

**WHEN I LEAVE FOSTER CARE, WHAT DOCUMENTS SHOULD I HAVE?**

Upon leaving foster care you may request a copy of your Birth Certificate, Social Security Card (or number), Health insurance information, medical records, and a Driver’s License or other form of state photo ID.

**HOW DO I MAKE SURE I AM INCLUDED IN PLANNING FOR MY FUTURE?**

It is very important that you take part in planning your future. It is, after all, your life. Talk to your caseworker and your team (including your foster parents) about your wishes, goals and any concerns you may have. Being involved in your own transition planning and knowing what your resources and options are helps your ideas, wants and needs be heard. Your team and supportive adults can assist you in reaching your goals. When you are 14 years old or older, you should go over the goals on your transition plan (also known as the T2) every six months until you leave foster care. For additional information, go to [www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual\\_1/i-b235.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_1/i-b235.pdf)

[www.dhs.state.or.us/cf/safety\\_model/procedure\\_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-18.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/cf/safety_model/procedure_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-18.pdf);

[www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/docs/transitiontoolkitchecklist.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/docs/transitiontoolkitchecklist.pdf) and

[www.fosterclub.com/transition/article/transition-toolkit](http://www.fosterclub.com/transition/article/transition-toolkit)

**DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU HAVE CERTAIN RIGHTS WHILE YOU ARE IN FOSTER CARE, AND THERE IS SOMEONE IN THE GOVERNOR’S OFFICE TO HELP YOU IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS?**

Look for the “Oregon Foster Children’s Bill of Rights” posted in your foster parent’s home or residential facility. That poster will review your rights while in foster care.

Your caseworker will give you a copy of the bill of rights within 60 days of your placement in foster/substitute care. You and your caseworker will review the bill of rights.

Here are some other resources to contact if you have concerns about your care or that your rights or needs are not being respected:

**Youth Empowerment & Safety (Y.E.S.) line:** 1-855-840-6036

**Foster Care Ombudsman Office:** [www.oregon.gov/dhs/aboutdhs/Pages/fostercare-ombudsman.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/aboutdhs/Pages/fostercare-ombudsman.aspx)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS, CONTACT THE FOSTER CARE OMBUDSMAN OFFICE OR THE Y.E.S. LINE:**

Email: [fco.info@state.or.us](mailto:fco.info@state.or.us)

Phone: 1-855-840-6036

Fax: 503-378-6532

Mail: 500 Summer St. N.E., E-17  
Salem, OR 97301

**OREGON FOSTER CHILDREN’S BILL OF RIGHTS**

**AS A CHILD OR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE, HOW DO I...?**



This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this publication in another format or language, contact 503-378-3486 or 503-378-3523 for TTY.



## DID YOU KNOW THAT AS A YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE, YOU HAVE CERTAIN RIGHTS?

We hope that whether you are about to be placed or have been in foster care for a while, you will find the information helpful. The pamphlet gives you some how to's and necessary information to help you with your transition to adulthood. You will also find some helpful links and resources.

Your caseworker and other members of your team can also help. Your “team” may consist of your caseworker, CASA, attorney, foster parent, ILP Provider, or any other Supportive Adult you would like to include.

## HOW DO I GET A BANK ACCOUNT WHILE I AM IN FOSTER CARE?

**Rules can really vary** so it is best to check with your local bank or credit union in your community. For example, some credit unions may allow a youth to open a savings account at age 12 or older with or without a parent's or guardian's permission; you must have acceptable identification (see below for examples) and a minimum deposit. The amount of deposit can vary depending on the type of account.

Your caseworker and other members of your team can help you by making sure you have **at least** the following documents:

- ★ Your Social Security card with matching name and number;
- ★ Your birth certificate;
- ★ A driver's license, other form of Oregon identification or a lawful permanent resident (LPR) card.

For additional information and tips on managing your money wisely, budgeting, credit and other financial advice:

**Teens can check out:** [www.handsonbanking.org/htdocs/en/t/](http://www.handsonbanking.org/htdocs/en/t/)

**Young adults can check out:** [www.handsonbanking.org/htdocs/en/y/](http://www.handsonbanking.org/htdocs/en/y/)

## HOW DO I GET A DRIVER'S LICENSE IF I AM UNDER 18 AND IN FOSTER CARE?

Your caseworker and team should agree that you are ready for this big responsibility. You will find a great tool to help you with that decision at [www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety\\_model/procedure\\_manual/ch04/ch4-section33.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/ch04/ch4-section33.pdf).

Here's another handy resource to use with your caseworker:

[www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety\\_model/procedure\\_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-29.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-29.pdf).

**If you are in the care and custody of DHS, you will need permission from the agency (DHS program manager or branch designee- usually the branch manager) to get your driver's permit and/or license.** The following link has all of the requirements for obtaining a driver's permit or driver's license: [www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv/teen/pages/license.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv/teen/pages/license.aspx)

In addition, here is a link to a DMV guide that helps walk you through the process: [www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety\\_model/procedure\\_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-28.pdf](http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/procedure_manual/appendices/ch4-app/4-28.pdf)

You can develop the safe driving skills to get a driver's license by taking a driver's education course. Financial assistance may be available to help with those costs. However, you must be covered by insurance on the car you will be driving and DHS is **not** responsible for insurance premiums.

## IF I WANT TO, CAN I STAY IN FOSTER CARE AFTER TURNING 18?

It may be possible to remain in care after you turn age 18. Talk to your caseworker and your team (including the judge) about your options. Your own participation in planning for your transition and future will help ensure your ideas and dreams are being heard and can receive assistance and supports to reach your educational, independent living skills and housing goals. To access services after you leave foster care, you will need to go to the local DHS Child Welfare office and request “voluntary services.”

## HOW DO I ACCESS THE TUITION AND FEE WAIVER?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) is used as the application for Oregon's Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver. To qualify, you must meet both foster care and higher education requirements.

For the foster care eligibility requirements, you must:

- ★ Have been in foster care under the care and custody of Oregon's DHS Child Welfare or one of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes' child welfare for at least 180 days after age 14; AND
- ★ Not leave foster care and custody prior to your 16th birthday.

For the higher education requirements, you must:

- ★ Enroll at one of Oregon's public colleges or universities for undergraduate studies;

- ★ Qualify for financial aid;
- ★ Complete 30 hours of volunteer activities (to maintain eligibility for the waiver in year two and the following years).

**Note:** You need to enroll prior to age 25. If you are still in the program at age 25, you can continue receiving the waiver until you have met the equivalent of four years of undergraduate studies (as long as you are making satisfactory progress).

For additional information, go to [www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/ILP/Pages/Financial-Aid.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/ILP/Pages/Financial-Aid.aspx).

## HOW DO I GET A COPY OF MY CREDIT REPORT?

Talk to your caseworker and your team. Federal law requires DHS to provide credit reports to you as a youth in DHS's **legal custody** beginning at age 14 and every year after that until you are no longer in the legal custody of DHS. DHS is also required to help youth in foster care identify and resolve any issues on your credit report. Be sure you have a copy of your Social Security card and birth certificate; the credit bureaus require this identification to help resolve any credit issues. For more information about youth credit and resources, go to [www.aecf.org/~media/Pubs/Topics/Child%20Welfare%20Permanence/Other/YouthandCredit/YouthandCredit.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/~media/Pubs/Topics/Child%20Welfare%20Permanence/Other/YouthandCredit/YouthandCredit.pdf).

## HOW DO I GET MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES OR OTHER TREATMENT (INCLUDING SERVICES AND TREATMENTS AVAILABLE WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF MY PARENT, FOSTER PARENT OR CASEWORKER)?

If you are in foster care, you have an Oregon Health Plan (OHP) medical card. OHP covers these services. If you are 14 years of age or older, you are legally **allowed** to obtain **some** medical treatment without your parents' or caseworker's consent. However, it is a good idea to talk to your caseworker and/or foster parent about any questions or concerns you may have. For more information, go to **OHA Minor Rights: Access and Consent to Health Care Guide and ORS 109.610-109.685 (Rights of Minors):** & <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Youth/Documents/MinorConsent2012.pdf> & [www.oregon.gov/blsw/pdfs/chapter\\_109\\_rights\\_of\\_minors.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/blsw/pdfs/chapter_109_rights_of_minors.pdf)

If you are 18 or older and aging out of Oregon state or tribal foster care, you are eligible for the Former Foster Care Youth Medical (FFCYM) Program that ends at age 26. For more information, go to: [www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/ILP/Pages/Resources.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/fostercare/ILP/Pages/Resources.aspx) (Health Care menu option).

