

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 20, 2006

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-88-06

TO: COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
COUNTY WELFARE FISCAL OFFICERS  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS  
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM MANAGERS  
INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM COORDINATORS  
COUNTY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING COORDINATORS

**REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL**

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

SUBJECT: LETTER OF INTENT AND COUNTY PROVIDER PLAN TO PARTICIPATE  
IN THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLACEMENT PROGRAM AND/OR  
THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM-PLUS

REFERENCE: County Fiscal Letter (CFL) 04/05-54, June 17, 2005;  
All County Information Notice (ACIN) No. I-93-01;  
All County Letter (ACL) No. 02-04;  
Assembly Bill (AB) 427 (Chapter 125, Statutes of 2001);  
AB 1119 (Chapter 639, Statutes of 2002);  
AB 824 (Chapter 636, Statutes of 2005);  
AB 1808 (Chapter 75, Statutes of 2006)

The purpose of this letter is to provide information to counties on the process for applying for participation in the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and/or Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus).

The goal of both programs is to provide participants a safe living environment while helping them learn and practice life skills in order to achieve self-sufficiency. The THPP provides the opportunity for youth in foster care aged 16-18 to develop independent living and employment skills. THP-Plus serves individuals who have emancipated from the foster care system and provides the greatest amount of freedom possible in order to adequately prepare the participants for self-sufficiency. Counties electing to participate in the programs provide supervised independent living housing and support services. County participation in each program is voluntary.

The attached "Letter of Intent Instructions for THPP and/or THP-Plus Participation" outlines the information necessary to begin the process for participation by submitting a Letter of Intent. The Letter of Intent must be received by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Independent Living Program no later than **December 1, 2006**. Counties that already have approval for THPP and THP-Plus participation are also

required to submit a Letter of Intent by the indicated deadline. Funding for these programs is currently limited.

In addition to the Letter of Intent, county and provider plans must be submitted for THPP and/or THP-Plus participation. The deadline for submitting these plans is **February 1, 2007**. Counties that have approved county and provider plans are instructed to review the plans in accordance with current regulations and, if necessary, make revisions as needed. Revised plans must also be submitted by the February 1, 2007 deadline.

For assistance in completing county and provider plans for THP-Plus, counties may refer to "A Guide to Implementing THP-Plus" which is available on the John Burton Foundation website at [www.johnburtonfoundation.org](http://www.johnburtonfoundation.org). The guide is a product of a collaborative effort between the John Burton Foundation, the CDSS, and the Corporation for Supportive Housing on the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project. For hardcopies of the guide, counties may contact CDSS at the number provided below to request a copy via mail. For THPP, the attached "County and Provider Plan Guidelines" contain instructions for developing THPP county and provider plans.

If you have questions or require additional assistance, please contact the Independent Living Program Policy Unit, Statewide Transitional Housing Coordinator, at (916) 651-7465. Any fiscal claiming questions may be directed to: [fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov](mailto:fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov).

Information regarding these programs is also available at this website: [www.childsworld.ca.gov](http://www.childsworld.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

MARY L. AULT  
Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

Attachments

c: CWDA  
CPOC

## LETTER OF INTENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR THPP AND/OR THP-PLUS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

To begin the process of applying for consideration to participate in the THPP and/or THP-Plus program, all counties must submit a **Letter of Intent** to the California Department of Social Services. Additionally, counties that have received approval for participation in THPP and THP-Plus programs are asked to submit a letter of intent by the December 1, 2006 deadline. The Letter of Intent must be signed by the county welfare director and should include a statement expressing the county's interest in developing a plan to administer the THPP and/or the THP-Plus program. Additionally, the contents of the letter must include the following:

- A brief summary of the county's demographics and need for a housing program;
- How many youth emancipate from their county annually;
- The number of anticipated beds/units;
- Estimated actual THPP and/or THP-Plus rate paid to the provider(s);
- Timeline for completed county and provider plans;
- Anticipated dates beds can be occupied;
- County contact name and number.

The Letter of Intent must be received no later than **December 1, 2006**. The county and provider plans must be received no later than **February 1, 2007**.

Send all documents to:

California Department of Social Services  
Independent Living Program Policy Unit  
Statewide Transitional Housing Coordinator  
744 P Street, M.S. 14-78  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**California Department of Social Services**

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLACEMENT  
PROGRAM (THPP)**

**COUNTY AND PROVIDER PLAN GUIDELINES**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The County Social Services Agency (SSA) will provide foster youth with real-life, concrete opportunities, supported with individualized, strengths-based services that will enable them to obtain the skills and abilities necessary for a successful transition to adulthood.

## INTRODUCTION

Foster youth face overwhelming challenges on their road to independence. This is especially true in the County where a lack of affordable housing is reaching crisis proportions.

Such is the environment within which County's emancipating foster youth must locate housing, find work, and sustain themselves as adults. The County Social Services Agency (SSA) recognizes that our youth need supportive and concrete services, delivered in a real-life environment, in order to prepare them for what's ahead. With that purpose in mind SSA respectfully submits this Plan to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for approval.

The introduction should include a brief description of the counties transitioning aged youth and the need for transitional housing in their county.

## POPULATION TO BE SERVED

Only those youth who meet all of the following criteria are eligible to participate in the County's Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP):

- Are dependents or wards of the County Juvenile Court.
- Are age 16 through age 18 (up to, but not including age 19).
- Reside in out-of-home placement funded through AFDC-FC.
- Participate actively in school or vocational training.
- Participate actively in a SSA approved independent living program.
- Maintain a substance-free lifestyle.

## PROGRAM MODELS

1. County will utilize one or more of the following THPP models:
  - Participant(s) lives in an apartment with an adult employee of the licensee.
  - Participant(s) lives independently in an apartment rented or leased by the licensee located in a building in which one or more adult employees of the licensee reside and provide supervision.
  - Participant(s) lives independently in an apartment rented or leased by the licensee under the supervision of the licensee if the State Department of Social Services provide approval.
2. In all models THPP providers will be encouraged to do the following:
  - Utilize apartments where youth may continue to live following emancipation.
  - Afford youth the opportunity to keep their apartment furnishings following emancipation.
  - Locate suitable and safe housing near public transportation lines, and in areas with adequate educational, vocational and employment opportunities.

## RATES

The rate for THPP participants will not exceed the provisional rate established by CDSS.

## SERVICE COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

All county THPP providers will include the following service components in their program:

- Coordination of ILP services with SSA, the Health Care Agency, Foster Youth Services, and other community and public partners.
- Case management
- 24-hour crisis intervention and support which will include providing each youth with a 24-hour emergency telephone number
- Individual and group therapy

- Educational advocacy and support, including linkages to Foster Youth Services with the goal of each youth obtaining a high school diploma, GED, or High School Proficiency prior to graduation from the Program.
- Job readiness training and support including linkages to WIA partners, One-Stop Centers, the Wood Children's Foundation Business Mentor Program, and other appropriate employment resources.
- Adult mentors who will commit to following youth for a minimum of six months following graduation from the program.
- Services to build and support relationships with family and community.
- Assistance to youth in finding or maintaining affordable housing that costs no more than 30% of the youth's gross income.
- Aftercare services including support groups and referrals to community resources.
- Outcome and evaluation continuing for 2 years following graduation from the program.
- Participation with the County Independent Living Program and the youth in development and execution of the Transitional Independent Living Plan.
- A contract with the placement county and the provider that specifies the requirements and expectations of each party.

REFERRAL and SCREENING PROCESS (County Independent Living Program)

1. Youth may participate in the THPP only with the permission of both the SSA Independent Living Program and the youth's placement social worker or probation officer. Only the placement social worker, probation officer or Independent Living Program coordinator may initiate a referral.
2. Referrals shall be directed to the Social Services Agency Independent Living Program staff who will take the following actions:
  - A. Determine the youths' eligibility for the Transitional Housing Placement Program.
  - B. Consult with the youth and the placement social worker or probation officer concerning the youth's strengths and needs including but not limited to the following areas:



- Placement history
  - Delinquency history
  - Substance abuse history
  - Work history
  - Educational needs and status
  - Behavioral health needs and status
  - Physical health needs and status
  - Family relationship needs and status
- C. Refer eligible youth to the THPP provider best suited to meet their unique needs.
- D. Assist youth in completing the application process required by the selected THPP provider.

REFERRAL and SCREENING PROCESS (THPP PROVIDER)

1. Review the youth's application (this may include review of up to two references).
2. Complete one or more interviews with the youth.
3. Consult with the ILP social worker and the placement social worker or probation officer concerning the youth's strengths and needs as well as the plan established in the Transitional Independent Living Plan.
4. Decide to accept or reject the application. Application rejections will be in writing and must include specific details supporting the provider's decision to reject.
5. Develop a contract with the youth that details the rights and responsibilities of each party, and under which each party agrees to the requirements contained therein.

Details of the contract shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- A. Systems for payment of ongoing expenses such as utilities, telephone, and rent.

- B. An allowance to be provided to each participant adequate to purchase food and other necessities.
- C. Apartment furnishings and a policy on disposition of the furnishings when the participant completes the program.
- D. Evaluation of the participant's progress and the process or reporting this progress to the SSA ILP program and the youth's placement social worker or probation officer.
- E. Linkage to job training through the Workforce Investment Act partners, the area One Stop Centers, the Mentor program, and other appropriate employment resources.
- F. Acknowledgement that the provider may not discriminate based on race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- G. Policies regarding all of the following:
  - Education requirements
  - Work expectations
  - Savings requirements (\$50.00 minimum monthly)
  - Personal safety
  - Visitors
  - Emergencies
  - Medical problems
  - Disciplinary measures
  - Child care
  - Pregnancy
  - Curfew
  - Household cleanliness
  - Use of utilities and telephone
  - Budgeting
  - Care of furnishings
  - Household decorations
  - Cars
  - Lending or borrowing money
  - Unauthorized purchases
  - Dating
  - Grounds for termination from the program (i.e., illegal activities, harboring runaways, drugs)

## PROVIDER SELECTION

The Social Services Agency will select providers to participate in the THPP based upon their experience and abilities in meeting the needs of the target population. Providers must include the following elements in their program proposals:

1. Strict employment criteria regarding any employee's age, drug/alcohol history and experience working with this age group.
2. A training program to educate employees about characteristics of persons in this age group placed in long-term care settings, and designed to ensure these employees can adequately supervise and counsel participants and provide them with training in independent living skills.
3. A detailed plan for monitoring the placement of persons under the provider's care
4. A contract between the participant and the provider that specifies the requirements for each party and that both parties agree to those requirements.
5. An allowance for each participant, sufficient for purchase of food and other necessities
6. A system for payment of utilities, telephone and rent.
7. The budget on which the rate will be based. Cost elements are to be broken into the following four categories:
  - Administrative salaries and overhead
  - Direct care staff
  - Social worker and social work supervision
  - Youth allowance itemized by telephone, rent, food, clothing, transportation costs, allowance, etc.
8. Providers will be encouraged to include the principles of the Child Welfare League Initiative, Positive Youth Development, in their program models.

## ASSESSMENT, OUTCOME AND EVALUATION

1. At least one of the following assessment instruments, as well as others approved by SSA, will be administered periodically by the THPP providers to measure youths' progress in the THPP program:
  - Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment

- Daniel Memorial Institute Independent Living Assessment for Life Skills
  - Community College Foundation Independent Living Skills Program Pre and Post Questionnaires
2. The following outcomes will be measured to determine individual program effectiveness.
    - Educational attainment
    - Employment
    - Avoidance of dependency
    - Homelessness
    - Parental status
    - Incarceration
    - High risk behaviors
  3. THPP providers will furnish regular reports on individual youths' progress and outcomes to the SSA Independent Living Program.
  4. For a minimum of two years following discharge providers will complete follow-up assessments and outcome evaluations every six months utilizing the same or complimentary assessment instruments. THPP providers will offer incentives to youth to encourage their participation in post emancipation assessments and outcome evaluations. Data and reports on these assessments and evaluations will be furnished quarterly to the SSA Independent Living Program.
  5. SSA will notify in writing CDSS of any major changes in the THPP program and/or provider.
  6. SSA will request in writing any bed/capacity and/or rate increases to CDSS Transitional Housing Coordinator prior to implementation.
  7. Social Services Agency will provide progress reports and overall program summaries to CDSS as requested.