

# HOUSE BILL No. 4481

March 20, 2007, Introduced by Reps. Clack, Shaffer, Hammel, Hammon, Meadows, Johnson, Jackson, Constan, Vagnozzi, Cushingberry, Accavitti, Gonzales, Meisner, Kathleen Law, Hopgood, Spade, Polidori, Espinoza, Scott, Dean, Bennett, Lemmons, Ebli, Byrnes, McDowell, Lahti, Valentine, Farrah, Condino, Melton, Virgil Smith, Brown, Angerer, Warren, Garfield, Robert Jones, Griffin, Sheen, Hoogendyk and Cheeks and referred to the Committee on Families and Children's Services.

A bill to establish the foster care independence program; to provide certain services for certain youth in foster care due to child abuse or child neglect; and to prescribe the duties of certain state departments.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

1           Sec. 1. (1) This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
2 "foster care independence act".

3           (2) As used in this act:

4           (a) "Adjudicated delinquent" means an individual found to have  
5 committed an offense that, if committed by an adult, would be a  
6 criminal offense.

7           (b) "Child abuse" and "child neglect" mean those terms as  
8 defined in section 2 of the child protection law, 1975 PA 238, MCL

1 722.622.

2 (c) "Department" means the department of human services.

3 (d) "Foster care" means 24-hour substitute care for children  
4 placed away from their parents or guardians for whom the state  
5 agency has placement and care responsibility. Foster care placement  
6 includes, but is not limited to, placement in foster family homes,  
7 child care institutions, and preadoptive placements.

8 (e) "Young adult" means an individual 14 years of age or older  
9 but less than 21 years of age.

10 Sec. 2. (1) The department shall establish the foster care  
11 independence program to offer education, training, employment, and  
12 financial support for young adults leaving foster care.

13 (2) The foster care independence program created under  
14 subsection (1) shall do all of the following:

15 (a) Identify young adults who are likely to remain in foster  
16 care until 18 years of age and help these children make the  
17 transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as  
18 assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration,  
19 vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily  
20 living skills, training in budgeting and financial management  
21 skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health  
22 activities, including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and  
23 pregnancy prevention.

24 (b) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care  
25 until 18 years of age receive education, training, and services  
26 necessary to obtain employment.

27 (c) Help young adults who are likely to remain in foster care

1 until 18 years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary training  
2 and education institutions.

3 (d) Provide personal and emotional support to children aging  
4 out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of  
5 interactions with dedicated adults.

6 (e) Provide financial, housing, counseling, employment,  
7 education, and other appropriate support and services to former  
8 foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement  
9 their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that  
10 program participants recognize and accept their personal  
11 responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition  
12 from adolescence to adulthood.

13 Sec. 3. (1) A young adult is eligible for services under this  
14 act if he or she is or has been in a foster care placement through  
15 the state based on child abuse or child neglect on or after his or  
16 her fourteenth birthday.

17 (2) A young adult is not eligible for services under this act  
18 if 1 or more of the following apply:

19 (a) The young adult is in an out-of-home placement solely as  
20 an adjudicated delinquent. If the young adult is currently an  
21 adjudicated delinquent but met the eligibility criteria before his  
22 or her adjudication, services may be provided under this act after  
23 the delinquency case is closed.

24 (b) The young adult was never in an out-of-home placement  
25 based on child abuse or child neglect.

26 (c) The young adult is in a detention facility or other state-  
27 operated facility.

1 (3) Services under this act shall be provided to eligible  
2 young adults 14 years of age and older regardless of the permanency  
3 planning goal. Services under this act shall be available to all  
4 eligible young adults after case closure through 20 years of age.  
5 Services under this act shall be provided on an "as-needed" basis.

6 Sec. 4. (1) The department shall provide at least all of the  
7 following goods and services to eligible young adults in the foster  
8 care independence program:

9 (a) Services that are not available from other funding sources  
10 or agencies for eligible young adults currently in the foster care  
11 system and for young adults released from foster care before  
12 reaching 21 years of age.

13 (b) Educational support.

14 (c) Classes or groups on interpersonal communication and  
15 building and maintaining relationships and classes or groups on  
16 independent living skills.

17 (d) Stipends to cover the cost of utility deposits, security  
18 deposits, and first month's rent to eligible young adults who are  
19 leaving foster care or have left foster care because they have  
20 reached 18 years of age but have not reached 21 years of age. The  
21 first month's rent and damage deposit may only be provided to young  
22 adults 18 to 21 years of age who are leaving foster care or who  
23 have left foster care because they attained 18 or 19 years of age  
24 and have not reached 21 years of age.

25 (2) The department shall make known a list of goods and  
26 services provided under the program established in this act.

27 Sec. 5. The department may provide goods and services allowed

- 1 under federal law and any other goods and services the department
- 2 considers appropriate.