



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION  
 MEMORANDUM

**TO:** MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL  
**FROM:** MICHAEL WALD, CHAIR- YOUTH COUNCIL  
**DATE:** AUGUST 5, 2009  
**SUBJECT:** ACTION REQUESTED: INCLUDING FORMER FOSTER YOUTH TO WIA ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

**ACTION REQUESTED**

The Youth Council recommends to the Workforce Investment San Francisco Board (WISF) to expand the criteria for WIA Youth Services by including “former foster youth” to the definition of the “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion of CFR § 664.200(c)(6) and WIA sec. 101(13).

**BACKGROUND**

*Current Eligibility Criteria*

Under current law, an eligible youth is defined, under WIA sec. 101(13), as an individual who:

- (a) is between the ages of 14 and 21 for WIA formula funding, or is between the ages of 14 and 24 for WIA ARRA Funding
- (b) is a low income individual, as defined in the WIA section 101(25); and
- (c) Is within one or more of the following categories:
  - (1) Deficient in basic literacy skills;
  - (2) School dropout;
  - (3) Homeless, runaway, or foster child;
  - (4) Pregnant or parenting;
  - (5) Offender; or
  - (6) Is an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment. (WIA sec. 101(13).)

Under 20 CFR Ch. V § 664.210, a local workforce board may establish the definition of “an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an additional program, or secure and hold employment.” The WISF currently defines such an individual as someone meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Enrolled in special education
- A student maintaining less than a “C” average

- A truant
- A person with Limited English Proficiency
- A person with disabilities including a learning disability
- A non-custodial parent
- A person with substance abuse or alcohol problems
- A member of a family receiving public assistance or MediCal benefits
- A resident of a Targeted Employment Area
- A resident of public housing or a family receiving a Section 8 Voucher
- An emancipated youth
- A youth who has never held a job for more than 13 weeks in the last 12 months

**If approved, this action would add “former foster youth” to this list.**

### ***Research***

According to research, former foster youth face severely low educational attainment, low labor market attachment, and low self sufficiency.

Only 54% of foster youth graduate from high school.<sup>1</sup> Nationally, fewer than 10% of foster youth that graduate from high school enroll in college. Less than 1% of foster youth that attend college earn a college degree.<sup>2</sup> According to Honoring Emancipated Youth, 33% of former foster youth have an average income of \$6,000 or less nationally.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> California Youth Connection, 2006 Policy Conference Report

<sup>2</sup> Honoring Emancipated youth “Barriers Facing Foster Care Youth” National and Local Statistics about Emancipating Foster Youth, citing “Assessing the effects of Foster Care” Early Results from the Casey National Alumni Study.” Seattle, WA: Casey Family Programs 2003. Available at [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)

<sup>3</sup> “HEY Statistics: Education”