



Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection & Permanency	Effective Date: 03-1-2017
Volume:	VI	Adolescent Services	
Chapter:	A	Independent Living	Revised Date: 11.3.2021
Subchapter:	I	General	
Issuance:	101	<b>Independent Living Placements and Arrangements</b>	

**Purpose:**

This issuance establishes policy and procedures regarding Independent Living Placements and Arrangements. Independent living placements and arrangements may be used only for youth ages 16 to 21, when no family resource is appropriate or available, and neither adoption nor kinship legal guardianship is a suitable option.

**Policy:**

**A) When Independent Living Placements are Appropriate**

When ALL viable alternatives have been exhausted, CP&P may arrange to place a youth in an independent living placement or arrangement. A youth in a licensed resource home or congregate care placement is not considered an independent living placement and therefore shall not be eligible for the independent living stipend. See, [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals.

**B) Determining the Appropriateness of the Independent Living Placement (Ages 16-17) or Ages Arrangement (18-21)**

- 1) The Worker shall determine and document on the CP&P Form [26-52](#), Contact Sheet independent living is the most suitable plan and appropriate for the youth as part of the assessment process. Eligibility is based on the following:
  - 2) **With Adolescent (Ages16-17)**
    - a) In order to determine the appropriateness of an independent living placement with an adolescent under the age of 18, the Worker, Supervisor, Casework Supervisor, and Local Office Manager (LOM) shall conduct a case conference to determine the appropriateness of the placement
    - b) The adolescent is 16 years of age or older,
    - c) CP&P has custody of the adolescent,

- d) The adolescent has no other appropriate supervised living arrangement available, and
- e) Background checks (CARI, CHRI and Local Police checks) shall be completed on all individuals living in the home and the residence shall be appropriate and physically safe.

**3) With Young Adults (Ages 18-21)**

- a) He or she meets one of the criteria for case acceptance and continued eligibility and has completed CP&P Form [10-10](#), Voluntary Services Agreement Between the Young Adult (18-21) and the State of New Jersey
  - b) The young adult has no other appropriate supervised living arrangement available, and
  - c) The identified living residence for the young adult shall be appropriate and physically safe.
- 4) See, [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), Services to Adolescents Age 18 to 21.

**C) Approval with Adolescent (Ages 16-17)**

- 1) The LOM's approval is required to place an adolescent in independent living. The assigned Worker shall submit CP&P Form [16-76](#), Special Approval Request, completed in the NJ SPIRIT application, containing the following information:
  - a) Documentation that a case conference was held with LOM, Supervisor, and Worker to approve the placement,
  - b) Documentation of attempts to secure an alternate supervised placement,
  - c) Court order stating that CP&P has custody of the adolescent.
  - d) A statement indicating why he or she requires independent living placement at this time,
  - e) A statement indicating the adolescent's willingness to cooperate with the plan for independent living,
  - f) A statement concerning the adolescent's need for Medicaid or other medical insurance,
  - g) A statement of the adolescent's need for a clothing allowance, and
  - h) A statement about the plans for the adolescent's future and of the expected length of time independent living placement shall be necessary.

**D) Six Month Approval**

**With Adolescent (Ages 16-17)**

- 1) Approval for an independent living placement is valid for no more than six months. At the end of each six-month period, the Worker shall submit a written request to continue the independent living placement (use CP&P Form [16-76](#), Special Approval Request) for Local Office Manager approval.
- 2) The Worker shall complete an assessment during the six-month service delivery to document the adolescent's well-being, service needs and adjustment to living

independently, in accordance with case recording policy. See, [CP&P-III-C-6-100, Case Recording](#).

#### **E) Medicaid**

- 1) CP&P shall provide Medicaid coverage to youth in an independent living placement or if he or she is receiving the independent living stipend (Program Status Code 600, or 650 for otherwise ineligible youth, See, [CP&P-V-A-4-100](#)), Code 650 Medical Services. For some youth, it is possible Medicaid is available from another source, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or other federally matched program accessible via county welfare services, and these options shall be explored and discussed with the youth on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate program available. See, [CP&P-III-C-2-400](#), Supplemental Security Income, [CP&P-V-A-1-600](#), Services to Pregnant Women, [CP&P-V-A-3-500](#), Medicaid Extension for Young Adults (MEYA), also known as Chafee Medicaid, for more information about some of the other programs potentially available to adolescents and young adults.
- 2) The Medicaid and HMO cards remain in the possession of the youth. See, [CP&P-V-A-2-200](#), Medicaid Eligible Recipients and [CP&P-V-A-7-100, Health Considerations for Adolescents](#).

#### **F) MVR Schedule With Adolescent (Ages 16-17)**

- 1) At least once a month, the Worker shall have a face-to-face contact with the adolescent. These contacts shall occur at his or her residence.
- 2) During these contacts, the Worker determines, verifies, and documents:
  - a) The continued appropriateness of the independent living placement,
  - b) The continued safety of the adolescent, including the safety of the residence, and
  - c) That the adolescent continues to live at the approved residence.
- 3) **With Young Adults (Ages 18-21)**
  - a) The Worker shall have a face-to-face contact with the young adult monthly. These contacts shall occur in a mutually agreed upon location. The Worker shall visit the young adult at his or her residence at least once every three months.
  - b) For young adults in a post-secondary institution, please refer to [CP&P III-C-3-100](#), Minimum Visitation Requirements (MVR).
  - c) During these contacts, the Worker shall determine, verify, and document:
    - i) The continued appropriateness of the independent living arrangement, and
    - ii) The continued safety of the young adult.
    - iii) [CP&P-IV-A-2-100](#), Assessing Child Safety in Out-Of-Home Placement Settings (complete safety assessment when completing MVR); and

- iv) [CP&P-VI-B-1-300](#), Adolescent Services Toward Self-Sufficiency.

**G) Clothing**

- 1) Clothing allowance for youth in independent living situations is a fixed dollar amount per month, \$98 for regular size clothing or \$103 for oversized clothing. For those youth that are receiving independent living stipends (rent, food, and incidentals), the clothing amount is directly deposited onto his or her Q Card or into the bank account in the same manner as the other stipends. For those not receiving other stipends, CP&P may issue a monthly clothing allowance from the LO Bank Account (LOBA). See, [CP&P-IX-F-1-300](#), Local Office Bank Account.
- 2) The local offices have luggage to transport the child's belongings; however, if luggage is not available, the LOBA Fund may be utilized for the purchase of the luggage. A child's possessions shall never be transported in large plastic bags except in an emergency, when no immediate alternative container is available [CP&P-IX-F-1-300](#), Purchase Luggage for Transporting a Child's Clothing.

**H) Child Placement Review Act**

CP&P shall notify the Superior Court, Chancery Division, Family Part, of every youth, under the age of 19, in an independent living placement in accordance with the requirements of the Child Placement Review Act. See, [CP&P-IV-A-3-200](#), Review of Children in Placement.

**I) Termination from Independent Living Placement or Arrangement**

- 1) An adolescent's or young adult's independent living placement may continue unless:
  - a. **With Adolescent (Ages 16-17)**
    - i. The adolescent's needs can be better met in a more appropriate placement.
  - b. **With Young Adults (Ages 18-21)**
    - i. The young adult does not meet eligibility for CP&P services or continued CP&P services See, [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), Services to Adolescents Age 18 to 21.

**Procedures:**

**1) Assess Safety**

- a) The assigned Worker assesses the safety of a youth in independent living using CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire. The Worker:
  - 1) Observes the youth's interaction with other youth and adults in the facility or home,
  - 2) Interviews the youth's house parent or Counselor, and

- 3) Observes the youth's room to assure appropriate sleeping arrangements, includes a bed.
  - b) Assess the youth's safety within one month of placement-at the independent living home, facility, or living arrangement, and every six months afterward. If the youth changes his or her living arrangements, again assess safety at that new site within one month of relocation.
  - c) Use LOBA Funds or Flex Funds, as appropriate, if needs are identified during the safety assessment process. See, [CP&P-IX-F-1-300, Local Office Bank Account](#); See, [CP&P-IX-F-1-400, Flexible Fund](#).
- 2) Safety Concern**  
The Worker immediately contacts his or her Supervisor, or in his or her absence, the Casework Supervisor (by telephone from the facility or by cell phone), if there is a concern for the safety of the youth or other youths in the program or home. Proceed in accordance with See, [CP&P-IV-A-2-500, Congregate Care Questionnaire](#).
- 3) No Safety Concerns**  
In the absence of safety concerns, the Worker and Supervisor meet within three workdays of the on-site visit to conference results of CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire and the Worker's assessment. Both sign the form in the designated spaces.
- 4) OOL**  
The Supervisor forwards copies of the completed CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire to OOL and CP&P Contract Administration staff for CP&P contracted supervised independent living programs.
- 5) Placement Line for Adolescents (Ages 16-17)**
- a) For independent living placement with an adolescent under the age of 18. The Worker creates the adolescent as a Resource in NJ SPIRIT and creates a placement line for the adolescent. The placement line is as follows:
    - 1) Service Type:
    - 2) Independent Living:
    - 3) Subservice Type:
    - 4) Supported Community Living (DMHS)
    - 5) Subservice Component:
    - 6) G041 Placmt SuppCommLVG DYFS Custody

**Key Terms (Definitions):**

- **Adolescent** - for the purposes of Independent Living policy, "adolescent" means a person who is age 16 or 17
- **Youth** - for the purposes of Independent Living policy, "youth" means a person between the ages of 16 up to 21.
- **Caring adult** - is an adult, identified by the adolescent or young adult, who is willing, and available to provide emotional support, encouragement, and assistance to the adolescent or young adult, to help him or her transition to self-sufficiency and adulthood. A "caring adult" may be a relative, family friend, neighbor, teacher, coach, clergy, or any other adult who is willing to assist the adolescent or young adult.
- **Incidental Expenses** - are expenses for personal care and household items other than rent, food, clothing, or luggage.
- **Independent Living Arrangement** - is a living arrangement for those young adults, ages 18 up to 21, who function responsibly without continuous adult supervision, or with minimal supervision. An Independent Living arrangement may be provided in a private home, apartment, or other similar residence.
- **Independent Living Placement** - is a specialized living arrangement for those adolescents, age 16 and 17 (up to their 18th birthday), who function responsibly without continuous adult supervision, or with minimal supervision. An Independent Living placement may be provided in a private home, apartment, or other similar residence.
- **Q Card** - a reloadable debit card that is used for youth or young adults who receive the Independent Living Stipend.
- **Rent** - is the cost of occupying a legal dwelling for a period of one month or longer, inclusive of rent and the cost of basic utilities.
- **Young Adult** - for the purposes of Independent Living Policy, "young adult" means a person who is between the ages of 18 up to 21.

### Forms and Attachments:

- CP&P Form [10-10](#), Voluntary Services Agreement Between the Young Adult (18-21) and the State of New Jersey
- CP&P Form [16-76](#), Special Approval Request (NJS form)
- CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire
- CP&P Form [26-52](#), Contact Sheet

### Related Information:

- [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals
- [CP&P-III-B-5-500](#), Family Engagement
- [CP&P-III-C-6-100](#), Case Recording

- [CP&P-III-C-2-400](#), Supplemental Security Income
- [CP&P-III-A-1-500](#), Services to Adolescents Age 18 to 21
- [CP&P-IV-A-2-100](#), Assessing Child Safety in Out-Of-Home Placement Settings (complete safety assessment when completing MVR)
- [CP&P-IV-A-3-200](#), Review of Children in Placement
- [CP&P-V-A-1-600](#), Services to Pregnant Women
- [CP&P-V-A-3-500](#), Medicaid Extension for Young Adults, Also Known as Chafee Medicaid
- [CP&P-VI-B-1-300](#), Adolescent Services Toward Self-Sufficiency
- [CP&P-IX-F-1-300](#), Local Office Bank Account (LOBA)
- [CP&P-IX-F-1-400](#), The Flex Fund
- NJ Youth Resource Spot, which lists resources for adolescents and young people: [New Jersey Youth Resource Spot](#)

**Policy History:**

- **3-17-2017**