



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for
Human Services

September 10, 2021

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

SUBJECT: Time-Limited Flexibility for use of Supplemental Chafee (LINKS) Funding

REQUIRED ACTION: Immediate

The Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 116-260) enacted on December 27, 2020, provides supplemental appropriations for the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood and allows flexibility on the spending of those funds that **expires on September 30, 2021**.

Each county in North Carolina will receive a one-time increase in their LINKS allocation from the supplemental funding in the Consolidated Care Act that will be equal to twice the annual allocation they have already received for SFY 2021.

In March, the federal Administration of Children and Families (ACF) issued program instructions (ACYF-CB-PI-21-04) noting that it had heard from many young people who are in or were in foster care that they had not benefited from previous COVID relief efforts including stimulus checks. The program instructions specifically allow a portion of the supplemental funding to be used to provide unrestricted one-time financial assistance to youth/young adults to assist them in meeting their needs during the pandemic. However, the flexibility to provide assistance in this way to eligible young adults expires on **September 30, 2021**

DHHS is instructing counties to provide assistance for this population of very vulnerable young adults. All young adults who were in foster care at age 14 or older and have not yet reached age 27 are eligible. Assessment of financial need is not required, and no county match is required.

The amounts of one-time unrestricted payments to eligible young adults which may be made under this program are as follows:

- Eligible young adults 18-20--\$2,500.00
- Eligible young adults 21-26--\$5,000.00

To assist counties in making stimulus payments, we are identifying procedures to expense a portion of the supplemental allotment to each county up front and hope to provide additional information and instructions about the upfront expensing of supplemental funding to counties within the next several days. We encourage counties who can make stimulus payments to eligible youth prior to receiving the upfront funding to do so. A template for a letter to send to potentially eligible young adults is attached.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

For tracking and reporting purposes, county departments of social services must list all eligible young adults who received these stimulus funds and the amount received on the 1571 Part II expense reports.

ACF is encouraging states not to count emergency benefits from these supplemental funds when considering recipients eligibility for other services including but not limited to TANF and Child Care.

The supplemental funding will be available to be spent through September 30, 2022, on other LINKS services; however as stated above the window for using these funds for one-time stimulus checks expires on **September 30, 2021**.

For more information, please join the upcoming LINK-Up call on Friday, September 10, 2021 at 10:00am. Follow this link to register: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/rt/3346857731495409409> using access code: 908-614-197.

If you have any questions, please contact Erin Conner, LINKS Program Coordinator at erin.conner@dhhs.nc.gov or by phone at 919-527-6351 or LeAnn McKoy, Foster Care 18-21 Coordinator at leann.mckoy@dhhs.nc.gov or by phone at (919) 527-6375. You may also contact your Regional Child Welfare Consultant.

Sincerely,

Carla McNeill

Carla McNeill, MSW
Section Chief for Permanency Planning
Division of Social Services, Child Welfare
North Carolina Department of Health and Human
Services

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Richard Stegenga, Deputy Director, Business Operations
Lisa Tucker Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Kathy Stone, Section Chief for Child Protective Services and Prevention
Linda Waite, Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory

Attachments:

- ACYF-CB-PI-21-04 (program instructions for the Consolidated Appropriations Act)
- Supplemental Chafee Calculations By County 9.9.2021
- Standardized Letter to Young Adults Template

CWS-33-2021