

# ITS ACADEMIC:

A Closer Look At The Maryland Tuition  
Waiver and Education and Training  
Voucher (ETV) Program

# Key Outcomes for Social Service Administration (SSA)

Youth acquire and demonstrate the necessary life skills to become self-sufficient.

- Increased number of youth who exit the child welfare system and become productive adults.

Youth establish and maintain permanent connections to a network of supportive adults and peers.

- Increased number of youth exiting the child welfare system with a network of community, peer, and adult support

Youth are empowered to advocate for themselves and actively participate in service planning and delivery.

- Increased number of youth participating in youth advisory boards across the state.
- Increased youth participation in the development, review, and enhancement of child welfare practice and policy.

# VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL DISPARITIES

Youth in care are some of the country's most educationally disadvantaged students.

Children with histories of out-of-home placement suffer from academic vulnerability related to:

- Placement in special education classes
- Lack of continuity in school progress
- High levels of discipline problems
- Grade retention

Unsteady workforce participation and economic hardship is evident amongst former foster youth.

They report lower earnings and greater welfare usage than their peers.

# Education Stability: It's the Law

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) , amending the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA). For the first time, ESSA embeds in federal law key provisions that promote school stability and success for youth in care and requires **collaboration between education and child welfare partners**. Under the new law, state educational agencies are also required to report annually on student achievement and graduation rate for students in foster care.

# FUNDING A HIGHER EDUCATION



**FAFSA**

Free Application For  
Student Aid

**TUITION  
WAIVER**

**ETV**

# FASFA- OPENS THE DOOR

Completing a FAFSA application each year is the first step on the path to paying for college. Complete the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)

Applicants will be required to:

- Create a FAFSA ID.
- Complete the application between October 1-March 1.
- Update your application EVERY year.
- Youth in care are eligible to file as “Independent” students – they do not have to claim parental or caretaker income.

# FAFSA BENEFITS

There are three types of federal student aid

- Grants – Financial aid that does not have to be repaid such as Pell Grant.
- Work Study - Students work to earn money for their education.
- Loans – Student borrows money that must be repaid.

Completing the FAFSA provides access to state financial aid resources and scholarships.

# Maryland Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

The **Maryland Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program** is a federally-funded, state-administered program designed to assist current and former foster youth with up to \$5,000 a year for qualified school-related expenses (i.e., room and board, books, school supplies, living expenses, childcare, groceries, health insurance, et cetera). Funding is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible students. Applicants must apply for the ETV program **every year** which includes documentation each semester confirming enrollment, the cost of attendance (COA) and unmet need to remain eligible for the program. Participation is renewable for youth.



# Maryland Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

## Eligibility Requirements:

Current and former foster care youth are eligible for the ETV program if they are:

- A youth that was in foster care on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and aged out at that time;
- A youth adopted from foster care on or after the age 16;
- A youth who, on or after age 16, entered into guardianship placement from foster care; or
- A former foster youth who left care at the age of 18, but is not yet 21.

# Maryland Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

## Additional Requirements:

Additionally, current and former foster care youth must be:

- A U.S. citizen or qualified non-citizen;
- Age 18, 19, or 20 when initially applying for the ETV program;
- A high school graduate or a GED recipient; and
- Accepted/enrolled at a college, university or vocational school that is accredited.

# Maryland Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

Participation in the ETV program is renewable until a youth's 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday, as long as they are continuously enrolled in post-secondary education and making satisfactory progress toward completion of the academic program (i.e. maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA)

Applicants can complete the online application for the ETV program at <http://www.fc2sprogram.org/>.

# Maryland Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients

The **Maryland Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients** is available to current and former foster youth who are enrolled in an academic or vocational program for an associate, bachelor's degree or vocational certificate at a Maryland public college or university, and vocational schools (Private colleges are **EXCLUDED**). The purpose of the tuition waiver is to provide financial assistance to facilitate the continued growth and education of foster care youth.

# Maryland Tuition Waiver for Foster Care Recipients

## Eligibility Requirements:

To be considered eligible for the Maryland Tuition Waiver, a youth must have:

1. Been placed in out-of-home placement by the Maryland Department of Human Services; and
2. A. Resided in an out-of-home placement on the individual's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or at the time of graduation from high school or upon the successful completion of the GED examination.

## Eligibility Requirements (continued):

- B. Resided in an out-of-home placement on the individual's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday and was placed into guardianship or c adopted out of an out-of-home placement after the individual's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday; or
- C. Been the younger sibling of a child who meets the qualifications stated in **2B** and was placed into guardianship or adopted concurrently out of an out-of-home placement by the same guardianship or adoptive family; or

## Eligibility Requirements (continued):

- D. Resided in an out-of home placement in the state for at least one (1) year on or after the individual's 13<sup>th</sup> birthday and returned to live with the individual's parents after the out-of-home placement ended.

The Maryland Department of Human Services Social Services Administration (DHS/SSA) confirms eligibility via a list that is provided to financial aid offices at Maryland public colleges and universities.

The youth must complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. This application is available at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov).

# Benchmarks for SSA

We start at age 14 to focus on benchmarks

- Education
- Employment
- Health/Mental Health
- Housing
- Financial Literacy/Resources
- Family & Friends Support



# Questions

