



Division of Safety and Permanence
October 12, 2022

DSP Informational Memo Series 2022-26i

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: Wendy Henderson
Administrator

Re: **Extension of Independent Living Program Eligibility to Age 23**

PURPOSE

This Informational Memo explains an adjustment to Wisconsin’s Independent Living (IL) program eligibility. Existing program eligibility for qualifying youth ends at age 21. However, since May 2021 regional IL providers have served youth to age 23 on a temporary basis using one-time federal stimulus funding. Effective immediately and on an ongoing basis with regular IL funding, contracted Transition Resource Agencies (TRAs) and tribal IL programs may serve IL-eligible youth up to age 23.

BACKGROUND

The 2018 Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) provides states the option to provide IL services to qualifying youth up to age 23. Since May 2021, contracted TRAs have been able to serve youth up to age 23 using funding provided under the Consolidated Appropriations Act Division X stimulus funding. In many cases, this was a continuation of services for young people who would ordinarily “age out” of IL services at age 21. With Division X stimulus funding ending on September 30, 2022, DCF needed to determine whether to continue eligibility to age 23 or revert to the previous age limit of 21.

INFORMATION

Based on positive feedback from service providers and young people – and to better align with the cadence of youth needs, maturation, and program engagement – DCF will continue age 23 as the upper IL eligibility age limit. This change is effective immediately.





The specific services and supports available to this population will vary based agency program structure and availability of funds. As with all IL services after a young person is discharged from care, youth engagement is voluntary, and service provision is guided by the young adult's wants, needs, resources, eligibility for other supportive services, and more. Other aspects of IL program eligibility and operations remain the same. Additional IL information and updated resource materials are available at: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/il>.

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Independent Living Coordinator
Bureau of Youth Services
Email: DCFILCoordinator@wisconsin.gov

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