SOUL Family Legal Permanency

BENEFITS

Benefits Available Upon Achieving Permanency Through SOUL Family Legal Permanency:

- **Custodian Monthly Subsidy**: Provides a monthly subsidy of $500 to the residential SOUL custodian until the youth reaches the age of 18 or high school graduation, whichever is later, but ends at age 21.
- **One Time Support**: Offers a one-time payment of $3,000 to the residential custodian to be used to meet specific needs of the young person that cannot otherwise be met through Medicaid programs, monthly subsidy payments or other resources, and to help with the young person's successful transition to the custodian's home.
- **Health Care Coverage:**
  - **Foster Care Medicaid**
    - Eligibility extends until the youth turns 18 or graduates from high school, whichever comes later. Coverage may continue until age 21 if the youth is still enrolled in a secondary education program. It ends if they unenroll or complete the program.

Benefits available at age 18 or after and SOUL Family Legal Custodian No Longer Receives Custodian Monthly Subsidy:

- **Chafee Program**: Basic Chafee, Independent Living (IL) Subsidy, Start-up Funds, Vehicle Repair and Maintenance (eligible upon turning age 18 and termination of Caregiver Monthly Subsidy payments).
- All Chafee Program Services require that the young adult open an Independent Living case with DCF and meet regular program requirements such as completion of case plan and budget, providing requested documentation such as employment verification or school attendance verification/grades, and maintain regular monthly contact with Independent Living Coordinator. Chafee, IL Monthly Subsidy, Start Up Funds, and Vehicle Repair Maintenance ends once the young person turns 21.
  - **Basic Chafee**
    - Chafee funds are available to help former foster youth achieve self-sufficiency. Basic Chafee can be utilized for: supporting high school graduation, GED completion, daily living, budgeting, money management, transportation, and clothing.
  - **Independent Living Subsidy (IL)**
    - Cannot receive both IL subsidy and SOUL Family Legal Permanency monthly subsidy to the residential custodian at the same time.
    - The young adult must be financially responsible for maintenance and expenses.
    - May be living alone, with a roommate(s) or in a family setting.

        - Eligible until 21st birthday.
        - Marital status does not impact eligibility for subsidy.
        - A plan to obtain high school diploma, GED or full-time employment is required.

    - **Start-Up Funds**
        - Start-Up Costs – Not including rent or room and board: Youth who are leaving foster care to live on their own may need assistance with start-up expenses, not including rent. These expenses may include utility deposits, necessary furniture, household supplies, or other items as deemed appropriate by the youth and the Independent Living Coordinator. Cumulative payments may not exceed $600.

        - Start-Up Costs – Rent or room and board: Youth who are leaving foster care to live on their own may need assistance with the rent/room and boarding costs, including deposits. Room and board are considered to be lodging and meals, often provided for a set fee. Cumulative payments may not exceed $600.

    - **Vehicle Repair and Maintenance**
        - Vehicle repair and maintenance funds may be utilized up to $1,000 (lifetime maximum, subject to change). The Independent Living Coordinator must consider and document the following prior to authorizing payment:
            - the vehicle is currently registered in the young adult's name,
            - vehicle is currently insured,
            - young adult has a valid driver's license,
            - other resources available to meet the young adult's transportation needs,
            - documentation from authorized/ certified mechanic for repairs or maintenance and itemized costs.

- **ETV and SOUL Post-Secondary/Certified Training (PSCT) Assistance**
    - Eligible for up to $5,000 per year until age 26 for Education Training Voucher (ETV).
    - Eligible for up to $5,000 per year until age 25 for SOUL PSCT upon turning age 18 and termination of Caregiver Monthly Subsidy payments.

    ETV and SOUL PSCT require the young adult to open an Independent Living case with DCF. The young person must follow the requirements of the program per Independent Living policy which includes completion of case plan, educational plan, budget, providing documentation such as school schedule and grades, and maintaining regular monthly contact with the Independent Living Coordinator.

    Education benefits can be stacked up for a total of $10,000/year for a maximum of five years. Amount awarded based on FAFSA determined need and cost of attendance for educational institution.

- **Aged Out Medical Program**
  - Upon closing of Foster Care Medicaid, youth may be eligible for Aged Out Medicaid until the age of 26. This component does not require opening an Independent Living case for services.

    Young people who achieve permanency through SOUL are eligible for Age Out Medicaid ONLY in Kansas. Young people will need to maintain a current address with KanCare and respond to reviews as required. If a young person moves to another state, they will need to apply to see if they meet that state's specific criteria for Medicaid.

Other Post-Secondary Benefits or Resources:

- Please note that the Kansas Foster Child Education Assistance Act (tuition waiver) will ***only*** be available to those young people who achieve permanency through SOUL Family Legal Permanency if the young person:
  - Turned 18 while in a foster care placement while in the custody of the Secretary of DCF.
    Or
  - Graduated from high school or obtained GED while in DCF custody and an out-of-home placement.

- Scholarships for Foster Youth – Some suggested scholarship links are listed below:
  - O'Brate Foundation
    - Traditional College Scholarship: Traditional Scholarship (obratefoundation.org)
    - Dual-Credit Scholarship: Dual-Credit Scholarship (obratefoundation.org)
  - Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, Kansas Foster and Adoptive Children Scholarship: Kansas Foster and Adoptive Children Scholarship Fund - Greater Kansas City Community Foundation (growyourgiving.org)
  - Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP (kkgu.org)
    - Kansas Kids @ GEAR UP (KKGU) is a U.S. Department of Education funded program with Wichita State University that prioritizes foster youth in Kansas. A scholarship is available to youth and young adults who participated in KKGU activities while in care.

- Federal Pell Grant – The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) asks if the applicant was a ward of the court or in foster care after attaining age 13. Answering "yes" to this question may qualify the applicant for the full Pell Grant – money recipients do not have to pay back for college as long as they maintain adequate progress and grades.

**Policy and funding are subject to change. Specific eligibility and funding should be discussed with a DCF Independent Living Coordinator or Supervisor.*