

Virginia Department of Social Services
Independent Living Transition Plan -
Instructions
For Youth Age 14 and Older

A transition plan describes the program and services which help youth prepare for the transition from foster care to adulthood. It is a written document that includes an overview of skills, knowledge, resources and competencies necessary for adult living. This individualized plan must be developed with the youth in order for it to be meaningful to him or her.

Elements of Independent Living Transition Plan for Age 14 and Older

One-page Introductory “Message”

The Independent Living (IL) Transition Plan for Age 14 and Older now includes a one-page Introductory “Message” for the youth providing background information about the Transition Plan, the central role of the youth and the team process to be used. The page concludes by encouraging the youth to see the *Guide for Older Youth In and Aging Out of Foster Care in Virginia* to learn more. Although the message is directed at the youth, the page serves to remind workers of the intended approach and processes set forth in existing policy.

This single page might be given to the youth when the IL needs assessment is completed and before the plan meeting occurs so that the youth will enter the planning meeting with a better understanding of the “big picture,” their role, and who should be involved. When workers become better acquainted with existing policy related to IL needs assessment and IL transition plans, then this page may no longer be needed; however, initially, it can serve as an aid to both youth and worker in reinforcing approaches required by policy.

Face Sheet – Page 1

This page captures all identifying information on a single page and clearly identifies (and emphasizes) the youth’s team. At the bottom is a cross-reference to the NYTD Survey to alert youth to whom it applies of expectations; the cohort timeframes can be updated as needed for subsequent year cohorts.

Tips - Pages 2 & 3

These two pages function as “directions” for the plan meeting that set forth three basic steps to follow, and briefly reviews what goals, activities, and measures are and how they are related. These pages are written in more youth-friendly language and efforts were made to use language from NYTD outcomes and IL Services categories. The examples of outcomes desired (in the first table on page 2) and examples of services to be provided (in the table at the top of page 3) should be, first and foremost, made understandable to the youth. The youth should not be required to choose from a list of services categories from NYTD or OASIS; rather, the responsibility of documenting services in categories required for different reports should be that of the service worker. To aid in the process, a concerted effort has been made to include youth-friendly examples that align fairly directly with IL services categories in Foster Care Guidance Section; however, examples and services categories do not always align perfectly and some worker judgment will be required. For example, a training focusing on costs associated with establishing an independent living situation might

fall in either the “housing” or the “money management” or perhaps both services categories.

Focus on priorities. Made explicit on page 2 is that the IL transition plan does not have to address all eight areas of life skills at once, but should focus on priorities at the time the plan is developed. Focusing on a few priorities has merit for youth who are at beginning stages of learning to engage in the planning process.

Services/supports in plan vs. IL services categories. There is a tendency to think of the plan as incorporating primarily the services the worker or custodial agency provide (either directly or through contract with other IL services providers) rather than including the broader universe of resources and supports available in the youth’s school, community, placement setting, and even online. To focus on what is provided by the worker/agency or to tie the transition plans too closely to what are reportable IL services categories unnecessarily restricts the services and supports available to the youth and doesn’t encourage use of the many emerging resources increasing becoming available online and via social media. These include products from Casey, Foster Club, and Jim Casey organizations.*Goals/activities/measures examples.* The examples provided now have an aligned activity and measure for each of the goals listed. The template now contains a page for each of the eight areas of life skills assessed by the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) with selected notations.

Elements of 90-Day Transition Plan

One-page Introductory “Message”

The 90-Day Transition Plan now includes a one-page Introductory “Message” intended primarily to alert the youth that this plan differs from prior plans because they are approaching or have arrived at age 18 and legal adulthood.

Organization of the 90-Day Transition Plan

The revised template is conceptualized as containing three sections.

Section 1. – **Rights and Responsibilities** - contains the notifications required for youth approaching age 18.

Section 2. – **Plan for Successful Transition** – documents specific plans in prescribed areas, confirms status of critical documents, and documents permanent connections.

Section 3. – **IL Services and Transition Plan for Young Adults** – completed when IL services are continued beyond the 18th birthday and constitutes the plan the youth will follow as he/she continues to receive IL services.