

Leaving and Aftercare

Information for caseworkers



Transition to Independent Living Allowance (TILA)

TILA is a payment of up to \$1,500 designed to help young people with costs associated with leaving OOHC to make a successful transition to independence. The use and timing of TILA is to be agreed by the young person and the caseworker, and align with the goals in the young person's Leaving Care Plan.

TILA up to \$1,500 (one-off)

Examples of TILA use: white goods, kitchen appliances, furniture, bedding and linen, food and clothing, one-off transport expenses such as driving lessons, registration, car repairs, educational expenses, employment expenses, bus and train passes, utility connection fees.

Did you know? In 2017, there were over 400 young people aged 16-17 in FACS managed placements, yet only 112 applications for TILA were received for 15-24 year olds in care or after care.

Question: Do you know any care leavers who could benefit from receiving TILA?



Smart and Skilled fee-free scholarships

Young people in care can access fee free scholarships to help them with training and employment. The NSW Government's Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships mean students can access training to get the skills they need to get the job they want and course fees will be covered (e.g. TAFE). Caseworkers can help young people apply for scholarships by ensuring they include such opportunities in their leaving care plan.

Smart and Skilled Fee-Free Scholarships are available for:

- young people who are eligible for a concession fee
- young people who are or have been in out-of-home care
- people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic and family violence and their dependants.



Learn to Drive & Driver Safety Course

Assistance to obtain a driver licence (including professional lessons) can be included in the leaving care plan. Also consider supporting the carer or finding another person (mentor, coach etc) in the young person's life who may be able to offer lessons and use of a car to help them learn to drive.

Safer Drivers course (free): 5 hour course young people can undertake and once completed, gives them an additional 20 hours in their log book. To be eligible a young person must:

- Hold a valid NSW Learner Driver's Licence
- Be aged under 25 years
- Have completed a minimum of 50 log book driving hours.

Free access for care leavers who meet the eligibility (save \$140)

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Work & Development Order (WDO)

Young people with fines can clear their debt by undertaking unpaid work, courses or treatment with approved organisations and health practitioners. Eligibility includes young people in care and care leavers aged 18-24. Ask the young person if they have any fines and help them take part in the program if needed. We want to give them an opportunity to transition to independence without overwhelming fines and debts.

Did you know? Time spent engaging with the young person during case management meetings can help cut down and reduce their fines (by \$50 per hour).



Housing

If a young person cannot continue living with their carer or other significant person in their life after they turn 18, then help them to find suitable accommodation. Support them to apply for services such as private rental subsidies, tenancy support and other accommodation options.

Refer to the
Housing
website

Preparing young people with an understanding of paying rent, maintaining and sustaining a tenancy, undergoing property inspections and other obligations can help achieve stable housing. For more information about Housing Pathways products such as *Rent Choice Youth*, *Rent It Keep It*, *Share It Kit*, tenancy assistance and rent assistance, refer to the Housing website. In times of crisis or prevention of homelessness, consider Link2home and specialist homelessness services.



Aftercare

Under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, the Minister has an obligation to provide or arrange assistance for care leavers up to the age of 25. Expiration of the care order at 18 is not an end point for the transition to independence.

Aftercare support should come from the agency that managed the OOHC placement as they have an established relationship with the young person and know their history. Follow up after age 18 – this can help spot any problems early and reduce risk of crisis.

When planning, consider key elements such as *culture and connection, health and wellbeing, education, training and employment, living skills, legal matters, financial support and entitlements (e.g. TILA), and accommodation*. Review and update plans as things change and make sure it is clear who is doing what to help and support implementation of the plan.

If the young person cannot go back to their OOHC provider after they leave care because they have relocated or they prefer not to have further contact with the provider, they can seek support from one of the nine Specialist Aftercare Services for those aged 18-24. Alternatively, they can contact the Care Leavers Line 1800 994 686.

For more information on these topics, search 'Key elements of a leaving care plan' on the FACS website