



**State of Florida**  
**Department of Children and Families**

**Ron DeSantis**  
*Governor*

**Chad Poppell**  
*Secretary*

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**DATE:** September 17, 2019      **TRANSMITTAL NO.:** P-19-09-0010

**TO:** Economic Self-Sufficiency Operations Managers  
Economic Self-Sufficiency Program Offices

**FROM:** Tonyaleah Veltkamp, Chief, Program Policy  
**(Signature on File)**

**SUBJECT:** Independent Living Programs (formally known as the Road-to-Independence Program)

**EFFECTIVE:** July 1, 2019

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The purpose of this transmittal is to inform staff of the different options young adults have when they are leaving foster care through the Independent Living Programs. This transmittal replaces transmittals C-19-03-0001, C-10-10-0011, and C-08-03-0006 and the policy manual will be updated accordingly.

**Background Information:**

On January 1, 2014, changes were made to provide several independent living services to former and current foster care young adults to support their success in becoming self-sufficient. Eligible young adults have the option to participate in Extended Foster Care (EFC), Postsecondary Education Services and Support (PESS), or Aftercare Services.

EFC provides eligible young adults the option of remaining in foster care until the age of 21 or until the age of 22 if they have a disability. EFC is a voluntary program that requires the young adult to agree to participate in school, work, or a work training program in accordance with federal and state guidelines.

PESS provides eligible young adults 18 to 23 years of age a monthly stipend and other supports necessary to become self-sufficient. PESS provides young adults the opportunity to participate after being adopted or placed with a court-approved dependency guardian at the age of 16 or older. After the initial application process, PESS requires that these students are enrolled in nine credit hours or the vocational equivalent to continue to receive the assistance.

Aftercare Services is a program available to young adults who have reached 18 years of age but are not yet 23 years of age and is no longer in foster care or receiving EFC or PESS. This program is intended to provide a safety net of services to help in transitioning to independence or assist in returning to the EFC or PESS programs.

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PESS payments and Aftercare Services were already excluded in determining eligibility for all programs. Effective July 1, 2019, EFC payments must be excluded when determining eligibility for all programs.

**Policy:**

Staff must:

- **Exclude** Independent Living Program payments (EFC, PESS, or Aftercare Services) for **all programs** when determining eligibility for benefits.
- **Include** individuals participating in any of the Independent Living Programs as they meet the student eligibility criteria because it is a state or local program where one or more components are the same as the SNAP E&T program. See criteria #6 in the Policy Manual 2210.0320.02.
- **Document** CLRC regarding program participation; no other entry is required on FLORIDA such as AFEI/AFMI screen.

Regional Program Offices with policy questions related to this transmittal should submit them through the Policy Technical Assistance Request page.

cc: Assistant Secretary for Economic Self-Sufficiency (Taylor Hatch)  
Assistant Secretary of Operations (vacant)  
Assistant Secretary for Office of Child Welfare (Patricia Medlock)  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Self Sufficiency (Maggie Mickler)  
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