



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

March 12, 2020

Dear Child Welfare Leaders,

In the last 24 hours the Children's Bureau has been made aware of the closing of colleges and universities to protect the health and well-being of students. Unfortunately, for many youth in foster care or formerly in foster care, on-campus housing is their only housing option. For many of these youth and young adults, there is no place to go once the school has closed their dormitory or on-campus housing, resulting in the real-time potential for homelessness for many of these youth.

The time to act is now. We urge all child welfare agencies to immediately contact all youth and young adults in colleges or in other settings who may need assistance finding and securing housing while their college or university is closed. Some schools and universities are offering the ability to remain in campus housing due to unique circumstances. We urge child welfare agencies to work with college and universities, urging them to continue to provide housing as appropriate to meet the special needs of youth in foster care/ formerly in foster care.

For those youth and young adults who are not able to stay at their colleges or universities, the child welfare agency should be prepared to offer assistance to young people in identifying housing. This could be through foster homes, assisting young people to contact relatives and other caregivers, or identifying other settings so that no young adult is without housing.

In all circumstances, we encourage child welfare agencies to be attentive to youth and young adults affected by these circumstances. Youth may require assistance not only with housing, but also accessing food, health care, and emotional support. We ask child welfare agencies to act with a sense of urgency to reach out to and support youth/ young adults at this moment.

As a reminder, up to 30 percent of a state's or tribe's annual allotment under the Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood may be used to provide room and board assistance to eligible youth ages 18 – 21 (or up to 23 if that option has been exercised in the Chafee plan). Please direct any questions on allowable use of Chafee funds to your Children's Bureau Regional Office.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of young people in or formerly in foster care.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jerry Milner
Associate Commissioner
Children's Bureau