

AB 12 and The Benefits for You

The California Fostering Connections to Success Act

Overview

What is AB 12 (the California Fostering Connections to Success Act)?

AB 12, starting January 1, 2012 is a law that passed in 2010, allows foster youth to be provided continued support and services up to age 20 (possibly to 21 if funding is made available by 2014) if they remain a dependent.



What is the purpose of AB 12?

The purpose of AB 12 is to provide continued support and services to foster youth, whom are legal adults, to help in the transition process and ensure that they are given the necessary skills to survive on their own.

Eligibility

If I want to have this support what should I do?

Once you turn 18 and/or are still a dependent in calendar year 2012, you will automatically be eligible for this support. You must live in an approved placement, meet one of the program requirements options, and sign a mutual agreement. You can decide you do not want to take part in this program, and then you can decide to leave the program and "opt-out." A caseworker will be assigned to each youth to assist them with developing their own case plan to help them meet the program requirements (see program requirements below).

What are the program requirements for AB 12?

A youth must be working or going to school at least part-time.

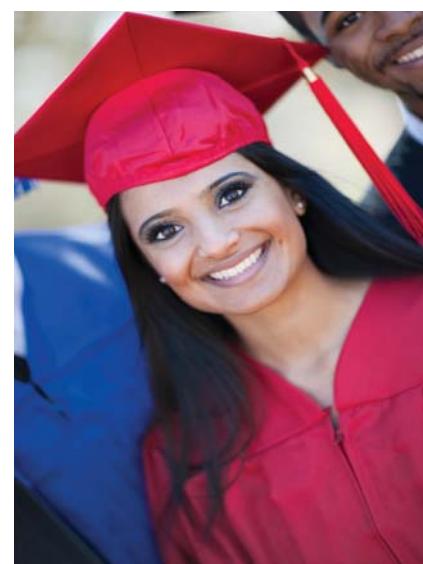
Will my case be court supervised?

Yes, youth that decide to opt-in will have their case under court supervision and there will be a minimum of court reviews every six months.

What are the basic eligibility requirements?

A youth must be in:

- a high school or in a General Education program; or
- enrolled in a college or vocational program; or
- employed at least 80 hours a month; or
- participating in a program aimed at gaining employment; or
- unable to work/attend school because of a medical condition.
- A youth must also live in an approved placement/housing environment and sign a mutual agreement with their case worker.



Turn over -->

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If I want to live in my foster home after age 18 will I have to be fingerprinted?

No. The only exception is if you leave the program and come back and are going to live in a placement with minors in foster care.

How long does it take to get in to the AB 12 program?

On January 1, 2012, all youth who are still dependents are automatically eligible for AB 12 unless you opt-out. If you leave care in 2012 and decide you want back in the program, there will be a process. If you leave care in 2011, you are ineligible for AB 12. As the program is developing over the next few months, CYC is advocating that the process to re-enter the program or opt-in be as simple and as fast as possible, but, as of now, we are unaware of how long it will take.

If I decide I do not want to participate in AB 12 and decide later that I do, can I?

Yes, after 2012 you can decide to leave care at any time under what is called “trial independence” and come back at any time as long as you are still eligible (see program requirements) and are under the age limit. There will be a process you need to go through to re-enter the program.



What would disqualify me from AB 12?

You may be disqualified from the program if you no longer meet the program requirements (i.e. not working or not going to school), participating in a program that already provides housing, joining the military, getting married, etc. A list of disqualifying programs will be available in the future. When you meet program requirements, again you may re-enter the program.

What if I am a parent, can I still participate?

Yes, youth who are parents have the same rights to participate in AB 12 as other youth.

What makes me ineligible?

If you have already turned 19 in 2011 and have emancipated from foster care in 2011, you are ineligible.

Placement

What are my placement options?

- Approved home of a relative or non-relative extended family member
- Foster family home (licensed)
- Foster Family Agency certified home (licensed)
- Home of a non-relative legal guardianship (approved by the juvenile court)
- Group home, subject to new limitations: finish high school by age 19 or have medical issues (licensed)
- Transitional Housing Placement-Plus Foster Care (approved)
- Supervised Independent Living setting (approved)