

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

Freshman Year

- Ask at the front office who the foster care liaison at your district/school is. Every school is required to have one. Ask that person how they can support you.
- Schedule a meeting with your new high school counselor
 - Map out your 4-year high school plan (*Search “family matters education development plan” or go to Michigan.gov for more info*)
 - Consider taking a foreign language class now. Two years are required to earn a diploma and you may take it early on, so you can focus on electives later.
 - Ask for login and help to learn how to check your grades frequently.
- You and your approved Parent or Guardian and/or School or Court designated Surrogate should schedule to meet with your foster care liaison and school counselor right away.
 - Ask your counselor for a copy of your Education Development Plan & a copy of classes, credits and requirements, you are required to complete over four years of high school.
 - You can identify your own choice of support persons to attend meetings with you
 - If you do not have a working laptop of your own, inform your worker immediately to explore possibilities. (YIT)
 - If you do not have WiFi access at home, inform your worker immediately so she can locate the right resource for you in the community.
- Consider joining a few extracurricular activities that your new school has to offer including clubs and sports. (*DHHS should be able to assist with fees*)
- Consider enrolling in a work based learning program through the school district
- Start practicing time management and organizational skills that can continue to utilize after graduation
 - Use of a planner to keep track of events/assignment due dates
 - Organize notes and materials by class
 - Plan ahead: use of your planner can help you track out the coming days/weeks to ensure no task is left unfinished
 - Ask your counselor or other adults for tips to stay organized.
- Participate in volunteer and community service activities
- When you become 13 years old in foster care or stay in foster care anytime after, you will be considered an independent student, which means your parents'/ guardians'/ adoptive parents' information will not be needed when you apply for college financial aid. If your foster care case closes any time after age 13. Request proof of your Independent Student Status, DHS-945 from your worker, for your records to use for college or trade school.

If in foster care after the 14th birthday ask you foster care worker about participating in the Michigan Youth opportunities Initiative (MYOI) group in your county.
- If active in the foster care system on or after your 14th birthday ask your foster care case manager if you qualify for Michigan as Foster Youth In Transition (YIT) funds to help you transition into adulthood.
- Ask for help! Your school may have tutoring or other resources to help in all sorts of ways. You won't know if you don't ask.

If you have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) ...

- If you transfer to a new district the new school must provide you comparable services to those laid out in the IEP from the old school.

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

- Ask your case worker to coordinate a meeting among your Education Advocate (could be court appointed, or surrogate appointed by school), School Counselor/Social Worker and your IEP Coordinator. During the meeting:
 - Update your worker's and your Court or School Appointed Advocate's Emergency Contact at your school
 - Together with your appointed advocate, ask your IEP Coordinator to review your Individualized Education Program with you. Ask questions.
- You can ask for Vocational Rehabilitation to come to your IEP (*Search "Michigan Rehabilitation Services," (MRS) "Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons" (BSBP)*) or go to Michigan.gov for more information
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available through vocational rehab starting at age 14. Pre-ETS includes:
 - Job Exploration
 - Work-Based-Learning Experience
 - Counseling on Postsecondary Education
 - Workplace Readiness Training
 - Self-Advocacy Training, including Peer Mentoring
- Talk with your IEP Coordinator about steps for you to participate in and eventually lead your own planning meeting.
- If your IEP is not working, ask in writing to meet and bring another adult with you. You may want to call for some advice first at Michigan Alliance for Families at (800) 552-4821 or Student Advocacy Center at 734-482-0489.

If you have a 504 Plan ...

- Ask to talk to the 504 Coordinator at the office and schedule a meeting.
- Read through your plan, make sure it makes sense to you, ask questions to clarify
- Ask them to support you in communicating to teachers about your plan.
- If the plan isn't working, ask to meet again.

Sophomore Year

- Ask at the front office who the foster care liaison at your district/school is. Every school is required to have one. Ask that person how they can support you.
- Meet with your counselor and academic advisor.
 - Update worker, appointed surrogate and /or supportive adult of your choice -- contact information with your school counselor
- Revise your 4 year plan each year to make sure it helps you progress toward your goals. Continue to get support and feedback from everyone on your team.
- Update your resume and register for summer employment through Michigan Works
- When you become 13 years old in foster care or stay in foster care anytime after, you will be considered an independent student, which means your parents'/ guardians'/ adoptive parents' information will not be needed when you apply for college financial aid. If your foster care case closes any time after age 13. Request proof of your Independent Student Status, DHS-945 from your worker, for your records to use for college or trade school.

If in foster care after the 14th birthday ask you foster care worker about participating in the Michigan Youth opportunities Initiative (MYOI) group in your county.
- If active in the foster care system on or after your 14th birthday ask your foster care case manager if you qualify for Michigan as Foster Youth In Transition (YIT) funds to help you transition into adulthood.
- Connect with in volunteer/community service activities.
- Continue participating in school activities such as clubs and sports.
 - If you have joined any athletic program, register with the NCAA Eligibility Center with the help of your Education Advocate and worker (Fee is waived for students in foster care)
- Explore your passions.

If you have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)...

- Ask your IEP Coordinator to review your Individualized Education Program with you. Ask questions.
- You can ask for Vocational Rehabilitation to come to your IEP (*Search "Michigan Rehabilitation Services," "Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons" or go to Michigan.gov for more information*)
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available through vocational rehab starting at age 14. Pre-ETS includes:
 1. Job Exploration
 2. Work-Based-Learning Experience
 3. Counseling on Postsecondary Education
 4. Workplace Readiness Training
 5. Self-Advocacy Training, including Peer Mentoring
 - If you are over 16, explore Summer Work Based Learning (SWBL).
 - SWBL is a 6-week paid work based learning experience that takes place in the summer and is facilitated by Michigan Rehabilitation Services ([MRS](#))/Bureau of Services for Blind Persons ([BSBP](#))
- Starting at age 16, the school should help you prepare for life after school, including work and other community activities. The school must include transition goals and services in a student's IEP. If you need more help than you're getting, please share that with your school case manager. A transition plan is the section of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that outlines transition goals and services for the student. The transition plan is based on a student's individual needs, strengths, skills, and interests. Find more information: (Go to <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/transition-iep/> for more information)
- If you transfer to a new district the new school must provide you comparable services to those laid out in the IEP from the old school.

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

What's Next?

If you're considering college after you graduate...

- Develop a list of jobs you might like after you are done with school and ask your network for connections to set up job shadowing to explore some of those ideas.
- Take PSAT
 - Free PSAT tests can be found at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org> *Note address used to register, you will use the same address each time you log in.*
 - Communicate with your caseworker about paying for test prep or testing fees. (YIT will pay for a preparation course and up to 3 tests)
 - Discuss needed accommodations in advance of the test with your counselor
- Study for SAT
 - Studying material including self-paced courses are available at <https://www.princetonreview.com>
 - Free studying resources can also be found at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org>
 - Find daily ACT prep questions and quizzes at <https://www.kaplanquizzes.com/act/>
- Start to learn about colleges and get familiar with the college admissions process
 - Explore websites for colleges
 - Visit campuses and go on college tours
 - Go to college fairs
 - Explore programs you are interested in

If you're considering working or joining tech fields after you graduate...

- Talk to your high school counselor about Non-College Degree (NCD) programs and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that may be a good fit for your strengths and interests. Your school district may offer training for cosmetology, truck driving, trade schools, and more to prepare you for the workforce after high school. Ask!
- Attend career fair events
- Develop a list of jobs you might like after you are done with school and ask your network for connections to set up job shadowing to explore some of those ideas.

If you're considering working toward certificate/non-diploma high school completion...

- Schedule a meeting with your high school counselor
 - Map out your course of study. A course of study lists all the classes and community experiences the student will complete to achieve their post-high school visions of where they want to work, learn, and live. A course of study may include the following:
 - General Education Courses
 - Special Education Courses
 - Work-Based Learning Experiences
 - Community Based Instruction
 - CTE (Career Tech Education)
 - Dual Enrollment
 - Early College
 - Students exiting high school without a diploma should consider how to get the most benefit from the high school environment, classes, and extra-curricular activities to move towards achieving your post-secondary goals. .
- Talk to your high school counselor about Non-College Degree (NCD) programs and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that may be a good fit for your strengths and interests. Your school district may offer training for cosmetology, truck driving, trade schools, and more to prepare you for the workforce after high school.

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

Junior Year

- Ask at the front office who the foster care liaison at your district/school is. Every school is required to have one. Ask that person how they can support you.
- Consider a part time job. A part time job now helps learn to you manage your time, take on more responsibility, and prepares you for future employment
- Get a State ID or driver's license.
- Meet with your high school counselor
 - Work with them to pick electives that support your future goals
- Take SAT exam in spring of junior year (assist in setting exam date for student)
 - Include healthy study tips and ways to prepare for exam day
 - Communicate with your caseworker about paying for test prep or testing fees. (YIT will pay for a preparation course and up to 3 tests)
 - Make sure your counselor has communicated any required accommodations, to your SAT test site and college board.
- Revise your 4 year plan each year to make sure it helps you progress toward your goals

If you have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)...

- You can ask for Vocational Rehabilitation to come to your IEP (*Search "Michigan Rehabilitation Services," "Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind Persons" or go to Michigan.gov for more information*)
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are available through vocational rehab starting at age 14. Pre-ETS includes:
 - Job Exploration
 - Work-Based-Learning Experience
 - Counseling on Postsecondary Education
 - Workplace Readiness Training
 - Self-Advocacy Training, including Peer Mentoring
 - If you are over 16, explore Summer Work Based Learning (SWBL). SWBL is a 6-week paid work based learning experience that takes place in the summer and is facilitated by Michigan Rehabilitation Services ([MRS](#))/Bureau of Services for Blind Persons ([BSBP](#))
- Starting at age 16, the school should help you prepare for life after school, including work and other community activities. The school must include transition goals and services in a student's IEP. If you need more help than you're getting, please share that with your school case manager. A transition plan is the section of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that outlines transition goals and services for the student. The transition plan is based on a student's individual needs, strengths, skills, and interests. Find more information: (Go to <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/transition-iep/> for more information)
- By age 17, the school is required to inform you of your new responsibilities when you become 18.
- At age 18, you assume legal control over educational placement, educational records, eligibility, evaluations and programming, and any mediation or due process needed to resolve disputes

What's Next?

If you're considering college after you graduate...

- Meet with your high school counselor
 - Work with them to pick electives that support your college goals



Michigan Alliance for Families in collaboration with Student Advocacy Center
1-800-552-4821 | michiganallianceforfamilies.org

This resource is meant to be used as a guide for students experiencing foster care and their caseworker throughout their years of high school with tasks and resources of how to successfully transition to post-secondary education in the state of Michigan. The guide is outlined by year, with action items for year grade.

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

- Ask them to share resources for college scholarships, work study programs, apprenticeships, and other options
- Research ways to pay for college such as the Michigan Tuition Incentive Program (*Search “[Michigan tuition incentive program](#)” or go to [Michigan.gov](#) for more information*)
- Think about colleges that the student would like to apply to and assist
 - Research application deadlines
 - Figure out necessities for each college
 - Recommendation letters
 - Transcripts
- Ask your counselor which colleges best fit you and why? Do they have your program? What's their graduation rate? Do they have a small class size? Do they have year round housing? What's their application process and deadlines? Ask the questions that matter to you..
- Ask your teachers, counselors, coaches and employers for a recommendation letter to support your college and scholarship applications.
- Start working on a college application essay, asking your counselor and other caring adults for help.
- Revise your 4 year plan each year to make sure it helps you progress toward your goals

If you're considering working or joining tech fields after you graduate...

- Consider enrolling in Career and Technical Education.
- Attend career fair events.
- Update a list of jobs you might like after you are done with school and ask your network for connections to set up job shadowing to explore some of those ideas.
- Research needed qualifications for jobs or careers you are considering
- Attend orientations with Michigan Works and your local Community College to learn about options in Tech and Trade School opportunities and apprenticeship.

If you're considering working toward certificate/non-diploma high school completion...

- Explore transition program options. Remember, your program should be individualized to meet your needs.
- Explore options for inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disabilities. <https://thinkcollege.net/>
- Talk to your high school counselor about Non-College Degree (NCD) programs and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that may be a good fit for your strengths and interests. Your school district may offer training for cosmetology, truck driving, trade schools, and more to prepare you for the workforce after high school.

Senior Year

- Ask at the front office who the foster care liaison at your district/school is. Every school is required to have one. Ask that person how they can support you.
- Ask your counselor for a complete list of required fees for graduation on your school's letter-head so YIT can cover fees.
- Meet with your counselor to review your Course of Study and confirm you are on track
- If possible, collect and organize life documents (Social Security Card, Birth Certificate)
- Continue to participate in extracurriculars you enjoy. Remember, DHHS should be able to assist with fees
- Meet with the Foster Care Liaison at school to discuss additional services that may be available

If you have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)...

- Starting at age 16, the school should help you prepare for life after school, including work and other community activities. The school must include transition goals and services in a student's IEP. If you need more help than you're getting, please share that with your school case manager. A transition plan is the section of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that outlines transition goals and services for the student. The transition plan is based on a student's individual needs, strengths, skills, and interests. Find more information: (Go to <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/transition-iep/> for more information)
- You can request that a college rep be present at your IEP meeting.
- Consider opening a case with vocational rehab. In general, the appropriate time to open a case with [MRS](#) or [BSBP](#), or move beyond Pre- Employment Transition Services and on to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services (Michigan Rehabilitation Services / MRS or Bureau of Services for Blind Persons / BSBP) is when a student is 1-2 years away from completing school:
 - 11th or 12th grade for those graduating with a diploma
- A "summary of performance" (SOP) is a document the school must provide before you exit public education (obtaining a diploma or aging out). It summarizes academic and functional performance levels and transition needs at the time you complete school. It must be specific, meaningful, and written so you can understand it. It must make recommendations about how to help you meet your postsecondary goals. The SOP should be reviewed at your final transition planning meeting. Make sure you know how to access in the future!
- When you turn 18, you have responsibilities. (Go to: <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/rights-and-responsibilities/> for more information)
- Understand your disability and how to advocate for what you need.

What's Next?

If you're considering college after you graduate...

- Meet with an academic advisor at your college by calling the advising office and figuring out your assigned advisor
- Set up MI Student Portal (Search: "[MiSSG student portal](#)")
- Complete FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov>)
 - Complete sooner rather than later (sometimes first come, first serve basis)*
- Explore student housing options
- Tuition Incentive Program** (TIP) application and check with the school

High School Youth in Transition Checklist for Post-Secondary Education

- Apply for **Education and Training Voucher (ETV)** through Samaritas (<https://mietv.samaritas.org/>)
- Fostering Futures Scholarship** - (More info at Michigan.gov)
- Research what colleges and universities offer campus-based support programs that specifically serve youth who have experienced foster care. Many programs offer financial assistance and services.

Explore the Campus Support Guide (go to FosteringSuccessMichigan.com)

Explore the Campus Support Network Map (go to FosteringSuccessMichigan.com/network)

- Research of additional scholarships that can apply to the student (i.e. KMJ learning disability scholarship)
- Check with foster care agency (i.e. MDHHS, private agency, etc.) to see if they have scholarships for students
- Explore the Creative Studies Scholarship at FosteringSuccessMichigan.com or search “The New Foster Care College for Creative Studies Scholarship”
 - Connect with support services at the college you decide to attend (Example: REACH program @ WCC)
 - Connect with MI Student Aid to ensure you are accessing all possible financial aid options.

If you're considering working or joining tech fields after you graduate...

- Meet with your high school counselor to discuss preparing to join tech fields after you graduate
- Attend career fair events
- Research programs at training or tech programs/schools that provide support to foster youth
<http://fosteringuccessmichigan.com/campus-support>
- Research programs like the Michigan Training and Education Voucher program if you're considering attending a training or tech program/school
 - Search “Foster Youth in Transition Michigan Education and Training Voucher” or go to Michigan.gov for more information)
- Explore Apprenticeship opportunities <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>
- Prepare a resume and cover letter. Find online resources for how to write a resume (Search “the resume workbook for high school students” for more information)
- Prepare for job interviews. Find online resources for job interview preparation (Search “common high school job interview questions” for practice questions)
- Update a list of jobs you might like after you are done with school and ask your network for connections to set up job shadowing to explore some of those ideas.

If you're considering working toward certificate/non-diploma high school completion...

- Explore transition program options. Remember, your program should be individualized to meet your needs.
- Consider enrolling in a work based learning program through the school district
- Explore options for inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disabilities.
<https://thinkcollege.net/>
- Consider opening a case with vocational rehab. In general, the appropriate time to open a case with [MRS](#) or [BSBP](#), or move beyond Pre- Employment Transition Services and on to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services, is when a student is 1-2 years away from completing school: During or just before a student's final year of school for those completing transition programs (beyond 12th grade) and earning a certificate of completion.

Post-Grad Transition to College

- Locate housing options during the summer months
- Meet with professors to discuss any needed accommodations
- Purchase textbooks
- Utilize resources like Student Care Packages as you get settled in your new housing
 - <https://www.fc2success.org/programs/student-care-packages/>
- Organize a campus tour for the student to explore where their classes will be located post-registration

If you had an IEP or 504...

- Connect with the Disability Services office to self-identify, submit needed documentation, and put accommodations in place.
 - Note: You may need to present documentation from the office to each of your teachers for accommodations.