

Extended Foster Care (EFC) – General Overview

NOTE: Our case management system is moving from Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) to Child Welfare Services-California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES). This policy includes language, forms/templates, and resources that will be reviewed and updated as we transition into CWS-CARES.

(Revised 08/07/26)

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Related Policies Additional information can be found in the following policies:

- Contacts – SW and Child
- Youth Missing from Care
- Child and Family Team Meetings
- Case Consultation
- EFC Re-Entry
- Hotline – Assignment of Referrals
- ER - Investigations
- Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFPP)
- Foster Youth Credit Reports
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- San Diego Regional Center
- Social Security Benefits

Forms

The following is a list of general forms used for Extended Foster Care (EFC):

- [SOC 157A](#) Supervised Independent Living Approval and Placement Agreement
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Forms (cont.)

- [SOC 157B](#) SILP Inspection: Checklist of Facility Health and Safety Standards
- [SOC 161](#) Six-month certification of EFC Participation
- [SOC 162](#) Mutual Agreement for Extended Foster Care
- 04-102 SILP Readiness Assessment
- [TILP 1](#) Transitional Independent Living Plan & Agreement
- 04-107 EFC Frequently Asked Questions
- 04-109 EFC Transition Jurisdiction Information
- 04-110 EFC Checklist
- 04-111 EFC- Authorization to Use or Disclose Protected Health Information-NMD
- 04-112 EFC-Authorization to use or Disclose Protected Health Information
- 04-113 EFC - Placement Needs and Services (CWS/CMS County Template)
- 04-116 Nonminor Dependent (NMD) Non-Compliance Letter

The SOC 161 Six-month certification of EFC Participation:

- certifies that the Nonminor Dependent (NMD) is currently participating in Extended Foster Care (EFC) services and is expected to continue with active engagement for the following six months.
- needs to be attached to the court report for each six-month case plan review.
- certifies that the nonminor in a Nonrelative Extended Family Member (NREFM) guardianship placement is participating in EFC services and is expected to continue with active engagement for the following six months.

The SOC 162 Mutual Agreement for Extended Foster Care:

- specifies the NMD's intention to remain in EFC and meet the EFC program requirements and eligibility. This mutual agreement is valid throughout a continuous stay and must be completed within six months of the NMD turning 18.
- must be sent to the Registrar to send to the Human Services Specialist (HSS).
- specifies the nonminor's intention to remain eligible for NREFM guardianship benefits and participate in the EFC program. This agreement needs to be signed by the youth within the month of their 18th birthday.

Background

On September 30, 2010, Assembly Bill (AB) 12 was signed into law in California. This bill allows California to implement provisions of the federal law, PL 100-351, also known as Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, signed into federal law in October 2008. AB 12 and subsequent California legislation allowed foster care for eligible youth to extend beyond age 18 up to age 21.

The goals for EFC are to:

- Extend time to assist NMDs in becoming better prepared for successful transition into adulthood and self-sufficiency through education and employment opportunities, addressing the effects of trauma, and developing permanent connections to supportive adults.
 - Assist NMDs to maintain a safety net of support while experiencing independence in a secure and supervised living environment.
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Definitions

“General jurisdiction” means the court has retained jurisdiction over a youth for the purpose of considering a petition to resume its dependency jurisdiction or to assume or resume its transition jurisdiction over the youth as an NMD. The court does not need to make this order. It happens by operation of law.

“Nonminor dependent (NMD)” is the term used for a dependent or ward eligible for EFC. An NMD is a youth between the ages of 18-21 under the jurisdiction of juvenile court with a foster care placement order on their 18th birthday and is meeting at least one of the EFC participation conditions.

“Extended foster care (EFC)” is available to youth 18-21 who were under foster care placement order at age 18.

“Supportive Transition” is the service component used for permanent placement services to an NMD.

“Nonminor former dependent (NMFD)” is a nonminor who:

- reached 18 years of age while subject to an order for foster care placement, and for whom dependency, delinquency, or transition jurisdiction has been terminated, and who is still under the general jurisdiction of the court, OR
- is over 18 years of age and, while a minor, was a dependent child or ward of the juvenile court when the guardianship was established and the juvenile court dependency or wardship was dismissed following the establishment of the guardianship.

“Parenting NMD” refers to an NMD who is the natural or adoptive father or mother, (whether married or unmarried); or other adult fulfilling the parental role.

“Transition Dependent” is a ward between 17 years 5 months and 18 years of age under a foster care placement order who is subject to the court’s transition jurisdiction.

Extended Foster Care (EFC) Eligibility Criteria

The following criteria determine a youth’s eligibility for the EFC program:

- At least 18 years old but under 21 years of age; and
- Must have a foster care placement order on their 18th birthday placing them under the care, custody, and control of a county child welfare agency, juvenile probation, or tribal agency; and
- Must meet one of the participation conditions (See [Participation Conditions](#) section); and
- Must sign the [SOC 162 Mutual Agreement for Extended Foster Care](#); and
- Collaborate with assigned SW to develop the Transitional Independent Case Plan (TILCP) or case plan and [Transitional Living Plan and Agreement \(TILP\)](#); and
- Reside in an eligible placement to receive a foster care payment. Youth can reside in an ineligible placement to obtain case management, but no foster care payment will be disbursed until the placement becomes approved.

NOTE: The placement does not have to be a paid placement on the youth’s 18th birthday as long as the youth has an order for a foster care placement on their 18th birthday.

Who is Eligible for EFC

Youth over the age of 18 but younger than 21 are eligible for EFC. The youth who have a current court order of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) or are in a guardianship established through dependency court can be transferred to the EFC program and assigned an EFC SW on or after the age of 17. Youth who have a court order of Family Reunification (FR) or Family Maintenance (FM) will not be transferred to the EFC program until their court order changes to APPLA. SWs who have youth in FR or FM status can reach out to the EFC program for assistance in preparing the youth to transition to adulthood.

The following youth are eligible for EFC:

- Currently under juvenile court jurisdiction in a foster care placement:
 - Parenting
 - Residing out of county/state
 - Active to Regional Center
 - Receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI) (special requirements need to be met)
 - Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) eligible
 - Married
 - Undocumented or completing Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) documentation
- On probation in a foster care placement
- In a Non-Related Legal Guardianship (NRLG) established through dependency court
- In a KinGAP guardianship established through dependency court
- Adopted youth whose adoption was completed through dependency court

NOTE: Married NMDs will need to complete an 04-102 SILP Readiness Assessment in order to be placed in a Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP).

The following youth are not eligible for EFC:

- Incarcerated at age 18 without a foster care placement order
- Incarcerated as an adult, depending on the length of incarceration.
- Active duty military
- In an NRLG status established through probate court.

NOTE: Youth in an NRLG established through probate court, who are eligible for state-only Aid to Families with Dependent Children- Foster Care (AFDC-FC) benefits, may continue to receive the AFDC-FC state-only benefits up to age 19 if they can complete high school on or before age 19.

Participation Conditions

NMDs must maintain at least one of the five participation conditions, also referred to as eligibility criteria, to participate in the EFC program. SWs will document the NMD's participation condition in the CWS/CMS in both contacts and court reports. The five participation conditions are listed in the table below:

Participation Condition	Definition
1. Secondary education	- Enrollment includes but is not limited to any high school setting or any course of study leading to the completion of a high school diploma, GED, High School Proficiency Certificate, or High School Completion Certificate. - Enrollment is deemed continuous during any summer or other scheduled break in the school program.
2. Post-secondary/ vocational education	- Must be enrolled at least half time in college, community college, or vocational education. - Enrollment is deemed continuous during any summer or other scheduled break in the school program.
3. Program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment	Programs and/or activities include but not limited to unpaid employment, volunteer activities, unpaid internships, drug or alcohol treatment.
4. Employment	- Employed 80 hours per month. This includes but is not limited to paid employment, paid internships, apprenticeships, work study or vocational programs. - As long as the NMD is scheduled to work 80 hours, they are eligible even if they do not work the 80 hours due to holidays, illness, excused absences or other circumstances beyond the NMD's control.
5. Incapable of doing any of the above	Medical condition, both short term and long term condition that renders the NMD incapable of doing any of the four activities. An NMD who is eligible for a disability program such as, Regional Center or SSI. NOTE: Written verification by health care practitioner or verification of disability benefits is required. A health care practitioner is defined as someone who is licensed or authorized by the state to provide services related to physical or mental health.

Military

Youth who are on **active-duty military status** are ineligible to participate in the EFC program as they are considered full-time military personnel. The period of basic training (also known as boot camp) is considered active duty; therefore, youth who enlist and attend basic training are ineligible for EFC. Youth who are enlisted in the military, but not on active duty, including those participating in a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program, are eligible for EFC, except during extended training if the military program does not allow a SW to conduct monthly face-to-face contact and supervision during that time. As soon as SW monthly face-to-face contact can resume the youth would be eligible to re-enter foster care. If the youth is discharged from active-duty military status prior to age 21, they may be able to apply for re-entry into the EFC program. See [EFC Re-entry policy](#) for more information.

Youth in the military reserves or National Guard are considered part-time military personnel and are eligible for the EFC program, if all other EFC eligibility requirements are met. SWs are expected to meet the contact requirements for youth in the military reserves or National Guard. When youth are called upon to serve active duty in either the military or National Guard, they are no longer eligible for the EFC program. Depending on the length of time on active-duty status, the youth's EFC case may have to be closed and the youth can re-enter once they are no longer on active duty status prior to age 21. See [EFC Re-entry policy](#) for more information.

When a youth is enlisted in a part-time military program, their Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) can include the military participation as a TILP goal.

- If the goal states that the purpose of the military employment is to enable the youth to gain needed work habits, skills, and responsibilities of maintaining employment, Welfare & Institutions Code (W&IC) section 11008.15 allows any income derived from the military participation to be disregarded for eligibility determinations.

Case Management

Case management with NMDs requires a balance of ensuring the NMD's safety and well-being while honoring their rights as legal adults. SWs will meet with the NMD face-to-face monthly, with at least 14 days between visits, assessing the NMD's safety and risk. This includes NMDs who live out of county or out of state. See Contact Policy for more information. During these monthly visits the SW is responsible for providing the NMD referrals and assistance, if needed, to any services or community partners needed for the NMD to maintain or meet the EFC participation conditions listed above. Depending on the specific needs of the NMD at the time of the visit, the SW may also do the following when completing the monthly contact:

- Engage youth in formulating their TILP goals (stable housing, education/employment, and independent living) reviewing and updating the TILP every six months
 - Monitor the NMD's progress in meeting identified goals in their TILP and Case Plan
 - Assess readiness of the NMD for their desired living arrangement (Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP), Transitional Housing Program Plus – Nonminor Dependent (THPP-NMD), or current living situation) and assist them with obtaining or maintaining it
 - Assist the NMD with developing a Shared Living Agreement with roommates, if applicable
 - Ensure the NMD knows how to contact a CFWB representative or a THPP – NMD representative 24 hours a day; (Hotline phone number, SW's and PSS's phone numbers, housing case manager's and housing program director's phone numbers)
 - Explain how to use effective communication and the chain of command for conflict resolution.
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Case Management (cont.)

- Ensure that the youth has Medi-Cal or another health insurance and help them get medical, dental, and/or mental health care, as needed. If applicable, discuss needs related to gender identity to ensure access to gender-affirming care.
- Ensure the NMD knows how to access the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, CalFresh program, and childcare services, if applicable.
- Ensure the NMD has [Welfare & Institutions Code \(WIC\) Section 391](#) documents and provide information on how to obtain those documents, if needed.
- Provide the NMD with their attorney's contact information, information about upcoming juvenile court hearings, and how to participate in these hearings, as applicable.
- Discuss and identify NMD's relationship to natural supports and lifelong connections.
- Explore NMD's feelings regarding visitation or lack of visitation with siblings.
- Maintain frequent communication between CFWB SWs of the NMD's:
 1. Dependent child(ren)
 2. Dependent siblings
 3. Significant other, if applicable
 4. Roommate, if applicable

There will be times when the NMD has challenges or barriers to maintaining their housing or EFC eligibility. When these issues arise, the SW and NMD contact will be more frequent to help ensure that the NMD receives the support needed to address the challenges or barriers.

Non-Compliance

There may be times when an NMD is not engaging with their case plan/TILP or not meeting the EFC participation conditions. When this happens, it is the SW's responsibility to work with the youth to engage and assist them in meeting or maintaining EFC participation. Some efforts to facilitate engagement of the NMD include, but are not limited to:

- Schedule a CFT meeting to address the complex needs of the NMD, such as struggling with parenting, barriers to productivity, safety issues (e.g., DV, CSEC).
- Conduct a support team meeting with members of the NMD's team (THPP-NMD case manager, CASA, natural support, and/or therapist) and the NMD to address the concerns and formulate a plan for the NMD to follow. This is an informal meeting.
- Contacting the NMD's attorney.

Refer to the [Case Consultation](#) and [Child and Family Team Meetings](#) policies for more information.

If, after the above interventions, the NMD continues to not meet EFC eligibility requirements, the SW will consult with their PSS to discuss the NMD's willingness to resolve the eligibility issue. After consultation the SW will take the following next steps:

- Inform the NMD's attorney of the current situation,
 - Send the 04-116 NMD Non-Compliance Letter to the NMD's last known address, and
 - Request a WIC 391 hearing to terminate jurisdiction.
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Missing from Care

When a SW is notified that a youth/ NMD is no longer in their placement and considered “missing from foster care”, Assembly Bill (AB) 2108 requires the SW to notify court and all parties or entities to the case (noted below,) along with local Law Enforcement (LE), within 24 hours. The following are examples of parties or entities of a case:

- Parents or legal guardians, unless notification has been limited or terminated by court
- Attorney for the parents or legal guardians
- Youth/NMD’s attorney
- Any known sibling
- CASA, if applicable
- Tribe or tribal representative, if applicable

NOTE: If, based on the totality of circumstance, the SW suspects that the NMD **did not** voluntarily leave foster care or is at risk of substantial harm, the above procedure needs to be completed.

The SW is required to make the following due diligence efforts monthly when a youth/NMD is considered missing from care as defined above, not an exhaustive list:

- Inform and ask the youth/NMD’s network, including their attorney, about their whereabouts and document any information obtained from the conversations
- Physically check places the youth/NMD frequents and relevant addresses
- Call, text, and email all known phone numbers and email addresses including those provided by the NMD’s support network
- Follow up on leads regarding the youth/NMD’s whereabouts
- Check social media by conducting a public search, not logging on to a personal page
- Check local and state custody websites searching for the NMD

See [Youth Missing from Care](#) policy for more information.

NOTE: Consult PSS about frequency of due diligence efforts when the missing youth/NMD has indicators of foul play or harm, developmental delays, or is under conservatorship.

Reporting Suspected Abuse of/by NMDs

When the Hotline receives a call regarding suspicions of abuse and/or neglect on an NMD, the Hotline SW will enter a contact into the CWS/CMS and provide the reported information to the assigned EFC SW. Under no circumstances will a referral be generated when the NMD is the alleged victim of abuse and/or neglect. The EFC SW will discuss the information with the NMD and take the appropriate steps to ensure the NMD’s safety. Those steps could be as follows, not an exhaustive list:

- Create a plan for safety
- Find a safe place for the NMD to stay
- Assist with filing any court documents like a temporary restraining order

When the Hotline SW screens a referral for an NMD parent and their child(ren), the referral will be assessed using the appropriate hotline tools, policies, and protocols. The referral will **not** be assigned solely because of the NMD’s dependency status. The Hotline SW will notify the EFC SW that a new referral has been assigned to the NMD, as a parent, and the EFC SW will be placed as secondary on that referral. The Emergency Response (ER) SW will consult with the assigned EFC SW

**Reporting
Suspected Abuse
of/by NMDs
(cont.)**

within 24 business hours. If the assigned EFC SW is unavailable, the ER SW will notify/consult with the assigned PSS.

See the [Hotline – Assignment of Referrals](#) and [ER – Investigations](#) policies for more information.

Travel

The Agency may cover the cost of travel for an NMD returning to San Diego County from an approved out of county/out of state school or placement in lieu of a compliance visit. This provision may be utilized no more than once every two consecutive months to remain in compliance with [WIC Code 16516.6](#) which states, no more than two consecutive monthly visits may be held outside the residence of the youth.

The allowable travel should be reasonable, necessary, and avoid disruption to the NMD's academic progress and/or employment commitment, thereby allowing the NMD to build connections at their school setting and in their community. The Agency reserves the right to deny travel requests that are excessive, present a risk to safety, and do not align with program compliance with the final approval for county funded travel being made at the discretion of the program manager.

The assigned SW should encourage the NMD to participate in all aspects of travel planning, i.e. budgeting, scheduling, and communicating with their support network regarding accommodations, to foster accountability and self-sufficiency. This includes assisting the NMD with developing travel plans that promote safety, responsibly, and independence. Encouraging the NMD to participate in the arrangements for their travel allows the NMD to learn what steps to take when planning a trip. The NMD is responsible for locating accommodations and paying for meals in San Diego as food and housing are not an expense covered by the Agency.

**Court Appointed
Special Advocates
(CASAs)**

While NMDs retain many of the rights of children in foster care, NMDs must also be recognized as emerging adults working in partnership with courts, attorneys, and child welfare partners. Therefore, NMDs must be consulted about their desire to continue receiving CASA services, or to re-engage CASA services when re-entering foster care.

The CASA assignment can remain after the youth turns 18, with the CASA having access to the NMD's records, **only with** the explicit written and informed consent of the NMD. The NMD can withdrawal their consent at any time.

**Intensive Family
Preservation
Program (IFPP)
Services for NMDs**

Parenting NMDs can be referred to the Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFPP) services and funding when there is an open referral or case on the NMD's child(ren). The IFPP SW will be working with the parenting NMD and their child(ren) to support the safety plan, with a referral, and family reunification, when it is an open case. IFPP will provide services based on the parent's address not the programmatic/regional assignment.

See [Intensive Family Preservation Program policy](#) for more information.

EFC Special Populations

There are special populations of youth in foster care who are eligible for the EFC program. These youth are eligible to receive the same services as other EFC youth unless noted. The main EFC special populations are youth who are in Nonrelated Legal Guardianships, on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), connected to the San Diego Regional Center (SDRC), or undocumented.

Nonrelated Legal Guardianships that were established in Juvenile Court are eligible for the EFC program. The assigned SW will need to complete a Transitional Independent Living Plan and Agreement (TILP), Case Plan, and SOC 162 every six months with the youth signing all the documents. Youth in this type of placement are not eligible to be placed in a THPP-NMD program and can only be placed in the guardian's home or college dorm. Youth in this type of placement continue to have the payments sent to the guardian.

Supplemental Security Income is a payment that comes from the Social Security Administration (SSA) on behalf of the youth in care. Prior to the youth turning 18, the assigned SW will assist the youth in completing the necessary documentation for their benefits to continue after age 18, if approved by the SSA. SWs should reach out to the foster care Human Services Specialist (HSS) for assistance when an NMD is on SSI. See the [Social Security Benefits](#) policy for more information.

The San Diego Regional Center (SDRC) serves persons with developmental disabilities. The person must be diagnosed with the developmental disability that originates before age 18. If SDRC services are applied for after the age of 18 there needs to be medical documentation that the developmental disability originated before age 18. NMDs can participate in both SDRC and EFC services. The assigned SW and Regional Center worker shall communicate to ensure that the NMD is receiving the appropriate services. Please see the [San Diego Regional Center](#) policy for more information.

Undocumented NMDs are eligible for the EFC program as long as the Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) has been started and they are meeting the participation conditions. See [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status](#) policy for more information.

Credit Reports and Documentation for NMDs

The SW will assist the NMD with obtaining their credit report annually and ensure that the NMD receives help with interpreting the credit report. This assistance may include but is not limited to referring the NMD to a governmental or nonprofit agency that provides consumer credit services. The SW is not required to be the individual providing the direct assistance with interpretation of the credit report or resolving any inaccuracies for the NMD.

The SW will document any information about the NMD's credit report in the court report, case plan and contact in the CWS/CMS, indicating if there was a credit report and the steps taken to mitigate any inaccuracies.

Please see the Foster Youth [Credit Reports policy](#) for more information.

Alignment with SET

This policy aligns with SET [Value 1](#) ensuring the youth's voice is gathered/represented at every meeting to inform key decisions and focus on safety, permanency and well-being and by engaging the youth in safety planning by utilizing respectful, honest and transparent communication.
