

Housing Advocacy

Housing advocacy services assist clients in obtaining and/or maintaining stable housing.

Services include:

- ◆ Assistance in securing affordable housing
- ◆ Consumer education
- ◆ Budget counseling
- ◆ Linkages to community-based resources (i.e. assistance with utilities, clothing and food)
- ◆ Follow-up services for a minimum of three months after the client secures appropriate housing

Please apply at least six months before a youth's 21st birthday to allow sufficient time to locate housing and for follow-up services.

Housing Advocacy Eligibility

Youth applying for housing advocacy services must:

- ◆ Be at least 17½ and less than 21 years of age
- ◆ Be a DCFS ward within six months of emancipation or be a former ward who was emancipated (Note: Wards who entered adoption or subsidized guardianship after their 14th birthday are also eligible.)

- ◆ Be homeless or in significant danger of becoming homeless if assistance is not provided
- ◆ Have an income that is sufficient to meet rent and utility costs or be in a program that will help them obtain an income before housing is obtained (e.g., a job placement program)

Cash Assistance

Cash Assistance is to assist newly emancipated wards or former wards (before their 21st birthdays) when a potential crisis exists.

Cash assistance may be authorized for the following reasons:

- ◆ Housing security deposit
- ◆ Rent when the client cannot make the payment
- ◆ Partial housing subsidy for a period of one year following emancipation (housing costs must exceed 30 percent of income and assistance cannot continue past the client's 21st birthday)
- ◆ Beds for the client and the client's children
- ◆ Current utility bills or deposits
- ◆ Appliances
- ◆ Other items required by the client to avoid or manage a crisis

Cash Assistance Eligibility

Youth applying for Cash Assistance must:

- ◆ Be at least 18 and less than 21 years of age
- ◆ Be a DCFS ward ready for emancipation (Applications for assistance may be made before emancipation, but cash assistance cannot be provided until after emancipation) or be a former DCFS ward who was emancipated
- ◆ Have an income that is sufficient to meet rent and utility costs after cash assistance is provided
- ◆ Complete a budget statement (CFS 370-5C) that demonstrates that with any subsidy and all other income they will be able to cover all remaining living expenses (e.g. housing, utilities, clothing, food). **Note:** If the budget criterion is not met and the client has shown commitment to obtaining an income (e.g., is in a job placement program), a one-time exception may be made.
- ◆ Be homeless or in a situation that will result in homelessness if cash assistance is not provided

Referral Process

Former wards should contact the Youth Housing Assistance Coordinator or a Housing Advocate directly.

Caseworkers of current wards should submit a completed form CFS 370-5 Request for Housing Advocacy and/or Cash Assistance to:

Ted Ernst
Youth Housing Assistance
Coordinator
Phone (312) 814 5571
Fax (312) 814-7134
Email: TErnst@idcfs.state.il.us

Please call or write for more information.



Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

160 North LaSalle, 6th floor
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone (312) 814-5571
Fax (312) 814-1878

Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois
DCFS #158 - August 2002 - 2,000 Copies
CFS 1050-35 - Rev. 8/02

Youth Housing Assistance Program



*Providing housing
advocacy services and
cash assistance to
emancipated wards*

