

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

## CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

August 22, 2016

**What's Inside:**

New program to assist youth with post-secondary education and employment.

## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS,  
PROGRAM MANAGERS, SPECIALISTS, SUPERVISORS, AND  
CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

**FROM:** TIM DECKER, DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT:** Missouri Reach Credential Completion and Employment Financial  
Assistance Program

**DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this memo is to introduce the Missouri Reach Credential Completion and Employment Financial Assistance Program.

In the SFY16 legislative session, additional funding was provided to assist youth in obtaining postsecondary education beyond the high school level. A new program to support youth with successful transition, the Missouri Reach Credential Completion and Employment Financial Assistance Program (CCE), is now available in addition to the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) and Missouri Reach Tuition Waiver.

The CCE program will be administered by Foster Care to Success (FC2S), the ETV and Missouri Reach manager, as an extension of Missouri Reach. All three programs use the same application, which is found at: <http://www.fc2sprogram.org/missouri/>.

Nationwide 72 percent of foster youth do not earn a degree or certificate within 6 years of first enrolling in college. Foster Care to Success has monitored enrollment and completion of degree obtainment for Missouri ETV recipients through the National Student Clearinghouse; in Missouri, 16-20% of youth who receive funding from the ETV Program or MO Reach Tuition Waiver will earn a degree.

With the CCE, Missouri is committing to helping all youth earn a credential by age 26 and this will drastically increase the number of completers who experienced foster care. Emerging research on brain development and the unique social-emotional challenges associated with exposure to trauma require new approaches to helping former foster youth transition into adulthood.

The new program will compliment but not duplicate existing education and training funding and assistance. The funding will fill the gap between the more traditional funding that is available for youth enrolling in higher education after high school and the reality that many young people are not on that linear path and do not earn a credential within the current framework of thinking that college is the only path for youth after high school to obtain employment.

The CCE is a program to help youth successfully pursue an education or training pathway that leads to a recognized credential and entry into the workforce. In addition to ETV, there are now two components to MO Reach which are distinct but complementary:

- 1) The Reach Tuition Waiver, which is a full tuition waiver program available since 2011-12, and
- 2) Credential Completion and Employment (CCE), launching in fall 2016, which is a short-term, targeted assistance program to help youth earn a recognized certificate and/or specialized training that leads to employment.

Missouri Reach CCE:

- Eligible youth are currently in care, exited care after age 17.5, or obtained legal guardianship or adoption after age 14.
- Youth ages 19 – 25 are eligible (the credential must be earned by 26<sup>th</sup> birthday).
- Program participation is limited to 12 months – including pre- and post-training time - of comprehensive support and funding that leads to credential completion.
- The credential must be earned in less than 9 months.
- The maximum award amount is \$8,000 over a 12-month period.
- CCE participants **are not simultaneously** receiving:
  - postsecondary funding from ETV or Missouri Reach Tuition Waiver, or
  - other (specific) public education and training funding (i.e. workforce stipend). Exceptions may be approved by the Older Youth Program Development Specialist or Older Youth Transition Specialist in cases of documented need or extenuating circumstances.
- Participants may be in a no-cost Workforce Program but need living assistance – 3<sup>rd</sup> party rent payments, gas cards, etc. (less than 25% of funding will be given to program participants.)
- If a youth needs 15 credits or less to earn a Bachelors or Associates degree and has expended all federal and state higher education funding (such as PELL & ETV) MO CCE funds may be used to pay tuition, fees and buy books.
- Participants must complete a skills and abilities aptitude test, phone-meet weekly with their FC2S navigator and build an online success profile (record personal and training goals and accomplishments).
- All applicants will be screened to determine if they are in default of federal student loans and coached to enter into a loan repayment plan. This is a program requirement for participants.

Information on the CCE should be shared with all eligible youth and stakeholders working with youth.

Information regarding the CCE should be provided to youth as part of the exit packet.

<b>NECESSARY ACTION</b>  1. Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division staff. 2. Review revised Child Welfare Manual chapters as indicated below. 3. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:	
<b>PDS CONTACT</b> Sally A. Gaines (573)522-6279 <a href="mailto:Sally.A.Gaines@dss.mo.gov">Sally.A.Gaines@dss.mo.gov</a>	<b>PROGRAM MANAGER</b> Amy L. Martin (573)751-3171 <a href="mailto:Amy.L.Martin@dss.mo.gov">Amy.L.Martin@dss.mo.gov</a>
<b>CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS</b> Section 4, Chapter 21 <a href="#">Index</a> Section 4, Chapter 21.3.7.2 <a href="#">Missouri Reach Tuition Waiver</a> (Renamed) Section 4, Chapter 21.3.7.3 <a href="#">Missouri Reach Credential Completion and Employment</a> (New) Section 4, Chapter 21.4.4 <a href="#">Education Financial Assistance and Support</a> (Renamed) Section 4, Chapter 21.7 <a href="#">Exit Plan</a>	
<b>FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS</b> <a href="#">Older Youth Exit Packet and Personal Documentation Checklist</a> <a href="#">Older Youth Service Tasks</a> <a href="#">Older Youth by Revised Exit Status</a>	
<b>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES</b> Information: <a href="http://dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/missouri-reach.htm">http://dss.mo.gov/cd/chafee/missouri-reach.htm</a> Application: <a href="http://www.fc2sprograms.org/missouri/">http://www.fc2sprograms.org/missouri/</a> Exit Packet: <a href="http://dssweb/cs/programs/older_youth/exit.htm">http://dssweb/cs/programs/older_youth/exit.htm</a> <a href="#">Exit Planning for Older Youth PowerPoint</a>	
<b>RELATED STATUTE</b> N/A	
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE RULE</b> N/A	
<b>COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS</b> <a href="#">PA-FC9</a>	

**CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR)**

[On-site Review Tool, Item 16, Educational Needs of the Child](#)

**PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

Parental Resilience: N/A

Social Connections: N/A

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: N/A

Concrete Support in Times of Need:

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/philbase.pdf>

Social and Emotional Competence of Children: N/A

**FACES REQUIREMENTS**

N/A