



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.53

Subject:	Identifying and Accessing Interdependent Living Services
Authority:	TCA 37-5-106; Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, ASFA
Standards:	DCS Practice Model 8-100, 8-101, 8-102, 8-105, 8-106,8-104, 8-107. PA-CM 3.04, PA-CM 4.01, PA-CM 5.05
Application:	All DCS Employees
Policy Statement:	
Eligible youth and young adults shall receive a full array of developmentally appropriate services to prepare them for Interdependent Living, or to assist with normalizing their life experience. Provision of these services must promote a Chafee Foster Care Independent Living goal, to include educational progress, employment, maintenance of physical and mental health care, housing opportunities, the formation of supportive adult relationships, knowledge of, and access to, community resources, the acquisition of skills to increase financial viability, and daily life skills. These benefits are not entitlements, but designed to support assessed needs and concrete goals.	
Purpose:	
To outline necessary procedures for identifying and accessing Interdependent Living Services for eligible youth and young adults.	
Procedures:	
A. Identifying Needed Interdependent Living Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible youth and young adults as defined by DCS Policy 16.52, Eligibility for Interdependent Living and Voluntary Post-Custody Services, shall receive an individualized life skills assessment of strengths and needs. The Family Service Worker (FSW) shall administer the assessment in advance of Family Permanency Plan development. The initial life skills assessment shall be administered within 14 days of youth entering care, and updated at least annually thereafter. Note: There are circumstances that may impede the ability to complete a life skills assessment in advance of the initial CFTM/Family Permanency Plan development. These circumstances and alternative measures are outlined in the following protocol: Alternative Life Skills Assessment Protocol. The FSW is responsible for developing Interdependent Living Planning as a part of the Family Permanency Plan as required by DCS Policy 16.51, Interdependent Living Planning. The results and recommendations of the individualized life skills assessment shall be used to develop individualized goals.

3. The IL Plan shall be updated at least annually for non-custodial youth receiving DCS Voluntary Post-Custody Services. However, it may be appropriate to administer life skills assessments, and update interdependent living goals more often if the youth or young adult's circumstances change and the Child and Family Team warrants it.
4. Youth and young adults must be afforded every opportunity to actively participate in identifying their interdependent living needs and associated services, and also in the development of their Family Permanency Plans/ILPs. The recommendations made by youth and young adults shall be incorporated to the extent that the Child and Family Team agrees such recommendations to be in the youth or young adult's best interest, comply with applicable policies and statutes, and do not adversely affect the safety or well being of the youth, young adult or others.
5. Youth meeting eligibility as outlined in [DCS Policy 16.52, Eligibility for Interdependent Living and Voluntary Post-Custody Services](#), must receive life skills instruction as a component of Interdependent Living Services. Such instruction shall be offered to young adults receiving DCS Voluntary Post-Custody Services, and encouraged if young adults appear to display problems generalizing life skills instruction received. The scope of such instruction shall be consistent with life skills assessment results and recommendations, and provided in accordance with the youth or young adult's developmental capabilities. Youth who exited state custody to permanency via adoption or subsidized permanent guardianship, or who are solely receiving scholarship assistance, may be offered such services but are not required to participate.
6. Life skills instruction may include, but is not limited to, formal classroom instruction, community workshops, school-based programs, and standardized curricula as provided by trained staff and resource parents in the milieu. All eligible youth, and participating young adults, shall have the opportunity to receive the following areas of instructions:
 - a) Acquisition of safe and affordable housing, and household management;
 - b) Budgeting;
 - c) Building credit;
 - d) Consumer competence;
 - e) Nutrition and food preparation;
 - f) Stress management and coping;
 - g) Time management;
 - h) Interpersonal relationships and communication;
 - i) Problem solving and decision making;
 - j) Hygiene, self-care, smoking cessation and personal safety;
 - k) Exercising legal rights and responsibilities, such as voting, legal representation, self-advocacy, youth's rights, and youth boards;
 - l) Education on housing issues, to include locating safe and affordable

- housing options, tenant's rights and responsibilities, housing assistance;
- m) Instruction on education issues, to include assistance with developing an appropriate education plan, completing secondary education and accessing resources for post-secondary educational institutions or vocational programs; and
 - n) Instruction on obtaining and maintaining employment to include the development of good work habits and skills, self-confidence and presentation skills, resume writing, completion of job applications, job seeking skills, and the use of local employment assistance and placement programs.
7. The DCS Office of Interdependent Living shall serve as a centralized resource to assist Family Service Workers, provider agencies and caretakers by:
- a) Making available life skills assessment tools that shall be utilized by FSW and provider agencies, and facilitating the training needed to utilize such assessment tools. Such assessments shall be individualized to the extent possible;
 - b) Making available life skills curricula for caregivers that can be utilized in the milieu, and facilitating the training caregivers need to deliver such training. Such instruction shall be individualized to the extent possible;
 - c) Identifying community based life skill instructional resources, and maintaining a publicly accessible calendar of such events;
 - d) Coordinating the delivery of life skills workshops, with a focus on providing intensified instruction to youth at risk of emancipating to adulthood from state custody; and
 - e) Interdependent Living Program Specialists shall serve the function of supportive advisors to Family Service Workers, provider agencies and caretakers, relaying pertinent skill and content information as it relates to the development of inter-dependent living goals, life skill assessment and life skills instruction.
8. Youth identified as having special needs shall also benefit from standardized life skill assessment and instructional tools that will also require an individualized approach. Family Service Workers shall consult with clinical professionals to ensure that the appropriate life skills assessments and instructional interventions are utilized. The FSW shall outline goals derived from these assessment results, and the instructional recommendations that proceed from them, in the youth's Interdependent Living Plan. Refer to the [Alternative Life Skills Assessment Protocol](#) to address circumstances that may affect administration of a life skills assessment in advance of initial plan development.
9. Family Service Workers shall document all life skills instruction eligible youth or young adults receive in the Well Being Services area in TFACTS.
10. Contracted transitional living providers shall provide, track and document life skills instruction in accordance with the established contracts.

<p>B. Responsibilities Related to Accessing Needed Interdependent Living Wraparound Funding</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interdependent Living Wraparound funding is established as a resource to support the provision of Interdependent Living Services for eligible youth and young adults. These resources are administered as a flexible funding resource to support goals as established in the Interdependent Living Plan DCS Policy 16.51, Interdependent Living Planning, and should be utilized in conjunction with available community resources with a focus on intensifying their use as youth approach adulthood, and diminishing their use as young adults become self-sufficient. 2. The established menu of IL Wraparound Services and the eligibility guidelines associated with each are outlined in the IL Wraparound List (reference IL Wraparound List/Protocol). These guidelines may experience adjustments based on the identification of overall needs over time, or diminished funds. Youth who exited state custody to permanence via adoption or subsidized permanent guardianship are eligible for a limited portion of these services, as outlined in the IL Wraparound List. 3. TFACTS provides automated functionality that assists with the establishment of Program Type eligibility and the specific IL services that are available to the youth based upon eligibility. The Family Service Worker or designated staff are responsible for identifying the needed Interdependent Living Services supported by IL Wraparound funding, based on the goals outlined in the youth or young adult’s Family Permanency Plan (see DCS Policy 16.51, Interdependent Living Planning). The DCS Team Leader shall be responsible for providing initial review and approval for services, as appropriate. 4. The Director of IL or designee shall be responsible for additional pre- approval to purchase the identified services. 5. The Regional Fiscal Director shall be responsible for managing the funds and assuring that all purchases are allowable under the established regulations. 6. Interdependent Living Program Specialists shall be available to provide training and technical assistance to Regional DCS staff: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To facilitate identification of needed services based on Interdependent Living Plan goals, and b. To facilitate accessing IL Wraparound Services as outlined in this section of the current policy, and also to identify community resources. 7. A quarterly review of fund expenditures shall be conducted with Regional, Central Office and Funding Unit staff to ensure appropriate usage and determine the need for adjustments.
<p>C. How to Access Interdependent Living Wraparound Funding</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All IL Wraparound funds shall be accessed through the Regional Funding Unit. The Family Service Worker or designated staff shall use the approved fiscal process to request provision and payment of IL Wraparound services, goods or incentives. It is necessary for the Family Service Worker (FSW) or designated staff to specify the incentive category and item(s) requested.

	<p>2. Eligible youth or young adults must have an open case in TFACTS in order for IL Wraparound funding to be approved.</p> <p>Note: Special provisions will be made available for eligible youth or young adults who achieved permanency through adoption or subsidized permanent guardianship. In such cases, it is not required that recipients have an IL Plan established.</p> <p>3. In conjunction with the Interdependent Living Plan and the guidelines for payment, the Team Leader shall provide the initial review and approval of the services. The Funding Unit shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The IL Director or designee shall provide additional pre-approval before fiscal authorization. No payments shall be made unless prior approval has been obtained through the Director of IL or designee;b) Obtain the appropriate signatures on the <i>Authorization to Vendor</i> form. The Funding Unit is responsible for reviewing the applicable terms and obligations with the potential vendor, to include the possible tax status that may be associated with accepting the funds;c) Purchase the service(s);d) Record the date of purchase of the approved services; ande) Maintain a record of the applicable requests, approvals and purchases.
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Forms:	<u>Authorization To Vendor</u>
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Collateral documents:	<u>Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment Protocol</u> <u>IL Wraparound List/Protocol</u> <u>Alternative Life Skills Assessment Protocol</u> <u>Interdependent Living Manual</u>
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