

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND CAREER PLANNING

Policy no.: 5.15

Effective Date: November 25, 2013

Date Revised: February 1, 2017

Policy Cross References: Financial Services for Youth; Basic Foster Care Rate; Youth with Income

Legislative References: s.28 When sixteenth birthday intervenes

PURPOSE: To outline the post-secondary educational supports available to youth, including supports provided to foster parents who are providing care to youth attending post-secondary educational programs. This policy is also applicable to youth in care or custody attending post-secondary education programs.

POLICY:

1. Youth who were in the care or custody of a manager on his or her 16th birthday and have signed a Youth Services Agreement are eligible to have post-secondary education costs covered up to the age of 21.
2. Eligible youth shall be provided with financial support to complete one post-secondary education program.
3. Financial support shall only be provided to youth attending post-secondary institutions in this province that are recognized by the Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Student Financial Assistance program.
4. Youth who have entered into a Youth Services Agreement but were **not** in the care or custody of a manager on his or her 16th birthday are not eligible to have post-secondary education costs covered.
5. Youth not eligible to have post-secondary education costs covered may continue to be supported by the Youth Services program in accordance with the eligibility requirements of the program while attending his or her post-secondary education program.

PROCEDURES:

Career Planning:

1. Social workers shall work with youth to identify their educational and career goals as part of the Youth Services Plan. Advanced planning is essential to ensure youth have access to educational opportunities they are interested in pursuing without being placed on waitlists. Youth should determine application deadlines to ensure applications are received by their school of choice in advance of the deadline.

2. Youth should meet with school personnel and contact the post-secondary institution they are considering in advance. Youth may also be able to access career planning services offered through the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour (AESL). Youth can access these services by contacting the AESL office in their area.

Post-Secondary Expenses for Eligible Youth:

3. A social worker may approve the cost of up to **two** post-secondary program application fees for youth planning to attend post-secondary education, including those not eligible to have tuition covered. In exceptional circumstances, the supervisor may approve one additional program application fee.
4. The social worker shall submit a written recommendation to the supervisor for consideration and approval of post-secondary costs. The recommendation must identify the program the youth wishes to attend, the support the youth will require and details regarding the cost of tuition, books, school fees, required uniforms, tools and other related costs. If the program is outside of the youth's community, and an assessment by the social worker determines that the academic program is not available closer to home, details respecting necessary travel and/or accommodations shall be provided.
5. Where the purchase of specific tools and/or uniforms is required by the program of study (e.g. tool list issued by the school for a trades program), the youth and social worker must identify the most economical means of purchase. (i.e. used books or equipment).
6. Where a supervisor has approved the cost of the post-secondary program, the social worker shall arrange to have the youth's tuition paid in accordance with the payment schedule requirements of the educational institution (i.e. by semester or full payment up front).
7. The social worker shall evaluate, and document on the youth's file, the youth's attendance, commitment and performance in the preceding semester before recommending to a supervisor that CSSD pay the youth's tuition for the following semester. In making this recommendation, the social worker should consider whether any factors affected the youth's performance during a semester (e.g struggling with transition to adult education during first semester, illness, family complications, etc.).
8. Where a youth reaches their 21st birthday during a semester, the youth's tuition fees and all other Youth Services allowances shall be paid up to the end of the semester in which the youth's 21st birthday occurs.
9. Where the youth intends to continue with post-secondary studies beyond their 21st birthday, the social worker shall assist the youth in advance to make application for student aid in accordance with the application schedule set out by the Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Student Financial Assistance program.
10. Where a youth has enrolled in post-secondary education and CSSD is paying the youth's tuition and school fees, all other allowances shall be paid in accordance with the *Financial Services for Youth* policy.

11. Where a youth is attending a post-secondary educational program outside of the community where they reside in a foster home, and the plan is for the youth to regularly return to the foster home for weekends and during school breaks, the foster parent shall continue to receive funding equal to the basic foster care rate while the youth is enrolled in the post-secondary education program up to the end of the semester in which the youth turns 21. Where the foster parent continues to receive the basic foster care rate:
 - a) The social worker shall discuss with the foster parent that when the youth is returning for weekends the foster parent is responsible for costs as outlined in the *Basic Foster Care Rate* policy. While receiving the basic rate, the foster parents are also responsible to ensure the youth has adequate personal care items (e.g. shampoo, deodorant);
 - b) The foster parent shall not displace the child or youth by taking another child or youth into their home;
 - c) The youth will receive support in accordance with rates set out in In Care or Youth Services policies (e.g. support for tutoring, clothing allowance, school supply allowance, etc.) and where applicable, the social worker shall arrange for all Youth Services allowances to be paid directly to the youth.
12. Where a youth is attending post-secondary school outside of the community in which they normally reside, a social worker may approve the cost of travel for the youth to return home during recognized school breaks (e.g. mid-term or Christmas break). If it is recommended by the social worker that the youth should have more frequent visits to the foster home, the supervisor may approve this. CSSD shall cover the cost of the most economical means of travel for the youth (e.g. bus versus air travel). Foster parents may be reimbursed for mileage at the established fluctuating basic Provincial Government rate where this is considered the most economical means of transportation or where other means that are more economical are not available.
13. Where a youth may be eligible for alternate forms of financial support (e.g. parental contribution, RESP, the youth is entitled to support through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada), there is an expectation that the youth access these additional supports prior to seeking funding from CSSD. In these cases, CSSD may off-set the outstanding financial need upon the approval of a supervisor.
14. Where a youth is working part-time or is participating in a paid student placement, the youth's income shall be considered as outlined in the *Youth with Income* policy and in determining the youth's need for financial assistance for post-secondary education. The youth will be expected to contribute to their education, wherever possible.

Youth not eligible for tuition payment:

15. Youth who are not eligible to have their post-secondary costs covered by CSSD but who attend a post-secondary program while receiving support from the Youth Services Program shall continue to be eligible for youth services allowances up to their 18th birthday.

16. Youth who are not eligible to have their post-secondary costs covered by CSSD but who begin to attend a post-secondary program while receiving support from the Youth Services Program may apply for financial assistance from the Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Financial Assistance Program. The youth's application for financial assistance must include a letter from the social worker confirming the amount of financial support the youth receives from CSSD.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. Where a youth has requested to change his or her program of study, the social worker shall work with the young person to identify why a change is necessary and offer support to assist the young person to continue with their program if possible (e.g. tutoring). If it is determined that the youth will not continue with the current program of study, a supervisor may approve **one** change to a youth's program of study.
2. Where a youth has successfully completed a post-secondary education program and has secured employment outside of the community in which they normally reside, the zone manager may approve one-time only funding to assist the youth to travel to their place of employment to a maximum of travel costs plus \$500 for set-up costs when relocation expenses are not provided by the employer.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:

- Canada - Newfoundland and Labrador Financial Assistance Program <http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/studentaid/index.html>