


To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator  
DCF Area Administrators  
Child Placing Agency Directors  
Child Welfare Agency Directors  
County Departments of Community Programs Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
Group Home Providers  
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors  
Private Child Placing Agencies  
Residential Care Center Providers  
Shelter Care Providers  
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Fredi-Ellen Bove   
Administrator

Re: **Independent Living Announcements: DCF Scholarship Process Change and 2019 Transition Resource Agency Awards**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this memo is to inform counties, tribes, out-of-home care providers, and other stakeholders of two updates related to independent living: 1) a change to the DCF Scholarship process; and 2) the results of the Request for Grant Proposal process for the Transition Resource Agencies located in Regions 2, 4 and 6.

## **BACKGROUND**

### DCF Scholarship:

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 designates Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds to support youth eligible for Independent Living services who are pursuing postsecondary education at an accredited institution. Youth are eligible to receive up to \$5000 per academic year until they are age 23 and so long as they demonstrate good academic progress. DCF uses a portion of these funds to finance awards made via the DCF Scholarship Program; the remaining funds are primarily distributed among the Transition Resource Agencies (TRAs) that serve young adults 18-21 who have exited out-of-home care.

Throughout the years, this bifurcated process has been found to be ineffective in maximizing use of ETV funds to support eligible youth. As a result, DCF in partnership with youth, TRA, and county staff participated in a LEAN project, which is a methodology used to identify ways to streamline business processes by thoroughly examining each process step. The change summarized on the following page is the first step towards implementing the changes recommended by the LEAN project participants.

### Transition Resource Agency Awards:

DCF elected to regionalize independent living (IL) services as of 2016 in order to provide a community-based voluntary extension of services to young adults transitioning from out-of-home care. Counties remain responsible for IL service provision throughout a youth's time in care, and the TRAs in each of the seven regions are responsible for coordinating funds and services for youth eligible for IL after exiting care. DCF utilized a phased implementation approach, with regions rolling out in successive years; the years in which the regions went into effect and the agencies responsible for service provision in each area

are listed below. Regions 2 and 6 are in the final year of the contract and Region 4 will become part of the regional model in fall 2018, with services beginning in 2019. Additional information on these agencies, their points of contact, and the services they are expected to provide is available here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/independentliving>.

Region	Year	Agency
1	2017	Wood County & CW Solutions
2	2016	Bay Area Workforce Development Board
3	2018	SaintA
5	2017	Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin
6	2016	Family & Children's Center
7	2017	Workforce Resource

## INFORMATION SUMMARY

### DCF Scholarship:

To better align service provision and maximize youth access to the funding sources and supports for which they are eligible, the TRA in each respective region is now responsible for administering the DCF Scholarship. Each TRA has a designated point of contact to which questions and applications can be directed. This is the first step of TRAs assuming additional responsibility for coordinating the allocation of ETV funds for eligible youth. A breakdown of which counties are part of which region can be found at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/map/il-r>. The TRA Points of Contact for administering the DCF Scholarship can be found at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/youthservices/pdf/scholarshipcontacts.pdf>. This list is also referenced in the revised DCF Scholarship form, available in the *Education and Training Voucher/Department of Children and Families Scholarship Program* drop down located at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youthservices/college>.

The current change became effective July 15, 2018, and any applications received by DCF have been transmitted to the appropriate regional contact; the applicant and/or individual who submitted the application on their behalf has been informed when this occurs. As a continuation of existing practice, youth will be notified of the outcome of their application (denied, approved, or missing information) and, as applicable, the allocated award amount. The school in which the youth is enrolled will also continue to be informed of the award amount.

Based on the recommendations put forward by the LEAN project participants, there will be subsequent changes made to the administration of ETV funds; all changes will be announced via memo. DCF staff will provide additional training and resources related to future changes as well. Until that time, questions can be directed to [DCFScholarship@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFScholarship@wisconsin.gov).

### Transition Resource Agency Awards:

In summer 2018, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) released a Request for Grant Proposal (RFP) for independent living (IL) service provision in Youth Services Regions 2, 4, and 6. DCF recently made awards to the selected proposers, which resulted in no change in service provider in Regions 2 and 6 (see above table). Kenosha Human Development Services (KHDS) was selected as the IL TRA in Region 4, which is comprised of Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth counties. Starting in January 2019, Kenosha Human Development Services (KHDS) will be responsible for serving IL-eligible youth throughout Region 4 until age 21 (23 for postsecondary supports) to build upon the independent living skills the youth developed while in out-of-home care. DCF staff will work closely with KHDS to improve youth sustainability and outcomes in the areas of education, employment, health, housing, and permanent connections. Questions regarding independent living, regionalization, and next steps with Region 4 can be directed to [DCFILCoordinator@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFILCoordinator@wisconsin.gov).

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Independent Living Policy Coordinator  
Bureau of Youth Services  
(608) 422-6990  
[DCFILCoordinator@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFILCoordinator@wisconsin.gov)

MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>