



CDSS

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

October 3, 2013

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 13-84

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
 ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS  
 ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM MANAGERS  
 ALL INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM COORDINATORS  
 ALL FOSTER CARE MANAGERS  
 ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES

SUBJECT: NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE (NYTD) SURVEY:  
 SECOND COHORT

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NOS. 12-52, 11-27, 08-31, 00-22,  
 AND 99-96; COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) NO. 09/10-19 AND  
 00/01-46; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) NO. I-07-10;  
 SENATE BILL (SB) 1013 (CHAPTER 35, STATUTES OF 2012);  
 WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (W&IC) SECTION 10609.4;  
 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (CFR) 1356.83

The purpose of this ACL is to provide updated information and direction regarding the surveying of the second cohort of 17 year olds participating in the NYTD survey beginning October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. The second cohort consists of all youth in foster care turning 17 years of age during this timeframe. For the purpose of this letter, tribes having Title IV-E Agreements must follow the same requirements as counties.

The first cohort of 17 year olds was surveyed in FFY 2011. Those youth who participated in the survey at age 17 in FFY 2011 were surveyed as the follow-up population at age 19 in FFY 2013 (October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013) and will be surveyed again at age 21 in FFY 2015.

## PURPOSE OF NYTD

The primary goal of NYTD is to obtain data that will help make informed decisions about service provision to improve services and their outcomes for current and former foster care youth. In order to continue receiving federal Chafee funds, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) must transmit NYTD survey outcomes and services data to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) every six months.

### Survey

The NYTD collects survey data in order to measure six outcomes: financial self-sufficiency; education attainment; connections with adults; homelessness; high risk behavior; and access to health insurance.

### Services

The NYTD collects data on independent living services provided to youth. These data are related to needs assessment; education; post-secondary education; career/job guidance; employment/vocational training; money management; consumer skills; time management; home management; housing options; health care; interpersonal/social skills; parenting skills; mentoring; and transitional housing. Please reference ACL 11-27 for more information.

<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl/2011/11-27.pdf>

## BACKGROUND

Federal requirements mandate that states must collect and submit outcome and independent living service data for eligible youth to ACF.

Eligible youth include the served population, baseline population, and follow-up population as follows:

- The served population includes all youth who receive at least one independent living service paid for or provided by the state agency in the reporting period including tribal youth, juvenile justice youth, and current and former foster youth.
- The baseline population includes all youth who are in foster care, including child welfare youth, probation youth, or youth in tribal foster care with a tribe having a Title IV-E agreement, who reach their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday during the federal fiscal year in which a survey is conducted. If the youth enters or exits foster care not more than 45 days after their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, they are eligible to take the survey. Each baseline population surveyed at age 17 becomes a cohort.

- The follow-up population includes the cohort of youth who reach their 19<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and participated as part of the baseline population when they turned 17 years of age. A youth may be in the follow-up population regardless of whether the youth ever received independent living services.

Federal rules require states to submit data twice a year regarding independent living services rendered to eligible served population youth. Federal rules also require states to collect and submit outcomes data from baseline population youth by conducting a survey of youth in foster care within 45 days after their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. States conduct follow-up surveys with these youth on or around their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday and again on or around their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

A timeline of the staggered cohorts and follow-up populations may be referenced in All County Letter (ACL) 11-27 and is available at:

<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl/2011/11-27.pdf>

#### LEGISLATION REGARDING NYTD AND THE 2011 CHILD WELFARE REALIGNMENT

The SB 1013 (Ch. 35 Stats. 2012) enacted many programmatic changes for realignment, including county responsibilities regarding NYTD. In part, the bill amended Welfare and Institutions Code Section 10609.4 to require counties to do the following:

- Ensure timely and accurate data entry into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) for all youth receiving any independent living services.
- Ensure that eligible foster care youth continue to receive information about, and are provided with an opportunity to complete, the NYTD survey by doing the following:
  - Providing information to the youth about the NYTD survey within 60 days prior to the date the current or former foster youth is required to be offered the survey.
  - Within 45 days following the youth in foster care turning 17 years of age, ensuring that each youth has an opportunity to complete the NYTD survey as required by federal law.
  - Counties must provide opportunities for current and former eligible foster youth to take the NYTD survey online at child welfare services and probation offices.

## SECOND COHORT SURVEY PROCESS

The second cohort (i.e. the baseline population for the second cohort) consists of all youth in foster care turning 17 years of age between October 1, 2013, and September 30, 2014 (FFY 2014). The survey for the second cohort is now an online survey that youth may complete on their own or be facilitated by a social worker or probation officer. The link to the survey is located on the CDSS NYTD webpage at:

<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG2981.htm>

### Preparation for Survey

County child welfare agencies, probation departments, and Title IV-E agreement tribes are required to provide the survey-eligible youth with information about the survey. This information should include how to access the survey, where to take the survey, and how to collect the incentive payment. Counties have the discretion to determine how this information is provided. Placement data for youth who have recently entered foster care and are reaching their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday must be entered timely into the CWS/CMS in order for youth to have access to the survey

Methods of providing information in advance include phone calls, postcards, letters, or emails to the youth. Contact with the youth can be made by any county or tribal representative including the county social worker, ILP Worker, Title IV-E agreement tribal social worker, ILP Coordinator, or probation officer. Documentation of efforts as to how information about NYTD is provided to survey-eligible youth in advance should be maintained to verify compliance. This may be a copy of the notice sent to the youth inserted in the file, a notation in the delivered services section of the youth's electronic or hard copy case file, or any other method the county chooses to document the advance notice requirement.

Counties are encouraged to identify in advance survey-eligible youth in order to plan how those youth will be given information about NYTD and offered the survey within the 60 days before the youth's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. Counties may utilize the "Time to NYTD Survey for 17 Year Olds" report located in SafeMeasures®, in the NYTD section of the Proposed Measures menu, to generate a report of youth who will be turning 17 each month. Social workers and probation officers may utilize these SafeMeasures® reports to plan discussions of the survey and incentives during their monthly visits with youth. SafeMeasures® has been updated to include probation cases in the 'Time to NYTD Survey for 17-Year Olds.'

The 'NYTD' section in SafeMeasures® also includes the following NYTD survey reports:

- Completed NYTD Surveys

- NYTD Survey Eligible Young Adults

Counties are reminded that state law requires the counties to provide this information within 60 days prior to the date the youth turns 17. For example, if the youth turned 17 on October 15, the advance information would need to be provided at any time between August 16 and October 14.

For those counties who do not have regular access to SafeMeasures®, Children's Research Center (CRC) has agreed to provide a secure, subscription-free web access to SafeMeasures®. This access is limited to viewing lists of those youth, organized by county, who have completed the survey. Youth are identified by unique identifiers on this site.

Probation departments interested in accessing SafeMeasures® reports, may contact [support@safemeasures.org](mailto:support@safemeasures.org) to submit a request.

In addition to reports in SafeMeasures®, a Business Objects report identifying youth turning 17 years old is available. Counties may receive additional assistance on SafeMeasures® and/or Business Objects, by contacting the county's Single Point of Contact (SPOC). The link to the SPOC list is at:

[http://www.hwcws.cahwnet.gov/countyinfo/county\\_contacts/default.asp](http://www.hwcws.cahwnet.gov/countyinfo/county_contacts/default.asp)

### Administering the Survey

As mentioned above, the survey is now an online survey. The online survey may be self-administered by the 17 year olds on any computer or smart phone within 45 days after their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. Youth may also access the survey at high school or in a local library. Alternatively, the survey data may be entered into the survey by the social worker or probation officer after verbally administering the survey to the youth. The CDSS recommends entering the survey data on a computer as there is more potential of technical errors occurring with a smart phone. Neither the youth nor the social worker will be able to access the survey after the 45 days have passed.

After locating the survey link on the CDSS NYTD webpage at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG2981.htm>, the youth, social worker, or probation officer may access the survey by filling out a three-line log in using the first and last initial of their first name on the first line, first and last initial of their last name on the second line, and their date of birth on the third line. For example, John Smith would enter:

- JN
- SH
- 01/01/1993.

The online survey also includes these instructions.

If a youth is not able or does not wish to self-administer the online survey, a social worker or probation officer may verbally administer the survey and enter the youth's answers to the online survey. CDSS recommends logging into the survey only when the survey data is ready to be entered. The social worker or probation officer may either bring a laptop or smart phone to their monthly visit, utilize a computer in the foster home to facilitate the survey completion or set up a time in the office to complete this task. Under no circumstance may the social worker or probation officer take the survey in lieu of the youth.

#### Consideration of Special Needs Youth

Counties should ensure that survey-eligible youth with special needs or limited English proficiency are offered the NYTD survey, as youth with a diagnosed disability are reported in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). Reviewing the records of youth in the baseline population to determine accommodation needs would be beneficial. Suggestions for accommodating youth with visual impairments, learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, hearing impairments, speech impairments, physical disabilities and limited English proficiency are contained in the NYTD Technical Assistance Brief # 4 and is available at:

[http://www.nrccwdt.org/resources/nytd/docs/NYTD\\_TA\\_%20Brief\\_3\\_Surveying\\_Special\\_Populations.pdf](http://www.nrccwdt.org/resources/nytd/docs/NYTD_TA_%20Brief_3_Surveying_Special_Populations.pdf)

#### Incentives

Incentives to the youth are offered to increase participation rates. The CDSS recommends that all 17 year old survey-eligible youth in the second cohort receive \$50 for completing the survey. The NYTD Technical Assistance Brief 6 describes the rationale that participation rates are higher when incentives are used. For more information on the federal NYTD perspective of incentives, the brief is available at:

<http://www.nrccwdt.org/2011/10/technical-assistance-brief-6-understanding-incentives-and-motivators-for-participation-in-the-youth-outcome-survey/>

A good practice would be to inform the youth in an advance mailing about the survey and recommended \$50 incentive. Counties may send a birthday greeting to the youth and include information about the survey and the incentive. While an incentive payment immediately after completion of the survey may be more effective in motivating the youth, counties have various fiscal policies and may require incentives be mailed after verification of survey completion. Some counties are working with their fiscal

departments to purchase incentives in bulk and requiring youth's signature verification upon release of the incentive. Probation departments may contact the ILP in their counties to find out the process for incentive distribution.

As part of the information to youth about the survey, counties should provide youth with specific instructions about claiming the incentive, such as whether the youth may collect it in person and where, or how to receive the incentive by mail. When providing the incentive to youth who have completed the survey, counties are encouraged to inform the youth about the surveys that will be available at age 19 and 21 and relay the importance of keeping contact information current. The delivery of the incentive also creates an opportunity to provide additional ILP services to the youth.

### Survey Outcome Determinations and Documentation

Based on the result of contacting the youth to take the survey, a "determination" must be made for each youth. The county child welfare agency, probation department, and tribal IV-E agency having current jurisdiction of the youth is responsible for ensuring that a participation determination is completed for each youth in the second cohort. A determination establishes one of the following statuses for survey outcomes:

- Participated – The youth participated in the survey either fully or partially. The completion of at least one question will result in a Participated status.
- Declined – The youth was located successfully and was invited to participate, but the youth declined to participate. A written or verbal decline of the youth to the opportunity to take the survey will be counted as a Not Participated status.
- Incapacitated – The youth has a permanent or temporary mental or physical condition that prevents survey participation. This category may not be used for youth who can complete the survey with accommodations/assistance. An Incapacitated status is exempt from calculation of the participation completion rate.
- Incarcerated – The youth is unable to participate because of his or her incarceration. Only youth who were in foster care within the 45 days after his or her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday are eligible to take the survey. If the youth completes the survey while incarcerated, the survey will count as a Participated status. If the survey-eligible youth is unable to participate due to incarceration, an "Incarcerated" determination is entered and will be exempted in the calculation of the participation completion rate.



- An important point to remember is that counties must attempt to contact survey-eligible youth who were incarcerated to inform them of the survey before choosing the category “incarcerated” as a determination.
- Runaway/missing – The youth is known to have run away or be missing from his or her foster care placement. This determination will be counted as a Not Participated status.
- Unable to Locate/Invite – Could not locate the youth or otherwise invite the youth’s participation. (For example, no current address or telephone number on file; no forwarding address available; mail was returned. Please note that this determination should rarely, if ever, be documented since the whereabouts of all 17 year olds in care should be known unless reported in the Runaway/Missing determination.) This determination will be counted as a Not Participated status.
- Death – The youth died prior to participation. This determination is exempted from the calculation of the participation completion rate.

Note that these determination terms have been established as a federal survey requirement and must be entered verbatim. Do not use other terms. Also, a determination date will need to be provided, and this date must fall within the 45 day time limit.

For eligible youth who do not participate in the survey, counties must record for each youth at the end of each of the two six-month periods (10/1/2013 – 3/31/2014; and 4/1/2014 – 9/30/2014), a determination of the outcome for each youth. The determination data must be tracked by the county throughout the two six month reporting periods.

CDSS will provide each county with a list of all eligible youth at the end of each six-month report period. These lists are to be returned to CDSS at [CWSdata@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CWSdata@dss.ca.gov) within 15 days from the end of the report period. Additional guidance will be sent to counties via email from the Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau (CWDAB).

### Claiming and Time Study

County Fiscal Letter 12/13-26 describes how costs associated with incentives for the NYTD survey can be claimed to PC-184-Independent Living Program (ILP) Services. The Program Identifier Number (PIN) 184015 was established under PC 184 to capture incentive costs and is given based on the participant’s successful completion of the survey. For ILP administrative activities related to the implementation of the NYTD survey, Time Study Code (TSC) 1841 is used.



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Ongoing Technical Assistance

A steering committee of CDSS and counties will be meeting throughout the duration of FFY 2014 to resolve any issues that may arise during the surveying of the second cohort. If there are any questions or concerns, please email to [NYTD@dss.ca.gov](mailto:NYTD@dss.ca.gov) or call 1-877-IAM-NYTD (1-877-426-6983).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

GREGORY E. ROSE  
Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

Attachment



**QUESTIONS FOR THE CALIFORNIA NYTD SURVEY: SECOND COHORT OF 17 YEAR OLDS IN FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2014 (OCTOBER 1, 2013 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2014)**

**IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS ENTERING THE DATA OR GET LOCKED OUT WHILE ENTERING THE DATA, PLEASE CONTACT [CWSDATA@DSS.CA.GOV](mailto:CWSDATA@DSS.CA.GOV)**

**First and Last letter of first name (*Michael = ML or Mary = MY*)**

**First and Last letter of last name (*Smith = SH or Garcia-Marquez = MZ*)**

**Enter the date of birth (01/01/1996)**

**1. Currently are you employed full-time?**

“Full-time” means working at least 35 hours per week at one or multiple jobs.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**2. Currently are you employed part-time?**

“Part-time” means working at least 1-34 hours per week at one or multiple jobs.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**3. In the past year, did you complete an apprenticeship, internship, or other on-the-job training, either paid or unpaid?**

This means apprenticeships, internships, or other on-the-job trainings, either paid or unpaid, that helped you to acquire employment-related skills (which can include specific trade skills such as carpentry or auto mechanics, or office skills such as word processing or use of office equipment).

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**4. Currently, are you receiving social security payments (Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or dependents’ payments)?**

These are payments from the government to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter of a person with a disability. You may be receiving these payments because of a parent or guardian’s disability, rather than your own.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**5. Currently, are you using a scholarship, grant, stipend, student loan, voucher, or other type of educational financial aid to cover any educational expenses?**

Scholarships, grants, and stipends are funds awarded for spending on expenses related to gaining an education. “Student loan” means a government-guaranteed low-interest loan for students in post-secondary education.

- Yes
- No

- Declined

**6. Currently are you receiving any periodic and/or significant financial resources or support from another source not previously indicated and excluding paid employment?**

This means periodic and/or significant financial support from a spouse or family member (biological, foster or adoptive), child support that you receive or funds from a legal settlement. This does not include occasional gifts such as birthday or graduation checks or small donations of food or personal items, child care subsidies, child support for your child, or other financial help that does not benefit you directly in supporting yourself.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**7. What is the highest educational degree or certification that you have received?**

“Vocational certificate” means a document stating that you have received education or training that qualifies you for a particular job, e.g., auto mechanics or cosmetology. “Vocational license” means a document that indicates that the State or local government recognizes you as a qualified professional in a particular trade or business. An Associate’s degree is generally a two-year degree from a community college, and a Bachelor’s degree is a four-year degree from a college or university. “Higher degree” indicates a graduate degree, such as a Masters or Doctorate degree. “None of the above” means you have not received any of the above educational certifications.

- High school diploma/GED
- Vocational certificate
- Vocational license
- Associate’s degree (e.g., A.A.)
- Bachelor’s degree (e.g., B.A. or B.S.)
- Higher degree
- None of the above
- Declined

**8. Currently are you enrolled in and attending high school, GED classes, post-high school vocational training, or college?**

This means both enrolled in and attending high school, GED classes, or postsecondary vocational training or college. You are still considered enrolled in and attending school if you are enrolled in and attending a school that is currently out of session (e.g., Spring break, summer vacation, etc.).

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**9. Currently is there at least one adult in your life, other than your caseworker, to whom you can go for advice or emotional support?**

This refers to an adult who you can go to for advice or guidance when there is a decision to make or a problem to solve, or for companionship to share personal achievements. This includes, but is not limited to, adult relatives, parents, or foster parents. This does not include spouses, partners, boyfriends or girlfriends and current caseworkers. The adult must be easily accessible to you, either by telephone or in person.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**10. In the past two years, were you homeless at any time?**

“Homeless” means that you had no regular or adequate place to live. This includes living in a car, or on the street, or staying in a homeless or other temporary shelter.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**11. In the past two years, did you refer yourself, or had someone else referred you for an alcohol or drug abuse assessment or counseling?**

This includes either self-referring or being referred by a social worker, school staff, physician, mental health worker, foster parent, or other adult for an alcohol or drug abuse assessment or counseling. Alcohol or drug abuse assessment is a process designed to determine if you have a problem with alcohol or drug use.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**12. In the past two years, were you confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with allegedly committing a crime?**

This means that you were confined in a jail, prison, correctional facility, or juvenile or community detention facility, in connection with a crime (misdemeanor or felony), allegedly committed by you.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**13. In the past two years, did you give birth to or father any children that were born?**

This means giving birth to or fathering at least one child that was born. If males do not know, answer "No."

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**14. If you responded yes to the previous question, were you married to the child's other parent at the time each child was born?**

This means that when the child was born you were married to the other parent of the child.

- Yes
- No
- Declined

**15. Currently are you on Medi-Cal?**

Medi-Cal is a health insurance program funded by the government.

- Yes

- No
- Don't know
- Declined

**16. Currently do you have health insurance other than Medi-Cal?**

“Health insurance” means having a third party pay for all or part of health care. You might have health insurance such as group coverage offered by employers or schools, or individual policies that cover Medi-Cal and/or mental health care and/or prescription drugs, or you might be covered under parents’ insurance. This also could include access to free health care through a college, Indian Tribe, or other source.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined

**17. Does your health insurance include coverage for medical services?**

This means that your health insurance covers at least some medical services or procedures.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined

**18. Does your health insurance include coverage for mental health services?**

This means that your health insurance covers at least some mental health services. This question is for only those who responded “yes” to having health insurance with medical coverage.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined



**19. Does your health insurance include coverage for prescription drugs?**

This means that your health insurance covers at least some prescription drugs. This question is for only those who responded “yes” to having health insurance with medical coverage.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined

**End of Survey Questions**

**Incentive and Contact Questions**

**20. How would you like to receive your incentive?**

- By mail
- Pick up at the local county office

**21. Street Number**

**22. Street Name**

**23. City**

**24. State**

**25. Zip code**

**THE INFORMATION BELOW MAY BE USED TO CONTACT YOU IN THE FUTURE AT AGE 19 AND 21.**

**26. Current E-mail address:**

**27. Primary phone number (include area code):**

**28. Driver's License or Identification Card Number:**

**29. Emergency contact person (name, phone number, relationship):**

**30. Facebook/Twitter/My Space Account/INSTAGRAM:**

**31. To verify this is you, please enter the last 4 digits of your social security number. Leave this item blank if you do not know or if you are unsure.**

**THANK YOU FOR ASSISTING CALIFORNIA'S YOUTH IN TAKING THE SURVEY!**

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE YOUTH RECEIVES THE \$50 INCENTIVE TIMELY.**