

Futures Program Handbook (Foster Care Jobs Program)

This guide provides a standard set of policies and guidelines, the Handbook may not cover every situation or scenario a provider may encounter. If there are questions, please email: FSD.E&TIquiry@dss.mo.gov

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Program Background/Overview

The DSS Mission Statement is to empower Missourians to live safe, healthy and productive lives. The mission statement includes all Missourians of every age. The Department of Social Services (DSS), Children's Division and the Office of Workforce and Community Initiatives (OWCI) are collaborating to provide Older Foster Youth with life skills, employment and training services, through the Foster Care Jobs Program, which is known as Futures. Funding for the Futures program is provided through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant.

The Department of Social Services, Family Support Division receives a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF). TANF was created in the 1996 welfare reform law (P. L. 104-193). Expenditure of TANF funds must meet one or more of the four purposes of TANF.

- To provide assistance to needy families to help keep children in the home.
- To end dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.
- To prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
- To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The Futures program meets the third purpose to prevent and reduce out of wedlock pregnancies.

The Futures program builds upon the short-term assistance offered by the Children's Division Older Youth program. Futures provides life skills assistance, intensive career planning, coaching, and case management. The structure of the program will include resolving short and long-term barriers such as poor literacy skills, substance use disorder, food insecurities, lack of childcare, housing insecurity, financial management, supportive services, community coordination, employment and training services, and other appropriate supports by providing an array of services, tailored to the specific strengths and needs of each youth.

The purpose of the Futures program is to:

- Assist youth in learning and gaining the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to help them navigate to adulthood in which they can be mentally, physically and economically sound.

While current Chafee providers will continue to serve youth in currently contracted services. The Futures providers will provide life skills, coaching, case management, education, training and employment services geared toward youth aged sixteen (16) through twenty-three (23) who are in the Children's Division Foster Care system and are residents of Missouri.

- Provide coaching and mentoring support to youth to promote the learning of life skills and achieving economic security;
- Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services to youth in the program.

The Futures program will serve Missouri foster care youth ages 16 to 23. Youth are referred within 1 month of reaching the age of 16.

Futures providers must follow TANF allowable funding usage, allowable services and activities.

- [Welcome To ACF | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov/acf)
- [Office of Family Assistance \(OFA\) | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov/office-of-family-assistance)

Services are provided in the following counties by the applicable Community Partnership:

Andrew	Atchison	Bollinger	Buchanan	Butler
Caldwell	Cape Girardeau	Carroll	Carter	Cass
Clay	Clinton	Cooper	Daviess	DeKalb
Dunklin	Gentry	Harrison	Holt	Jackson
Jefferson	Johnson	Lafayette	Livingston	Mississippi
New Madrid	Nodaway	Pemiscot	Perry	Pettis
Platte	Ray	Reynolds	Ripley	Saline
Scott	St. Louis County	Ste. Genevieve	Stoddard	Wayne
Worth				

For counties not listed above, the Futures contractor must collaborate with MWA providers to serve youth in the MWA Older Youth program. For youth that reside outside of the Futures’ provider county, the contractor will submit the referral form to FSD.E&TInquiry@dss.mo.gov.

For information regarding which counties an MWA contractor serves and a provider location: [Contact Us](#)

Referrals

Futures referrals will be received via the Missouri File Transfer Portal (MO FTP), providers must review MO FTP for referrals on a regular basis, but at a minimum once monthly.

Providers must make all attempts to communicate with 100% of the youth referred for services during each month. Communication includes written correspondence, phone, in-person and/or social media.

Providers must attempt to enroll referrals into the Futures program until one of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The youth has enrolled and is participating in Futures;
- 2) The youth or the resource parent has verbally stated they do not wish to participate in Futures;
- 3) The youth is no longer on a contractor’s referral list;
- 4) The youth has been on a referral list for six months and has not enrolled nor has made contact with the contractor.

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For youth enrolled in the program, the provider must communicate with the youth at least twice monthly, or more if the youth need coaching and case management services.

Program Services

Providers assist youth in life skills, educational, training and employment activities. The goal of the Futures program is to help prepare youth for adulthood so they can provide for themselves and their families with economic security. Services are individualized to meet the needs of the youth, which can include creating workshops offering family assistance, counseling, mentoring, financial assets classes, housing assistance, resolving legal issues and overcoming barriers.

Providers must meet the unique needs of each youth, which may include, but not limited to language, sight and hearing impairment. DSS, its providers and sub-recipients are required by law when working with non-English speaking populations to utilize interpretive services to effectively communicate with limited-English proficiency (LEP) populations

Providers must engage with community partners to braid funds which include employment and training programs, employers, educational institutions and apprenticeships in accordance with federal program, rules legislations and policies.

Providers are required to have representation on Department calls, trainings and meetings.

The Provider must have the capacity to serve all referred youth as required and on an as needed basis.

- A coach must be available for each youth to provide individual career planning, set goals/milestones, determine barriers and a plan to overcome barriers and steps for reaching goals.
- The provider must attempt to contact 100% of youth referred for services during each quarter via written correspondence at least once monthly. For youth participating in the program, the provider shall contact the youth at least twice monthly, or more if the youth need additional support or services.
- The provider must have attempted contact with the youth within 10 calendar days of the referral to schedule a meeting.
- Providers will develop youth apprenticeships/internships by networking with regional employers.
- Providers will develop dual tracks for youth that include an educational and employment component. Example: earn high school degree and complete internships.

Services that may be rendered by the provider or a partner agency include, but are not limited to:

- Evaluation of the youth that may include the assessment of their support, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and accountability
- Life skills including financial management, housing education, leadership and self-management, and social competence
- Education and training including short-term training, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, job search training, and job skills training

- Employment activities including job search, subsidized employment, and unsubsidized employment

Allowable Activities

Futures providers have allowable activities in which funding can be used for. Futures providers will place youth in life skills, educational, training or employment activities.

Life Skills

Providers may place youth in the following life skills activities.

Allowable Life Skills Activities	
Financial Management	Housing Education
Governance/Leadership/Community	Self-Management/Social Competence

Educational

Providers may place youth in educational activities. The youth must maintain a “C” average to continue to have Futures funds pay the education expense.

Allowable Education Activities	
Education related to employment	Vocational Education & Training

Training

Providers may place youth in the following training activities.

Allowable Training Activities	
Community Service	Entrepreneurial Training
Job Readiness	Job Search Training
Job Skills Training	On the Job Training
Work Based Learning	

Employment

Providers may place youth in the following employment activities.

Allowable Employment Activities	
Job Search	Subsidized Employment
Unsubsidized employment	Work Experience

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Incentives

Youth are eligible for incentives for milestones achieved. Providers must develop an incentive structure and submit a detailed list of incentives and the amounts they intend to pay youth. The list must include the milestone, amount and maximums allowed for each youth. The provider may not provide any incentives until OWCI approves the Incentive Structure plan. The Incentive Structure form shall be submitted within 10 business days of notification of award.

Incentive Reporting

Providers are to submit quarterly incentive reports on those youth that incentives have been provided to. The report must include the name, DCN, reason for the incentive and the incentive amount. Incentive reports are included on the quarterly reports and the information is to be submitted by the due date to FSD.E&TIquiry@dss.mo.gov

Supportive Services

Transportation Reimbursement Expense (TRE)

TRE payments are issued to youth to assist with travel to allowable activities. Providers will provide youth with transportation supportive services, when the youth has incurred a transportation cost and need is demonstrated when participating with the program. Providers shall not include any additional requirements to receive transportation assistance.

- The youth must be active in an allowable activity or the expectation to participate in the activity immediately.
- Transportation services assistance cannot exceed \$25.00 per week.
- Providers may only reimburse youth for transportation in which they are responsible.

Work-Related Expense (WRE)

Providers will provide youth with support with work-related expenses to assist the youth in obtaining, retaining employment or participating in an allowable activity.

Case Notes

Case notes and system entries are imperative, and it is required providers make certain staff are entering case notes accurately and timely.

Case notes are to be maintained in the case record after each interaction with the youth or information pertaining to the youth. An interaction may include but is not limited to face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, texts, social media, emails and phone calls.

Case managers should enter comments when interaction with the youth occurs, but no later than 24 hours after the interaction occurred.

Case notes must always include:

- The reason for the interaction;
- Documents completed and the explanation;
- Participant concerns regarding participating in the program;
- Barriers to participation, employment or training ;
- Successes/Accomplishments that occurred since the last communication with the youth;
- Services provided, and
- Status updates

Objectives/Outcomes

- Outcome # 1: Enroll at least fifteen percent (15%) of youth referred to the program.
- Outcome # 2: Twenty-five percent (25%) of youth enrolled in program meet high school graduation requirements.
- Outcome #3: Twenty-five percent (25%) of youth enrolled in the program gained employment.
- Outcome # 4: Fifteen percent (15%) of youth that are not in High School transitioned to post-secondary education, gained employment or entered the military.

Reporting

Providers are required to report the outcomes and other information regarding the youth referred and participating in the Futures program on a quarterly basis, using the quarterly report program provided by OWCI. Reports are due on the following schedule:

Quarterly Reporting Timeline (based upon state fiscal year)		
Quarter	Time Period	Due to DSS
1 st Quarter	July 1 – September 30	October 31 st
2 nd Quarter	October 1 – December 31	January 31 st
3 rd Quarter	January 1 – March 31	April 30 th
4 th Quarter	April 1 – June 30	July 15 th

- Outcome #1: Enroll at least fifteen percent (15%) of youth referred to the program.
 - 1B: The number of youth referred within the quarter.
This is the number of youth referred during the quarter via the MO FTP, by OWCI via email, Children’s Division or self-referral.
Ex: If a youth is not active in the program and continues to show on the referral list, the youth would continue to count as a referral.
 - 1C: The number of youth enrolled in Futures within that quarter.
This number each quarter will include only the youth that enrolled in the Futures program within the quarter
Ex: John enrolled in Futures in the First quarter; it is the 3rd quarter. Is John reported on the 3rd quarter report in this category? No, John would have been reported on the 1st quarter report.
- 1D: The number of youth participating in the program.

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John in the above example enrolled in the first quarter, it is the 3rd quarter and John continues to participate. John will be reported on the 3rd report as well, as he continues to participate in the program.

- Outcome #2: Twenty five percent (25%) of youth enrolled in the program gained employment.
The number of youth enrolled in the program who met high school graduation requirements.
Youth included in the count for this outcome are in 9th grade or above and currently meet high school requirements. (Youth are counted once per state fiscal year)
- Outcome #3: Twenty-five (25%) of youth enrolled in the program gained employment.
The number of youth enrolled in the program and gained employment within the quarter.
- Outcome #4: fifteen percent (15%) of youth that are not in High School transitioned to post-secondary education, gained employment or entered the military.
The number of youth during the entire fiscal year who are 18 years or older and have graduated or not in high school but are attending post-secondary education, short-term training, gained employment or entered the military. (Youth are counted once per fiscal year, unless there is a change in status, for example, Sally was in post-secondary education but now has entered the military.)

Information Security/Confidentiality

Providers must maintain an accurate electronic or physical record of the youth's case which includes but is not limited to all coaching/case management information, documentation, case notes and services provided.

Providers are to maintain a physical case record for the youth and DSS Confidentiality and Security policy must be followed when accessing Futures program case files.

DSS approved equipment may only be used to access the state network and applicable systems. Workstations, printers, storage devices, case records must be kept in a secure location and protected from unauthorized access. Case records must be stored in a locked and secure area.

All equipment that is connected to the state network must be in a secure area and must be utilized by only provider's personnel given security access. The provider must complete all security forms provided by FSD to request access to the agency's network and the systems. FSD has the right to revoke access to the network and systems at any time if it is determined the provider is not in compliance with the contract, access will be restored when the state is satisfied that the provider is in full compliance again.

It is prohibited to access or make inquiries or updates to information systems and/or records that are not required in the performance of your duties. Only individuals specifically authorized to access mainframe programs and systems (e.g., child abuse records) must limit use to work-related activities

and inquiries (e.g., it is prohibited for workforce members to access information regarding themselves, friends, relatives or a case that is not in their caseload).

You are responsible for all use associated with your assigned unique user ID and password and care should be taken to protect the confidentiality of such. User IDs and passwords should not be shared with anyone under any circumstances. Use of unauthorized User IDs or passwords to gain access to information systems is prohibited.

Providers and their staff **DO NOT** have any personal privacy rights regarding your use of information systems. Your **USE** of information systems indicates that you understand and **CONSENT** to ITSD-DSS' right to inspect and audit all such use. All information systems and any matter created, received, accessed, stored or transmitted via information systems are the property of ITSD-DSS.

Providers are required to adhere to DSS confidentiality requirements related to their reports, electronic/paper files, documents, any other materials, and all of the file information is the property of DSS and therefore accessible for complete DSS or its designee oversight. MWA files shall be maintained separately from other program files or documents.

If at any time information related to abuse or neglect is suspected, they are bound to the DSS mandated reporting rules and must make the appropriate hotline report to DSS Children's Division.

Invoicing & Payment

The provider will invoice for the reimbursement of actual allowable costs incurred for providing services for the Futures Program.

- DSS may recover from the provider all funds for which adequate verification and full documentation of expenditures is not maintained.
- Invoices will be submitted no less than once every month. The provider will e-mail invoices, expenditure reports, and supporting documentation to: W&CI.Invoices@dss.mo.gov The provider must submit invoices on a DSS provided invoice.
- All invoices submitted will include backup documentation that clearly indicates the expense, date of the expense and how it relates to the Futures Program.
- Each invoice for the month of May will need to be submitted by a date as directed by DSS.

Monitoring

The provider is subject to monitoring and inspection by DSS or a DSS designee in order to assure compliance with the requirements of the contract. The provider will participate in and cooperate with any record reviews, all program evaluations, and improvement plans in accordance with federal reviews, or any other performance initiative required of, or by, the DSS.

If DSS has concerns with the provider's performance in the contract, the DSS may, at its sole discretion, issue a monitoring report or other concerns to the provider. This provision does not change the state's right to Cancellation of the Contract.

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Appendix A:
Futures Allowable Activities

<u>Allowable Activities</u>	<u>Definitions for allowable expenditures</u>
Assessments	Assessment to identify basic skills, emotional/social capabilities, strengths and needs to match youth with appropriate services; may address knowledge of basic living skills, job readiness, money management abilities, decision making skills, goal setting, task completion & transitional living needs.
Academic support	Assistance to complete high school or Hi-Set; including academic counseling, Hi-Set prep, help applying or studying for Hi Set, tutoring, homework help, literacy/study skills training. DOES NOT include general attendance in HS.
Post-secondary educational support	Services to help youth enter or complete college, including SAT/ ACT prep, info about financial aid/ scholarships, help with school or loan applications, college tutoring, college tours.
Career Preparation	Focus on developing youth's ability to find, apply for & retain employment including vocational/career assessment, career exploration and planning, guidance setting & assessing vocation and career interests/skills, help matching interests & abilities w/ vocational goals, job seeking, placement support, identifying employers, resumes, job applications, interview skills, job shadowing , job referrals, career resource libraries, understanding employee benefits, securing work permits, retention support, how to work with employers/employees, workplace values such as timeliness/appearance, understanding authority & customer relationships.
Employment programs or vocational training	Training to build a youth's skills for a specific trade, vocation or career through classes or on-site training. Including apprenticeship, internship, and summer employment program. DOES NOT include summer or after-school jobs secured by the youth alone. Vocational training includes participation in vocational or trade programs in school or through non-profit, commercial or private sectors; training for cosmetology, auto mechanics, building trades, nursing, computer science, and other current or emerging employment sectors.
Budget and financial management	Training includes living within a budget, opening and using bank accounts, balancing a checkbook, consumer awareness and smart shopping skills; accessing information about credit, loans and taxes, filling out tax forms.
Housing education/ home management training	Assistance or training in locating/maintaining housing, completing rental applications, acquiring a lease, security deposits and utilities, keeping a healthy/safe home, tenant's rights/responsibilities, handling landlord complaints. Home management includes instruction in food preparation, laundry, housekeeping, living cooperatively, meal planning, grocery shopping, basic maintenance and repairs. Start-up kits.

Health education and risk prevention	Hygiene, nutrition, fitness/exercise, first-aid, sex education, abstinence education, education about sexual development and sexuality, family planning, sexually transmitted disease education, substance abuse prevention/intervention, education about effects & consequences of substance use, substance avoidance/ intervention, DOES NOT include youth's actual receipt of direct medical care or substance abuse treatment. States CANNOT use Federal TANF funds for medical services, except pre-pregnancy planning services.
Family support and healthy marriage education	Education and info about safe and stable families, healthy marriages, spousal communication, parenting, responsible fatherhood, childcare skills, teen parenting, and domestic/family violence prevention.
Mentoring	Youth has been matched with a screened and trained adult for a 1-on-1 relationship that involves them meeting on a regular basis. Can be short term but may also support the development of a long-term relationship; while youth often are connected to adult role models through school, work or family. This includes only a mentor relationship that has been facilitated, paid for or provided by the State agency.
Education Financial Assistance	Expenses for: Educational supplies, textbooks, uniforms, computers, tuition assistance, scholarships, tutoring, HI Set and other educational tests, educational prep, support services. Possible financial support for Senior pictures, senior dues, prom, extracurricular activities if the provider is able to provide evidence the payment of these fees are in direct correlation to life skills, educational, training or employment activities.
Youth Leadership	Youth Board activities, speaking engagements, leadership training.

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Appendix B: Crosswalk: Chafee Provider / Futures Provider

Chafee Provider Services	Youth Future Career Program Services
Independent Living needs assessments	Yes - Basic Skills & career assessments
Academic Support	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Post -secondary educational support	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Career Preparation	Yes
Employment Programs/vocational training	Yes
Budget and Financial Management	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Housing education/Home management training	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Health education & risk prevention	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Family support and healthy marriage education	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Mentoring	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Education and Financial Assistance	Yes - Support as relates to employment
Youth Leadership	Yes – but should be used to mainly support CD Staff & Chafee Provider
Room & Board Financial Assistance (Aftercare only)	Yes - Support as relates to employment

Appendix C: Forms

Action Plan	 Futures Youth Action Plan template.docx
Case Note documentation	 Futures Program documentation.notes
Incentive Structure	 Futures Incentive Structure template.docx
Quarterly Reports	 Futures Program Quarterly Report template.docx
Referral/Transfer Form	 Futures Referral-Transfer form.docx

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Appendix D: Resources (emails, quick links, etc.)

Resource/Acronym	Definition
AC	Alternative Care
ACF	Administration for Children and Families
Career Pathway	A series of structured and connected education programs and support services that enable individuals to advance to better jobs and higher levels of education and training
CD	Children's Division
CFCP	Chafee foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood
Departmental Client Number (DCN)	Number used to identify an individual that has applied or is receiving benefits from the Family Support Division.
DOL	Department of Labor
DSS	Department of Social Services
E & T	Employment & Training
ETV	Education and Training Voucher
FACES	Family and Children Electronic System - Children's Division statewide automated information system.
FST	Family Support Team
IAP	Individualized Action Plan
Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC)	Research division for the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD) which provides analyses and assistance on employment and other trends at: https://meric.mo.gov/
Missouri Resource Navigator	Lists essential services and opportunities at: https://mo.servicesnavigator.org
Missouri Work Assistance (MWA)	The employment and training program that offers TANF participants the opportunity to gain skills, training and work experience.
OFA	Office of Family Assistance
SkillUP	The employment and training program that offers SNAP (Food Stamp) participants the opportunity to gain skills, training and work experience.
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) also known as the Food Stamp program in Missouri.
SYAB	State Youth Advisory Board – a board that represents all children and youth who are currently in, or were previously in s out of home placements.
Temporary Assistance (TA)	Name of Missouri's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
TLP	Transition Living Program
Office of Workforce and Community Initiatives (OWCI)	Oversees DSS E & T and Community programs.

Futures Program	FSD.E&TInquiry@dss.mo.gov
Futures Success Stories	Success Stories Missouri Department of Social Services
OWCI Invoicing Unit	W&CI.Invoices@dss.mo.gov
OWCI Monitoring Unit	FSD.E&TMonitoring@dss.mo.gov
OWCI Provider Portal	Employment and Training Provider Portal Missouri Department of Social Services

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