

Workshop 1: Screening, Application, Timing and Appeals

- **Dedicated Team Approach:** Staff trained in disability definitions and process
- **Be Proactive:** Load the Cannon
- **Leverage Technology:** Online applications and ERE process; Claims Management Database
- **Effective Benefits Management:** Strong understanding of the complexities of how State, County and federal funding interacts in relation to SSI
- **Timing of Emancipating Youth Cases:** Age, emancipation and processing are interrelated.
- Making an SSI application is only half the battle. Pursuing Appeals is the other half.
- If the application is denied, and your county child welfare agency does not do appeals work, or contracts its SSI work out to an agency that does not, it is critical that you establish relationships through MOUs or otherwise with non-profit advocacy groups that handle administrative appeals.



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Workshop 2: Contract Services or Conduct In-House? A Discussion of Methods for Obtaining SSI Benefits for Youth

- Communication and Coordination are critical. The youth, the caregiver, the social worker, the foster care eligibility worker, the staff handling the application, staff for the agency rep payee functions, the child's attorney, the judge, among others, need to work together for SSI Advocacy.
- An Excellent working relationship with Social Security is key to success from application to emancipation or termination of dependency. Be Respectful and Courteous: They are busy people too!
- Case situations can get complex. Focus on the best interests of the child
- Accounting is a must have partner.
- Develop a good data tracking system.
- Develop a strong internal policy.
- Provide social workers with go-to resources like desk guides.
- Use available tools like the Screening Tool in the Best Practices Guide (see your packets for a copy).



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Workshop 3: Developing Comprehensive Transition Plans for Youth

- Permanent, affordable housing is available for youth with disabilities.
 - Youth with disabilities need assistance to access this housing.
 - The process isn't easy or quick, but can make all the difference for foster youth with disabilities.
 - Social Security does encourage and support SSI recipients to work.
 - Social Security has work incentives for people with disabilities receiving SSI to work or work toward a career goal and still receive their monthly payments and Medi-Cal.
 - Before dismissing the dependency
- case of a youth who has SSI in place, make sure that youth has an advocate who can assist with the age 18 review, payee issues and management of benefits
- Consider making a motion to continue the dependency of youth with SSI in place who do not otherwise have an advocate -the SSI can pay for the cost of care, and the continued support of the child welfare system could be crucial
 - Consult with a benefits expert on SSI rules to ensure eligibility is maintained

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WORKING TOWARDS THEIR FUTURE

Workshop 3: Developing Comprehensive Transition Plans for Youth, Continued....

- SSI payment alone does not provide a safety net for youth with disabilities emancipating out of care. A true safety net includes caring supportive adults who are independent of systems, housing, education, employment, and other resources that meet youth's specific needs. Relationships make up a safety net—not a check.
- Youth with disabilities exiting foster care need an advocate to assist with developing a plan for, monitoring and holding all accountable to providing the services and supports that make up the safety net. Counties, attorneys representing youth, CASAs, and other advocates all play a role in providing this advocacy.
- Many youth with disabilities would benefit from advocacy to allow them to take advantage of current and future opportunities to stay in foster care up to 21 and/or under court jurisdiction. The structure of the child welfare system can provide a safety net to assist youth for the tra



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Participate in an Ongoing Conversation about how to Assist Foster Youth With Disabilities

■ **Purpose:**

- ❑ Trouble-shoot issues that arise in AB 1331 and AB 1633 implementation
- ❑ Share best practices for assisting youth with disabilities make a successful transition
- ❑ Share information about state and federal policy developments
- ❑ Identify areas that need legislative or administrative fixes

■ **First Call:** Tuesday, September 14 at 10:00 a.m.

- ❑ Indicate your interest on the evaluation



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