

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 11:</b> Independent Living	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1, 2006
	<b>Section 10:</b> Education and Training Voucher Program	<b>Version:</b> 1

<b>POLICY</b> <b>[REVISED]</b>	<b>OLD POLICY: 404.57</b>
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make available funds for the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program through a contracted service provider as funds are made available from the federal government.

The following youth meet DCS eligibility requirements for ETV assistance:

1. A youth in foster care who is between age 17 and 18 and is not enrolled in secondary school, who has earned a General Equivalency Development (GED), Vocational Certificate, or has a high school diploma;
2. A youth who turns age 18 while placed in foster care;
3. A youth adopted or placed in a guardianship from foster care after his or her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday;
4. A probation youth, adjudicated delinquent in foster care (out-of-home placement, other than detention, ordered by the juvenile court) on his or her 18th birthday and had a case plan identifying Independent Living (IL) needs;
5. A youth participating in the ETV program on his or her 21st birthday may continue until he or she turns 23 years of age. The youth must be enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program and be making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program; and
6. Eligible youth must have been accepted into or be presently enrolled in a degree, certificate, or other program at a college, university, technical, or vocational school. If a youth is currently receiving funds and enrolled, the youth must show progress towards that degree or certificate.

Code References

[42 USC 677: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program](#)

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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The Family Case Manager (FCM) and the Chafee IL service provider will:

1. Assure that all youth age 16 and older in foster care are provided with information about the ETV program and encouraged to consider post-secondary education through college, vocational, or trade schools;
2. Assist foster youth in applying for the Twenty-First Century Scholars program and with the appeal process if needed; and
3. Assure that all youth age 17 and older being provided with Chafee IL services who intend to pursue post-secondary education:
  - a. Are aware of College Goal Sunday (<http://www.collegegoalsunday.org/>) and assist the youth in participating in this program,

- b. Are informed of the deadline for applying for state grants and scholarships (<http://www.in.gov/ssaci/>),
- c. Submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> prior to applying for ETV assistance, and
- d. Are provided with the ETV website ([www.statevoucher.org](http://www.statevoucher.org)) address and are assisted in submitting an application on the website.

The IL Specialist will:

1. Monitor the ETV applications as submitted and determine eligibility for all applications in a timely manner;
2. Respond timely to queries regarding ETV eligibility and eligible services through ETV funds;
3. Monitor the ETV contract expenditures;
4. Verify eligibility for youth applying for ETV funds who were in foster care on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in another state and are current residents of Indiana between age 18 and 21 and who are not residing in Indiana for post-secondary education reasons; and
5. Maintain email contact with all ETV recipients and provide information regarding available scholarships, internships, and other areas of interest to youth participating in post-secondary opportunities.

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### **Funding Available**

Eligible Indiana youth may access up to \$5,000.00 per year, not to exceed the cost of attendance (see Related Information), to help with the cost of post-secondary education, college, or vocational training programs. These funds are to supplement the youth's own efforts in obtaining their education. Eligible Indiana youth may receive this assistance while attending in-state and out of state schools

### **Funding For ETV Will Be Made Available In the Following Manner:**

1. **Tuition and Student Loans** will be paid before any other funds are expended for a youth;
2. A **computer and printer** may be purchased if the youth has not received a computer through the State Computer Camp program;
3. For youth living off campus, **housing expenses** will be paid to the landlord when the youth provides a copy of the lease. If the youth does not provide a lease agreement, he or she cannot be provided with funds for housing. Rent checks will be made out to the landlord and sent to the youth;
4. The youth may request funds for **student health insurance** by providing the completed school insurance form to the contracted service provider's office. Payment will be sent to the insurance carrier;
5. **Childcare expenses** will be paid to a licensed child care provider. Checks will be made out to the child care provider and sent to the youth;
6. At the beginning of each semester, funding for books may be requested by providing a list of the **books and supplies** needed with the cost. Funding will cover between \$350 and \$450 per semester as long as funds are available. Funds will be provided to the school or bookstore, or the youth may be reimbursed if books are purchased directly and receipts are provided. Youth not receiving initial funding at the beginning of each semester may access up to \$100 per month for school supplies;

7. Youth may access up to \$200 per month for **living expenses**, if funds are available; and
8. Youth may access up to \$100 per month for **transportation** costs, if funds are available.

### **Email Address and Bank Accounts**

Youth must have their own personal email address for correspondence and must check their email weekly. Youth receiving ETV checks must have a personal checking account to cash the ETV checks that are received for services.

### **Students Responsibility for Receiving ETV Funding**

1. A youth must reapply every year at [www.statevoucher.org](http://www.statevoucher.org) as long as he or she is making satisfactory progress in school and has not reached his or her 23rd birthday;
2. A youth must send ETV his or her transcript every semester and maintain a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) to remain in good standing with the program. Otherwise:
  - a. If the youth's GPA is between 1.0 and 1.99, he or she will be placed in the Academic Excellence Program and given one (1) semester to improve his or her GPA,
  - b. If the youth's GPA is .99 or lower, funding for the next semester is at the discretion of the State, and
  - c. If the youth lost ETV funding because his or her GPA was too low, the youth may stay in school and pay for his or her own expenses, raise his/her GPA, and reapply for ETV funding.
3. A youth must notify ETV if he or she drops any classes; if not, future funding will be in jeopardy;
4. If grades are not provided, funding must be put on hold until the youth provides his or her grades and continued eligibility can be determined; and
5. Any youth who has eligibility determined initially will continue his or her eligibility throughout the program as long as the youth provides the required documentation to the contracted service provider and maintains a 2.0 GPA.

### **Academic Excellence Program**

When youth drops below the required 2.0 GPA, the youth will be given one (1) semester to bring his or her GPA back up to 2.0 or above in order to remain eligible for ETV funding. This program is intended to help the youth learn to:

1. Manage time wisely;
2. Study effectively and access resources such as study groups, math and writing labs, campus mentors, and teaching assistants;
3. Become a good test-taker; and
4. Communicate with professors.

The youth must submit his or her plan for improving grades; identify student support services he or she will be accessing; identify one (1) major goal for the semester; explain how he or she plans to use time wisely; and provide ideas about how he or she will improve study habits and test taking skills.

## **FORMS AND TOOLS**

[Application for ETV Funds](https://www.statevoucher.org/) – Available at <https://www.statevoucher.org/>

## RELATED INFORMATION

### **Cost of Attendance**

The cost of attendance is the total amount of money it will cost a student to attend a school for the fall and spring semesters. Each youth may access up to \$5000, not to exceed the cost of attendance. This is calculated differently at each college, university, or trade school. The cost of attendance is calculated using actual figures (not estimates) for the following:

1. Tuition/fees (hours enrolled including full time, 3/4 time, 1/2 time, or less than 1/2 time);
2. Room and Board (on campus, off campus in own apartment or shared housing, off campus with parents);
3. Books/Supplies;
4. Personal (including clothes, personal items-each university figures this differently);
5. Transportation (each university figures this differently);
6. Day care and computers are not automatically included but can be allowed. Students have to ask for this to be included;
7. Student Health Insurance (not always included); and/or
8. Expected family contribution or is the student independent (foster youth).

Standards amounts regarding where the youth is living is based on self-report. If the youth needs the personal and/or transportation costs increased, the school will ask for receipts to document how much has been spent in each area to justify the additional costs. If day care, computers, or student health insurance are needed, the student must check to see if these items were included in the cost of attendance. If not, the youth can request that the items be included which could raise the cost of attendance for the youth which could increase the amount of funds available for the youth.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Answers to frequently asked questions are available at <http://www.nationalfostercare.org>. These documents are very helpful in understanding the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and ETV Program.