



FOSTER YOUTH DEVELOPMENT DISABILITY SERVICES ELIGIBILITY REPORT



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Executive Summary

This report is prepared in compliance with 2SHB 1061, which requires the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to submit an annual report to the Legislature that provides the number of children and youth who:

- Are enrolled clients of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) ages 16 through 21 years old
- Are functionally eligible for Medicaid waiver services
- Are also defined as dependent children under chapter 13.34 RCW
- May exit dependency proceedings under chapter 13.34 RCW after reaching the maximum age for dependent children

The stated intent of 2SHB 1061 is to: (1) help reduce the number of former foster youth with developmental disabilities discharged into homelessness or inappropriately placed in hospitals; and (2) maximize the use of the most cost-effective and appropriate services for former foster youth with developmental disabilities.

Introduction

DCYF's stated mission and vision are to "protect children and strengthen families so they flourish" and "ensure that Washington State's children and youth grow up safe and healthy — thriving physically, emotionally, and academically, nurtured by family, and community."

DDA's stated mission is to "transform lives by providing support and fostering partnerships that empower people to live the lives they want."

Blending these two missions with a person-centered, family-focused approach helps us meet the needs of dependent children and youth with disabilities. The goal of this cross-agency collaboration is to identify developmental needs of dependent youth, and begin planning as early as possible for their transition to young adulthood.

Shared Planning Meeting Requirement

2SHB1061 requires DCYF to convene a shared planning meeting (SPM) for dependent youth between the ages of 16 and 16.5 who are DDA eligible, and when the DCYF caseworker believes the youth "may be eligible for services administered by the developmental disabilities administration." The goal of the SPM is to begin planning for services the youth may need or

want in preparation for their transition to adulthood. Representatives from DDA and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) are invited to this SPM.

The SPM objectives may include but are not limited to:

- Assessing for functional eligibility for developmental disability waiver services
- Understanding what services, the youth wants or needs when they exit dependency
- Planning for residential services provided by DDA
- Planning for housing options from entities other than DDA
- Developing an action plan for how the youth will receive the services they want or need when they exit dependency
- Initiating a working connection between the DCYF Social Service Specialist and the DDA Case Manager

Additionally, DCYF is required to direct youth who have participated in this SPM to apply for DDA services, and assist in the application process.

Dependent children and youth are required to have SPMs every six months while they are under DCYF's placement and care authority, so these requirements were added to the SPM that occurs when a youth is between the ages of 16 and 16.5. DCYF added the specific requirements of this section to our [Guide to Shared Planning Meetings](#) and [Policy 1710 Shared Planning Meeting](#).

Implementation

DCYF identified individuals from each of the six child welfare regions as designated points of contact for the Developmental Disabilities Services Planning Meetings. Though DCYF's FamLink system does not have a way of reliably tracking whether or not a child or youth is eligible for DDA services, our Office of Innovation, Alignment & Accountability (OIAA) has been successful in identifying youth who are indicated in our FamLink system as currently DDA eligible, *and* youth who may have a qualifying health or mental health condition, or Individualized Education Plan (IEP), in an attempt to better capture this data. This list is distributed to the designated points of contact, who then work with the youth's Social Service Specialists and Shared Planning Meeting Facilitators, to ensure that a Developmental Disabilities Services Planning Meeting is scheduled, held and documented. The points of contact from each DCYF Region will also assist in ensuring that partners from DDA and DVR are invited to attend.

DCYF is actively working with DCYF Information Technology (IT) staff to determine if there is a FamLink change that would capture DDA and DVR's participation in these meetings, and to assist in more accurately being able to track who attended these meetings when invited. In the interim, this information is additionally being captured in text on the Shared Planning Meeting form in FamLink.

DCYF has allocated 6 new positions as DDA/MH Liaisons, one for each region, and is currently in the process of hiring. These individuals will further support the work within the regions.

Data Summary of the Identified Population

Data reviewed during the time period of June 2022 to October 2022 reflects that there were 79 youth with open cases between the ages of 16 to 16.5 during the timeframe of July 1, 2021 to November 1, 2022 who were identified in FamLink as either being eligible for DDA services, having a health/ mental health condition, or having an IEP.

Cross Agency Collaboration

Representatives from DCYF, DDA, and DVR have met consistently to discuss implementation, and to identify point people from each agency to represent the work. This cross systems team created a supplemental handout (Developmental Disabilities Services Planning Meeting Guide) with DCYF, DDA and DVR points of contact, as well as detailed processes for meeting implementation.

In addition to the work required under 2SHB1061, DCYF and DDA are working together to create and update service level agreements (SLAs) to improve communication between agencies for both dependent and non-dependent children and youth. The process of outlining steps for inter-agency communications, escalation of concerns and needs, and multi-system collaboration is already supporting creative cross-agency solutions to meet the needs of eligible children and youth served by both systems.

Some of the ways DCYF and DDA are successfully collaborating and supporting families together include:

- DCYF offering in-home voluntary services to support families waiting for DDA out-of-home services
- DDA is expediting approval processes to meet the needs of families in crisis
- Cross-system meetings that include Medicaid partners to explore all options available to youth and families
- Development of pathways to provide access to agency leadership when approval is needed for creative solutions
- Discussions are in early stages of exploring the possibility of implementing DDA services under an existing waiver, or cultivating a new waiver, that would allow DCYF Dependent children and youth to increase access to DDA resources.

In addition, DCYF, DDA, and the Health Care Authority (HCA) continue to work collaboratively to

support youth experiencing a crisis who do not meet the admission criteria for an acute behavioral health inpatient hospital or free-standing psychiatric hospital.

The Residential Crisis Stabilization Program (RCSP) will:

- Provide crisis stabilization services in a clinically appropriate facility setting
- Provide a safe setting for evaluation and treatment of a youth's behavioral health needs and family concerns for the purpose of preventing DCYF involvement

Conclusion

Expanding DCYF's FamLink report to capture youth approaching age 16 has allowed for increased ability to more proactively plan for these youth, and ensure SPMs are being facilitated with both DDA and DVR invited *before* the youth turns 16.5. We are hopeful that these Dependent children and youth who are in out-of-home placement will be able to access all available supports to be successful and thrive in their homes and communities. Dependent youth with disabilities require additional supports as they transition to adulthood. Exploring all possible options for services and building multi-system supports around these youth as they move into adulthood will give them the best chance for success as young adults.

Appendices

[Shared Planning Meetings Policy 1710](#)

[Guide to Shared Planning Meetings DCYF CWP 0070 p](#)