

**Pending Legislation Impacting Foster Care:  
State Legislatures in Session as of 8/24/2021**

**California (Legislature adjourns September 10, 2021)**

[SB 546](#) would provide a smartphone and monthly prepaid mobile telephone service to certain current and former foster youth 13 to 26 years of age.

[SB 228](#) would expand eligibility for priority enrollment for current and former foster youth at the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges (CCC), and expands eligibility for a student support program for current and former foster youth at the CCCs.

[AB 1051](#) would, among other things, prohibit presumptive transfer from applying to foster youth placed in a group home or a short-term residential therapeutic program outside of the county of original jurisdiction, unless an exception is invoked.

[AB 1006](#) would require the California Department of Social Services to convene a workgroup to examine the negative effects of high turnover of foster family agency social workers on foster youth and to make recommendations to the Legislature for reducing turnover.

[SB 100](#) would require the State Department of Social Services to convene a working group of representatives from specified state agencies and stakeholders to examine the extended foster care program and make recommendations for improvements to the program.

[SB 532](#) would expand and strengthen the rights for foster youth, homeless youth, former juvenile court school students, children of military families, and migratory children to be exempted from local graduation requirements if certain conditions are met; (2) require local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide those students the option to remain in school for a fifth year to complete the statewide coursework requirements if certain conditions are met; and (3) require LEAs to annually report to the California Department of Education on the number of students, who in the prior school year, graduated with an exemption from the LEA's local graduation requirements.

[AB 413](#) would appropriate \$13 million annually from the General Fund to the Department of Housing and Community Development for existing programs that assist former foster youth in accessing stable housing.

[SB 739](#) would require the California Department of Social Services, beginning January 1, 2022, and until December 31, 2025, to administer the California Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth pilot project with the goal of improving outcomes for foster youth.

[AB 592](#) would expand the scope of a host family within the foster care system to include supervised transitional housing services provided by a transitional housing placement provider; permit a host family to include certain approved placements and declares that those placements, when operating as a host family, do not require additional certification; and expand the definition of a Supervised Independent Living Setting to include a transitional housing unit in which a host family lives with a nonminor dependent.

**District of Columbia (Council adjourns December 2021)**

[24-235](#) would establish the Aged Out Foster Care Economic Support and Financial Literacy Act of 2021, requiring that a \$1,000 stipend each month be provided to youth who have aged out of the foster care program as a means of economic support, and that financial literacy training and tools be provided to provide assistance establishing bank accounts and building money management skills (personal financial management, budgeting, and saving).

## **Massachusetts (Legislature adjourns January 4, 2022)**

[HB 3954](#) would provide a universal basic income for youth aging out of foster care.

[SB 103](#) would create an electronic backpack for foster children, meaning a repository of a foster youth's educational records (names and addresses of educational providers, foster youth's grade-level performance, and any other educational information that the department requires).

[SB 85](#) would ensure positive transition plans to prevent youth homelessness, requiring that the Department shall discharge any transition age youth with a written transition plan that comprehensively addresses programs and services and options that will help such child prepare for the transition from foster care to a successful adulthood including but not limited: securing stable housing, making an education plan, finding a vocational, employment services and career counseling and placements, maintaining physical and mental health care and health insurance, building relationships with other caring adults, particularly with life-long connections, developing expertise in daily living skills, learning how to access community resources and public benefits and services, connecting with other state agencies, developing financial skills including receiving, understanding, and correcting, if applicable, consumer credit reports, and any information about any additional or specialized services provided to the child or young adult to assist with the transition to successful adulthood, and identifying and addressing immigration status concerns and issues.

[HB 228](#) would seek to eliminate disproportionality and inequities for at-risk children. Among other things, it would require the office of the child advocate to produce a public report with detailed recommendations for addressing inequities in child serving state entities.

[HB 3953](#) would promote resilience and community healing to mitigate adverse childhood and community experiences.

[HB 87](#) would require better tracking of data points regarding children in foster care (deaths of children in the care of the state, number of children in psychiatric hospitals within the care of the state, number of children served by supervised visitation centers, number of children whose whereabouts are unknown, number of times children transfer schools as a result of a 'best interest' determination).

[S 87](#) would establish a Foster Parents' Bill of Rights.

## **Michigan (Legislature adjourns December 16, 2021)**

[HB 5025](#), regarding benefits for foster youth, would require, among other things, that when the Department serves as the representative payee or in any other fiduciary capacity for a child receiving Veterans Administration benefits, federal Supplemental Security Income, or Social Security benefits, it shall use or conserve the benefits in the child's best interests, including using the benefits for services for special needs not otherwise provided by the department or conserving the benefits for the child's reasonably foreseeable future needs; and ensure that when the child attains the age of 14 years and until the Department no longer serves as the representative payee or fiduciary, a minimum percentage of the child's benefits is not used to reimburse the state for the cost of care for the child and is used or conserved on behalf of the child.

## **New Jersey (Legislature adjourns January 11, 2022)**

[AB 4963](#) would provide comprehensive Medicaid benefits to certain individuals formerly in foster care.

## **Pennsylvania (Legislature adjourns on December 31, 2021)**

[HB 1475](#). Youth who are either homeless or disconnected from their families face challenges with accessing their birth certificates. State laws blocks this population from being able to independently obtain their birth certificates.

A lawyer may request a birth certificate on their behalf, however there are thousands of youth in need of their birth certificates who may not have access to this option. This bill would lower the age limit for an individual from 18 years to 12 to apply for a copy of their birth certificate, allow any homeless youth or foster youth, or a social service or community-based organization providing case management for a youth, to apply for and obtain a copy of their birth certificate without the signature, permission, or consent of a parent or guardian, and waives the fee for obtaining a birth certificate copy for homeless and foster youth.

**Wisconsin (Legislature adjourns on December 31, 2021)**

[AB 143](#) authorizes the Department of Children and Families to promulgate rules for the establishment, certification, operation, monitoring of, and placement of a child in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program.