are certified by counties.</p> <p>Eligibility Ages: 18-25 Suggested Ages:³ 21-24</p> <p>Duration: 36 months maximum [or until 25th birthday, whichever happens first].</p> <p>Status of Foster Care Case: CASE CLOSED - Must have exited from the foster care system, including foster care through juvenile probation, on or after 18th birthday.</p> | <p>Fact Sheet: Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus)</p> <p>Policy Alert: THP-Plus Program Expansion: A Resource for Current and Former Foster Youth in California</p> <p>Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-Plus: An Advocacy Guide</p> | <p>This fact sheet provides an overview of the THP-Plus program, including county certification requirements, requirements to remove a youth from the program and housing, and strategies advocates can pursue if the youth is experiencing difficulties with the THP-Plus provider or facing an exit from the program or housing.</p> <p>This resource for current and former foster youth provides an overview of the THP-Plus program and discusses the new program changes (as of July 1, 2022) that allow youth to remain in the program up until age 25 (instead of 24) and for 36 months total (instead of 24).</p> <p>This advocacy guide summarizes the legal protections that young adults have--both as former foster youth and as tenants--to remain in THP-Plus and stay housed. The guide also contains advocacy checklists, practice scenarios, and links to other</p> |

³ These suggested ages are based on how a youth may maximize their time using housing options available to current and former foster youth in California. However, each case requires an individual assessment. Please contact us for TA at info@ylc.org if you need help working through the nuances of a particular case.

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| | | <p>Ensuring Stability and Success for Youth Tenants in THP-Plus</p> <p>Seven Strategies Counties Can Implement to Ensure Housing Stability and Maximize Participation in THP-Plus During COVID-19 (August 2020)⁴</p> <p>Six Immediate Steps for THP-Plus Stability (May 2020)</p> | <p>relevant resources.</p> <p>Co-created with Bay Area Legal Aid, this resource is meant to help civil legal advocates initiate capacity-building conversations about transition planning with THP-Plus providers and the county agencies that oversee them.</p> <p>Co-authored by John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) and Bay Area Legal Aid, this resource contains seven strategies that provide both immediate and longer-term actions that counties can take to prevent youth participants from exiting the THP-Plus program at risk of homelessness, with depleted job opportunities, and without a safe place to shelter in place and practice social distancing.</p> <p>Co-authored by JBAY and Bay Area Legal Aid, this resource describes funding streams and promising strategies that counties should utilize in administering their THP-Plus programs during the current state of emergency and for a reasonable time afterward.</p> |
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⁴ We have included YLC’s COVID-19-related resources in this resource guide since many of the recommendations continue to be applicable to youth, despite many COVID-19 program flexibilities having expired.

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| <p>Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Vouchers and Family Unification Program (FUP) Vouchers</p> | <p>Program Overview: FYI and FUP are types of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) available to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) that work in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies (PCWAs) for young people who are leaving or have left foster care.</p> <p>Eligibility Ages: 18-25⁵</p> <p>Suggested Ages: 24-27 (or 29 under the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program)⁶</p> <p>Duration: 36 months maximum, but could be extended 2 years through the FSS program.</p> <p>Status of Foster Care Case: CASE CLOSED - Must have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan AND be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.</p> | <p>FYI and FUP for Youth Overview Fact Sheet (California)</p> <p>List of FYI Resources for Advocates in California and Nationwide⁷</p> <p>Referral Letter Packet (CA and National)</p> <p>Important Updates on FYI</p> | <p>This advocate-facing fact sheet provides an overview about FYI and FUP vouchers.</p> <p>This document is a list of all of the tools and resources Youth Law Center and partners have developed around the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Voucher Program. The list describes the document and provides the link to each document.</p> <p>The following template letters can be used as part of your advocacy to (1) request that a youth be referred for a FYI voucher and/or a FUP voucher; (2) a request from a young person to be referred for a FYI or FUP voucher; and (3) to request that your child welfare agency take action to begin an FYI program.</p> <p>This fact sheet provides an update for child welfare agencies and juvenile probation departments about recent improvements in the FYI program and the availability of funding in California.</p> |
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⁵ A youth must be <25 years-old at the time of Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA) certification as FYI/FUP-eligible and also at the time of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract execution. However, so long as the youth meets these criteria, the youth can use the voucher beyond the age of 25.

⁶ See *supra* footnote 3.

⁷ Note: we have included some of the resources from this list in this table, but additional resources beyond those highlighted here are also included in the list.

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| | | <p>An Overview of FYI/FUP Vouchers: A Resource for Current and Former Foster Youth in California</p> <p>Foster Youth to Independency (FYI) Voucher Program: Best Practices for Stakeholders</p> <p>Foster Youth to Independency (FYI) Initiative FAQs</p> <p>California Bench Card: Ensuring Housing Security for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care by Utilizing FYI Vouchers</p> | <p>This resource provides an overview of FYI and FUP for young people who are leaving or have left foster care.</p> <p>This resource includes an overview of successful practices in the implementation of the FYI and FUP programs for stakeholders in California, especially jurisdiction new to FYI/FUP.</p> <p>This is a resource that has been developed by the Youth Law Center to respond to questions YLC has received from stakeholders.</p> <p>This benchcard provides judges with questions and guidelines to help them make decisions to support effective transition planning, including ensuring that young people have access to FYI vouchers.</p> |
| <p>THP-NMD, THP-Plus and FYI/FUP</p> | <p>See individual program eligibility above</p> | <p>Maximizing Housing Entitlements for Current and Former Foster Youth</p> <p>Housing & Homelessness Prevention for</p> | <p>This advocate resource shows how a youth may maximize their time using housing options available to current and former foster youth in California.</p> <p>This presentation provides an overview of extended foster care in California,</p> |

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| | | <p>Transition Aged Foster and Former Foster Youth: A Presentation of the Youth Law Center</p> <p>Housing Preservation Strategies: A Supplement to Youth Law Center's Presentation: Housing and Homelessness Prevention for Transition Aged Foster and Former Foster Youth, Slide 14</p> | <p>transitional housing options for current and former foster youth, housing preservation strategies, the FYI & FUP Housing Choice Voucher programs, and supportive services to maintain housing.</p> <p>This supplement to the YLC Presentation: <i>Housing & Homelessness Prevention for Transition Aged Foster and Former Foster Youth</i> provides a broad overview of various housing preservation strategies for youth in THP-NMD and THP-Plus.</p> |
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Housing-Related Trainings and Workshops from Youth Law Center's Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) Civil Legal Practice Exchange

The [TAY Practice Exchange](#) is a practice support network for civil legal advocates across California that convenes regularly to share resources, exchange technical assistance, develop referral pathways, and identify recurring issues related to the civil legal needs of transition-age young people. We provide monthly training, bi-monthly workshops, bi-monthly office hours, a listserv, and a dedicated resource library. Contact Marisa Lopez-Scott, Senior Attorney, at mlopez@ylc.org for more information or to join.

| Training Title, Presenter(s), and Date | Training Materials (if any) and Video Recording |
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| <p>Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-Plus (Youth Law Center, Public Counsel, and Bay Area Legal Aid) (December 15, 2020)</p> | <p>Training materials not available</p> <p>Video Recording</p> |

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| Landlord-Tenant Basics for TAY Advocates (Legal Services of Northern California) (January 7, 2021) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Housing for Current and Former Foster Youth in California (John Burton Advocates for Youth) (March 31, 2021) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium (Law Foundation of Silicon Valley) (August 18, 2021) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Housing Legal Rights of Survivors (Family Violence Appellate Project) (February 3, 2022) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Housing Rights for TAY with Disabilities (Disability Rights California) (March 16, 2022) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| New Housing Opportunities: FYI and FUP for TAY (National Center for Housing and Child Welfare and Youth Law Center) (May 18, 2022) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Advocacy Strategies for Preventing Involuntary Exits from THP-NMD (Youth Law Center) (February 15, 2023) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Introduction to Landlord Tenant Laws for California Advocates (Western Center on Law and Poverty, Public Interest Law Project, and Bay Area Legal Aid) (November 2, 2023) | Training Materials Video Recording |
| Foster Youth to Independence: The Untapped Potential of FYI | Training Materials |

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| Housing Vouchers for Transition Aged Foster Youth (Youth Law Center) (March 7, 2024) | Video Recording |
| The <i>Grants Pass</i> decision and Its Implications for Youth Advocates (Youth Law Center) (September 5, 2024) | Training Materials Video Recording |

About Youth Law Center

YLC is a nonprofit legal advocacy organization that has worked for four decades to transform foster care and juvenile justice systems across the nation so every child and youth can thrive. YLC’s advocacy aims to ensure children and youth are not only protected from harm and dangerous conditions in systems but also receive the support, opportunities, and love they need to grow up healthy and happy. We pursue these goals through child-focused, research-informed advocacy strategies including litigation, policy reform, media advocacy, collaborative system-change projects, training and advice, and public education.

Additional Resources

Youth Law Center Resource Library: <https://www.ylc.org/resource-library/>

Youth Law Center Outreach and Contact Information: <https://www.ylc.org/resource/outreach-handout-for-qlsps/>