

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
September 18, 2015**

PI 15-17

TO: County Social Service
Division of Juvenile Services
Tribal Offices
Regional Supervisors
Chafee Independent Living

FROM: Kelsey Bless, Permanency Administrator
Dean Sturn, Foster Care Administrator

SUBJECT: Foster Care Discharge & Transition 624-05-15-110

PROGRAMS: Foster Care

EFFECTIVE: September 29, 2015

RETENTION: Until Manualized

Children and Family Services (CFS) will issue many new policies this month to meet full compliance with the PL 113-183 "Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act". This federal legislation can be viewed at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/4980/text>.

Effective September 29, 2015; North Dakota will engage in the nationwide effort to ensure that foster children have proper documentation provided to them upon discharge from care (regardless of their age) and that they are included in transition planning and receive various documents prior to "aging out" of foster care.

"Transition Planning" was a sub heading located under Case Planning 624-05-15-50. CFS removed that sub heading and incorporated that portion of former policy into the new "Discharge & Transition Planning" section 624-05-15-110 below:

Discharge & Transition Planning 624-05-15-110

Discharge Planning

Discharge planning efforts begin the day a child enters foster care. The Child & Family Team, including the child when age appropriate, need to develop a comprehensive discharge plan, focusing on the individualized needs of the child. Special attention must be given to the child's mental health, substance abuse, and developmental issues.

Federal law also requires that all children in foster care should be discharged with the following items at no cost to the child:

1. Personal items
2. Legal documents
 - a) Copy of birth certificate
 - b) Copy of Social security card, and/or
 - c) Identification card (if applicable)
3. Medical information
 - a) The extent of the medical history and records provided upon discharge is to be determined by the case manager as necessary and appropriate for the child's continued care. (Immunization records, medications, future medical appointments scheduled, etc.)
4. Education records
 - a) History of schools attended
 - b) School grade level
 - c) Copy of the child's IEP (if applicable)
5. Credit report results
 - a) Only required for children over the age of 14
6. Transition Checklist (SFN 494)
 - a) Only required at age 18 for children "aging out" of foster care

Transition Planning

For a child "aging out" of foster care at the age of 18, transition planning occurs in conjunction with discharge planning.

A transition plan is required for all children "aging out" of foster care and must be completed within 90 days prior to their 18th birthday. The transition plan must be developed and personalized at the direction of the child and made part of their foster care case plan (either attached or embedded in the case plan). Transition planning is also required 90 days prior to the 18th birthday for a child who is interested in remaining in the 18+ Continued Care program. The transition plan can be updated as needed.

North Dakota requires the use of SFN 494 "Transition Checklist" for all children aging out of foster care regardless of the length of time the child has been in foster care. For placements less than six months, custodians should make concerted efforts to gather required documentation noted on the Transition Checklist.

Policy will be manualized as soon as possible. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Children & Family Services.

Attachments: SFN 494 Transition Checklist (new form) is now required.

Thank you.