



WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



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 12, 2016

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 16-81

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

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

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTERS (ACL) NOS. [15-79](#), [14-69](#), [13-84](#), [12-52](#), [11-27](#), [08-31](#), [00-22](#), AND [99-96](#); COUNTY FISCAL LETTERS NOS. [09/10-19](#) AND [00/01-46](#); ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. [1-07-10](#); [SENATE BILL \(SB\) 1013 \(CHAPTER 35, STATUTES OF 2012\)](#); [WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(W&IC\) SECTION 10609.4](#); [45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(CFR\) PART 92 AND SECTION 1356.83](#)

The purpose of this ACL is to provide updated information and direction regarding surveying of the third cohort of 17 year-olds participating in the NYTD survey beginning October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017. The third 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 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011. Those youth who participated in the survey at age 17 were surveyed as the follow-up population at age 19 in FFY 2013 and again at age 21 in FFY 2015. The second cohort of 17 year-olds was surveyed in FFY 2014. Those youth who participated at age 17 were again surveyed as 19 year-olds in FFY 2016 and will be surveyed again as 21 year-olds in FFY 2018.

The primary goal of the NYTD is to obtain services and outcomes' data that will assist federal, state and local governments in making informed decisions about independent

living service provision resulting in better 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 survey measures six outcomes: financial self-sufficiency; education attainment; connections with adults; homelessness; high-risk behavior; and access to health insurance. The NYTD survey is located at the end of this ACL as Attachment A.

Services

Counties collect data regarding independent living services provided to youth. These services include 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. Services are tracked through the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and submitted to ACF twice a year. Please reference [ACL No. 11-27 dated April 21, 2011](#) for more information about collecting this services data.

BACKGROUND

Federal requirements mandate that states collect and submit outcome and independent living services 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 that has a Title IV-E Agreement, who reach their 17th birthday during the FFY in which a survey is conducted. If the youth enters or exits foster care not more than 45 days after their 17th 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 19th or 21st 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.

A timeline of the staggered cohorts and follow-up populations may be referenced in Attachment B of this letter.

LEGISLATION REGARDING NYTD AND THE 2011 CHILD WELFARE REALIGNMENT

The Senate Bill 1013 (Chapter 35, Statutes of 2012) enacted many programmatic changes for realignment, including county responsibilities regarding NYTD. In part, the bill amended W&IC section 10609.4 to require counties to do the following:

- Ensure timely and accurate data entry into 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.
 - Providing opportunities for current eligible foster youth to take the NYTD survey online at county child welfare services and probation offices.

THIRD COHORT SURVEY PROCESS

The third cohort consists of all youth in foster care turning 17 years-of-age between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017 (FFY 2017). Youth may take the survey online on their own or the survey may be facilitated by a social worker or probation officer.

The survey is located on the [CDSS NYTD](#) webpage and can be found using the first link titled Take the California NYTD Survey.

Preparing 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 the purpose of the survey, how to access the survey, when and where to take the survey, and how to collect the incentive payment. Counties have the discretion to determine how this information was provided; however, the information must be provided within 60 days prior to their 17th birthday. For example, if the youth turns 17 on October 15th, the advance information would need to be provided at any time between August 16th and October 14th.

Placement data for youth who have recently entered foster care and are reaching their 17th 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, Independent Living Program (ILP) Worker, Title IV-E Agreement tribal social worker, ILP Coordinator, or probation officer. Documentation of efforts as to how information about the NYTD survey 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 completion of the advance notice requirement.

Counties are encouraged to identify survey-eligible youth prior to the youths' 17th birthdays in order to plan how those youth will be given information about NYTD. 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. The 'NYTD' section in SafeMeasures® also includes the following NYTD survey reports:

- TILP Services
- NYTD Survey Completion
- NYTD Full Data Elements
- My NYTD Cases
- My Unit NYTD Cases

For those counties who do not have regular access to SafeMeasures®, Children's Research Center 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 and also those who are eligible to complete the survey. Youth are identified by unique identifiers on this site. Please contact support@safemeasures.org to submit a request to access the NYTD report.

Probation departments interested in accessing SafeMeasures® reports, may contact support@safemeasures.org to submit a request to have a free account created to view the NYTD report.

In addition to reports in SafeMeasures®, a BusinessObjects 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](#).

Administering the Survey

The online survey may be self-administered by the 17 year-olds on any computer by accessing the webpage within 45 days after their 17th birthday. Youth may also access the survey at high school, in a local library, or in the county child welfare or probation offices. Alternatively, 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 the potential for technical errors increases when using smart phones. 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, the youth, social worker or probation officer may access the survey by filling out a three-line login 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. The CDSS recommends logging into the survey only

when the survey data is ready to be entered. Under no circumstances may the social worker or probation officer take the survey in lieu of the youth.

The login page for the third cohort was revised to include information regarding how survey responses will be used for data analysis purposes. Youth are notified that their name will not be associated with the answers provided; however, answers may be shared when aggregated with other youth responses. This revised language gives CDSS the ability to share aggregate survey responses with counties. A protocol on how this data will be shared with counties is currently being developed. To view the survey and login page, please refer to Attachment A.

Considering Special Needs Youth or Limited English Proficiency

Counties should ensure that survey-eligible youth with special needs or limited English proficiency are offered the NYTD survey. It is important for counties to include youth with a diagnosed disability reported in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System in order to prevent a bias in the survey. Reviewing administrative data and the records of youth in the baseline population would be helpful to determine accommodation needs ahead of time. Counties may also query youths' caseworkers as to whether they believe an accommodation is required in order for the youth to complete the survey. Counties may find that surveying caseworkers is the most cost effective means of establishing the size of its special needs populations and identifying which youth need accommodations. Counties need to accommodate youth with visual impairments, learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, hearing impairments, speech impairments, physical disabilities and limited English proficiency. A Spanish survey is available upon request. Youth who are incapacitated, such as those with a severe mental or physical disability that prevents them from answering the survey questions, are not required to be surveyed.

Incentives

Incentives to the youth are offered to increase participation rates. The CDSS recommends that all 17 year-old survey-eligible youth in the third cohort receive \$50 for completing the survey. Research has indicated that response rates to surveys are increased when incentives are cash versus material incentives, i.e. gift cards, prizes, etc.

A best practice would be to inform the youth in the advance notice about the survey and \$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 Coordinator in their counties to discuss 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 ages 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 Title IV-E agency having current jurisdiction of the youth is responsible for ensuring that a participation determination is completed for each youth in the third 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 17th 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 exempt from 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 exempt from calculation of the participation completion rate.

Note that these determination terms have been established as federal survey requirements and must be entered verbatim. Do not use other terms. Also, a determination date must be provided and 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 (October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017, and April 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017), a determination of the outcome for each youth. The determination data must be tracked by the county throughout the two six-month reporting periods.

The 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 within 15 days from the end of the report period. Additional guidance will be sent to counties via email from CDSS' Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau.

Retaining of Completed Survey Instruments

The record retention provisions at [45 CFR Part 92](#) apply to NYTD and require that counties retain all data collected for NYTD, including the hard copies of the surveys, for three-years following the submission of the financial Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) report. The CFCIP report is submitted one year and three months following the end of the survey period (the December 30 following the end of a FFY in September). For example, the FFY 2015 ends September 30, 2015. Thus, the NYTD data collected for the 17 year-old survey of the third cohort would need to be retained until December 30, 2021.

Also, per 45 CFR 92.42(b)(2), the record retention period may be extended if “any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action involving the records” has been started before the expiration of the retention period. These actions include any scheduled

All County Letter No. 16-81
Page Nine

NYTD Assessment Reviews. If the state is notified by ACF of such an action, CDSS will notify counties and the records must be retained until completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it or until the end of the regular retention period, whichever is later.

Ongoing Technical Assistance

A steering committee of CDSS and county representatives will meet throughout the duration of FFY 2017 to resolve any issues that may arise during the surveying of the third cohort. Please email NYTD@dss.ca.gov or call 1-877-IAM-NYTD (1-877-426-6983) should you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

GREGORY E. ROSE
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

Attachments



Welcome to the California National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) survey. The NYTD survey is a research study focused on the needs of foster youth as they prepare to leave foster care.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE THIS SURVEY?

No. Taking the survey is voluntary. But your answers matter! Foster youth across the country are taking this survey to help improve programs and services for youth and young adults in foster care. Plus, you will receive a check or a gift card for taking the survey. Please contact your social worker, probation officer, or ILP Office about how to get your check or gift card. If you take the survey, we will contact you again at age 19 and age 21.

WILL YOU SHARE MY ANSWERS?

We will only share your answers when they are combined with answers from other youth. No reports or discussion about this survey will use your name or connect your name to your answers.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SURVEY?

If you are still in care, please contact your social worker or probation officer.

Thank you for taking the NYTD survey. The survey has 19 questions and takes 15-20 minutes to complete. You can only log-in to the survey once, so be sure to answer all of the questions. Remember to print the certificate of completion at the end of the survey. To begin the NYTD survey, please enter the information below.

Enter the First and Last letter of first name (Michael = ML or Mary Anne = ME)

Enter the First and Last letter of last name (Smith = SH or Garcia-Marquez = GZ)

Enter your date of birth (01/01/1999)

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

Attachment A

- 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. Have you ever been homeless?

“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. Have you ever referred yourself, or has 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. Have you ever been 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. Have you ever given birth or fathered 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

Attachment A

- 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 (first and last 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 PARTICIPATING IN THE NYTD SURVEY!

NYTD Data Collection and Reporting

Submission Date to ACF by CDSS	Reporting Period	ILP Services Data	Survey Data Age 17*	Survey Data Age 19**	Survey Data Age 21**
--------------------------------	------------------	-------------------	---------------------	----------------------	----------------------

May 15, 2016	Oct 1, 2015- Mar 31, 2016	X		X (Cohort 2)	
Nov 15, 2016	Apr 1, 2016- Sept 30, 2016	X		X (Cohort 2)	
May 15, 2017	Oct 1, 2016- Mar 31, 2017	X	X (Cohort 3)		
Nov 15, 2017	Apr 1, 2017- Sept 30, 2017	X	X (Cohort 3)		
May 15, 2018	Oct 1, 2017- Mar 31, 2018	X			X (Cohort 2)
Nov 15, 2018	Apr 1, 2018- Sept 30, 2018	X			X (Cohort 2)
May 15, 2019	Oct 1, 2018- Mar 31, 2019	X		X (Cohort 3)	
Nov 15, 2019	Apr 1, 2019- Sept 30, 2019	X		X (Cohort 3)	
May 15, 2020	Oct 1, 2019- Mar 31, 2020	X	X (Cohort 4)		
Nov 15, 2020	Apr 1, 2020- Sept 30, 2020	X	X (Cohort 4)		
May 15, 2021	Oct 1, 2020- Mar 31, 2021	X			X (Cohort 3)
Nov 15, 2021	Apr 1, 2021- Sept 30, 2021	X			X (Cohort 3)
May 15, 2022	Oct 1, 2021- Mar 31, 2022	X		X (Cohort 4)	
Nov 15, 2022	Apr 1, 2022 - Sept 30, 2022	X		X (Cohort 4)	

*Survey data collection within 45 days following the youth's birthday.

**Survey data collection within the reporting period of the youth's birthday.