

FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR YOUTH

Policy no.: 5.5

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Policy Cross References: Assessing Service Eligibility and Determining a Youth's Need for Protective Intervention, Youth Services Agreements, Removal of Youth, Transitioning from the In Care Program to the Youth Services Program

Legislative References: s.67 Youth services agreements

PURPOSE: To outline the financial support available to youth who have been approved for residential and/or supportive youth services.

POLICY:

1. Residential Services shall be approved for youth who:
 - a) are in need of protective intervention,
 - b) are voluntarily requesting support from the Youth Services Program,
 - c) meet the age requirements set out in s. 67 of the *CYCP Act*, and
 - d) are living outside the parental home.
2. Where a youth living at home is approved for supportive services, funding may be provided, with supervisory approval, to cover all or part of the cost of services that **cannot be obtained** from another source, and are required to prevent the youth from needing *residential services*.
3. Where a youth has signed a Youth Services Agreement (YSA) and continues to reside in his or her foster home or placement, refer to policy *Planning: Transitioning from the In Care Program to the Youth Services Program* for direction related to financial support to the youth and the foster parent.
4. A housing allowance shall be provided to a youth to cover the costs of accommodation including:
 - a) Board and lodging;
 - b) Bedsitters;
 - c) Emergency shelters/accommodations; or
 - d) Apartments
5. Youth are responsible for securing their accommodations. A social worker may assist a youth to find appropriate housing but is not responsible for approving the suitability of the accommodations.
6. The youth shall receive a monthly personal allowance.

7. The youth shall receive a monthly grocery allowance if meals are not included in the youth's accommodations.
8. The youth shall receive an annual clothing allowance.
9. The youth shall receive an annual Christmas allowance.
10. Youth participating in an educational program shall receive an annual school supplies allowance.
11. Youth graduating from high school shall receive a graduation allowance to cover graduation costs.
12. The youth shall receive basic medical, dental and vision care.
13. The youth may receive funding for moving costs, security deposits and necessary furniture or household items to assist a youth to secure accommodations when assessed as necessary to meet his or her needs.
14. Parenting youth may receive funding for child care costs where required for educational or employment purposes.
15. Parenting youth may receive funding to cover the cost of babysitting if required to attend to health related matters or other activities identified in the Youth Services Plan.
16. All financial requests and approvals shall be documented on the *CSSD Financial Request* form and a copy shall be placed on the youth's paper file, and the approval documented in the clinical CRMS file.
17. Approvals for financial services as outlined in this policy shall not exceed a six-month period, at which time reassessment is required to determine if the service or benefit continues to be required.
18. All rates outlined in this policy include any applicable taxes (e.g. the clothing allowance includes the cost of clothing and taxes).
19. The social worker shall inform the youth of the financial services available to them and inform the youth of any limitations or conditions associated with these services.
20. Where it has been determined that providing the youth with allowances as a lump sum (e.g. \$180 personal allowance or \$300 clothing allowance in one payment) may place the youth at risk, the social worker, in consultation with the supervisor, may determine an alternate schedule for payment of allowances to the youth (e.g. the youth's personal allowance may be divided into weekly payments)

21. The social worker shall request that youth provide receipts for purchases made with benefits that have been provided to them. Where receipts cannot be provided, the social worker shall consult with the supervisor to determine an appropriate response. Receipts are not required for the youth's monthly/annual allowances (e.g. housing, personal, grocery allowance).

PROCEDURES:

Accommodations:

1. The following table outlines the housing allowances for youth approved for residential youth services. The housing rates vary based on the type of accommodation secured by a youth.

Housing Type	Allowance Provided
Board and lodging or bedsitting	Actual cost up to \$500 per month
Emergency Housing	Shelters: Shelter per diem as set out by the shelter operator Hotel/Bed & Breakfast: Most economical means in youth's community
Apartments	Pregnant/Parenting youth: Income Support Rates for single youth with dependents Single youth: Board and lodging rates apply to shared apartment accommodations

2. A board and lodging arrangement is the preferred type of accommodation for the youth as meals are included and additional support may be provided, particularly if the youth is residing with a relative or significant other.
3. Youth Services clients choose where they reside, however, the social worker shall offer support and assistance to the youth in making these arrangements. The social worker shall provide the youth with information and guidance to assist the youth in making an informed decision regarding housing.
4. Prior to a youth leaving his or her placement and/or during the Youth Services assessment process and where the youth is agreeable, the social worker shall:
- a) Assist the youth to explore options for supportive housing, including
 - i. Board and lodging with family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, or other relatives/significant others);
 - ii. Supportive housing options available within the community;
 - b) Assist the youth in securing a living arrangement in the community if housing options with family or significant others are not available;
 - c) Work with the youth to review classified ads and to identify possible housing options that fit within their budget and otherwise meet their needs (e.g. near school or other necessities);
 - d) Support the youth to make contact with a housing provider and offer to visit housing options with the youth;

- e) Educate the youth about safe housing options and provide the youth with information about housing safety (e.g. considering who else may reside in a home or checking to be sure they can secure their belongings);
 - f) Meet with the youth to discuss the challenges of living independently;
 - g) Assist the youth in developing a budget so he or she is informed of the realities of living on one's own;
 - h) Provide the youth with information on the rights and responsibilities of living independently;
 - i) Make referrals to community agencies that may provide support to youth; and
 - j) Ensure supports and services are arranged in a timely manner or prior to a youth leaving the placement in order to ensure a smooth transition with no gaps in services (e.g. financial arrangements should be set-up so the youth is not delayed in receiving financial support).
5. Where a youth is approved for residential services, a social worker shall:
- a) **obtain** the name and address of the prospective board and lodging or bedsitting provider from the youth;
 - b) **promptly** complete a Child Protection Clearance Check on the prospective board and lodging or bedsitting provider; and
 - c) **immediately** notify the Protective Intervention (PI) social worker of the youth's plans to move into the home if the board and lodging or bedsitting provider has an open Protective Intervention Program. Notification is provided to ensure that the PI social worker may determine if the youth moving into the home impacts the *Family Centered Action Plan* or *Safety Plan* currently in place with a family.
6. Although youth are responsible for finding accommodations, the social worker may make arrangements to pay the housing provider directly in an effort to reduce or prevent evictions due to non-payment of rent.
7. Where a social worker becomes aware that a youth is residing, or planning to reside, in a board and lodging or bedsitting arrangement with an individual whose children require or have required an out-of-home placement (due to a removal, *Kinship Services*, *PCA*, *YSA* or an *Order to Reside*), the social worker shall:
- a) advise the youth that the monthly housing allowance will not be approved;
 - b) **promptly** notify the PI social worker about the youth's plans to reside in the home; and
 - c) assist the youth to find alternate housing.

Youth will continue to receive all other monthly allowances and supports when the monthly housing allowance is declined.

8. Where a social worker becomes aware that a youth is residing, or planning to reside, in a board and lodging or bedsitting arrangement with an individual where there are reasonable grounds to believe the youth will be at significant risk of harm (e.g. living with a known sex offender or drug dealer) the social worker shall consult with a supervisor to determine if the monthly housing allowance shall be declined. If the housing allowance is declined:

- a) the youth shall be advised of this decision and the social worker shall assist the youth to secure an alternate housing option, if the youth accepts this assistance;
 - b) the youth will continue to receive all other monthly allowances and supports when the monthly housing allowance is declined.
9. Pregnant or parenting youth who have been approved for services under the *Assessing Service Eligibility and Determining a Youth's Need for Protective Intervention* policy shall be provided with monthly financial support equivalent to the Income Support rates, established by the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, for single adults with dependents. This rate will replace the monthly allowances outlined in this policy. Information regarding current income support rates may be obtained online at: <http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/policymanual/incomesupport/index.htm>
10. If a youth has arranged to share an apartment with friends, the youth's housing allowance shall not exceed the board and lodging rates as set out in this policy.
11. Emergency funding to pay for a shelter, hotel or a bed and breakfast stay may be approved for a maximum of 14 nights per year for a youth who is homeless. A social worker shall determine availability and shall assist the youth in securing the most appropriate and economical accommodation available in the youth's community. Emergency accommodations in excess of 14 nights per year require the approval of a zone manager.
12. A social worker shall apply for the Children's Special Allowances for youth under the age of 18 and receiving residential services. Information regarding this application can be found online at: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/csft-eng.html>

Personal Allowance

13. A \$180 personal allowance shall be provided monthly to cover the costs of personal hygiene items, entertainment, and transportation.

Grocery Allowance

14. A \$200 grocery allowance shall be provided monthly if the youth's accommodation does not include daily meals.
15. Based on a recommendation from a qualified health practitioner, an additional \$60 per month may be approved by a social worker to cover the cost of extra food for youth with a documented medical condition that requires a special diet.

Clothing Allowance

16. A \$300 clothing allowance shall be approved annually by the social worker and provided to the youth to purchase necessary clothing.

Christmas Allowance

17. A \$400 Christmas allowance shall be approved by a social worker and provided to the youth to purchase Christmas gifts.

School Supplies Allowance

18. A \$300 school supplies allowance shall be approved by a social worker once per school year for youth enrolled in high school or GED/ABE program or a post-secondary program, to purchase school supplies. The allowance should be issued before studies begin to allow the youth to purchase supplies in advance.

High School Graduation Allowance

19. A high school graduation allowance of up to \$750 may be approved by a social worker to be provided to a youth when they are graduating from high school to cover graduation costs such as graduation tickets, clothing, graduation ring, yearbook, etc.

Health Services

20. Prior to recommending approval of any medical, dental or vision services, a social worker shall first explore with the youth if his or her medical or drug costs can be covered under one of the following:
 - a) Parent's private insurance;
 - b) Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program
<http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/prescription/>
 - c) Health Canada's Non-Insured Health Benefits through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
 - d) Nunatsiavut Health Services
 - e) Medical Transportation Assistance Program
<http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/mcp/travelassistance.html>
21. Youth are eligible to receive coverage for prescription drugs through the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP). The social worker is responsible for submitting the application to the NLPDP unless the youth is already enrolled. Additional information regarding the NLPDP may be obtained online at: <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/prescription/>
22. Prescription medication that is not covered by another external source may be approved as follows:
 - a) The social worker may approve up to \$100 per month
 - b) The supervisor may approve up to \$250 per month
23. The cost of special items or equipment to meet an identified medical or special need may be approved by the zone manager if these costs are not covered by another external source (e.g. MCP, a Department of Health and Community Services or Regional Health Authority program, etc.). The social worker shall explore alternate funding sources before recommending funding approval by CSSD.

Dental Services

24. Where dental services are not covered by another program or private insurance, the supervisor may approve:
- a) an examination and cleaning every 12 months;
 - b) routine fillings and extractions;
 - c) diagnostic x-rays once every two years;
 - d) emergency examinations.
25. Where a youth requires orthodontic follow-up for braces that were approved for the youth as a child or youth in care, the zone manager may approve the cost of the treatment as recommended by the youth's orthodontist.

Vision Care

26. Youth are eligible to receive annual vision care including eye examinations, prescription glasses or contact lenses, as well as repairs to prescription glasses. A supervisor may approve the following services once per fiscal year:
- a) Eye Examination – actual cost up to a maximum of \$70
 - b) Glasses or Contacts – \$200.00

Counselling

27. When counselling is required for a youth as outlined in the Youth Services Plan, the social worker shall work with the youth to explore available public/insured counselling services to meet the youth's counselling needs, including any service the youth may be eligible for due to having Aboriginal status or through an Employee Assistance Program. If public/insured counselling services have been explored but are unavailable, a zone manager may approve funding for private counselling services if deemed necessary.

Moving Costs

28. All or part of the cost associated with moving a youth's personal items to a new accommodation may be approved by a supervisor to maximum of \$150 per year. The social worker shall direct the youth to explore community assistance or the support of family and friends before funding is approved. The social worker shall advise the youth to secure the most inexpensive mode of transportation.

Damage Deposit

29. The supervisor may approve the cost of one damage deposit each year at a maximum rate of 75% of the cost of one month's rent. If required, the zone manager may approve funding for additional damage deposits. The youth will be expected to repay the entire amount of additional damage deposits through deductions from their monthly personal allowance. The repayment rate will be set at 5% of the youth's monthly personal allowance.

Furniture and Household Items

30. A supervisor may approve up to \$500 in funding to assist youth in purchasing necessary furniture and household items when securing accommodations. Funding shall only be approved in cases where the youth has demonstrated that they cannot make alternate arrangements to secure necessary items. Where funding is approved, the social worker shall provide guidance to the youth to ensure the youth acquires the necessary items in the most economical manner.

Driver's Education Program/Road Test/Driver's License

31. When a youth requests funding for a driver's license and the youth has included this goal in the Youth Services Plan and he or she intends to pursue post-secondary education in a field where a driver's license is a requirement (e.g. truck driver) a supervisor may approve the cost of the following:

Item	Maximum Cost
Driver's education program	\$1250
Road test	Up to the maximum rate set by the Motor Registration division of Service NL
Driver's license	Up to the maximum rate set by the Motor Registration division of Service NL

Other Youth Specific Costs

32. The social worker may approve the following if deemed necessary to meet the needs of a youth:

Item	Maximum Cost
Birth certificate	Up to the maximum rate set by the Vital Statistics division of Service NL
Photo identification	Up to the maximum rate set by the Vital Statistics division of Service NL
Suitcase	\$100

Transportation

33. For youth who are attending an educational or rehabilitation program and where transportation is not provided by the particular program, the cost of a bus pass or other transportation shall be approved by the social worker.
34. Funds may be approved for the youth to attend health related appointments or to attend to other matters as outlined in the Youth Services Plan, including meetings with the social worker, family contact, and social/recreational activities. Transportation costs for these appointments may be approved as follows:
 - a) A social worker may approve up to \$100 per month
 - b) A supervisor may approve up to \$200 per month
 - c) A zone manager may approve amounts over \$200 per month
35. Where mileage costs are paid to a board and lodging provider for transportation of the youth to school, health appointments or other pre-approved activities as outlined in the Youth Services Plan, reimbursement shall be calculated using a rate of \$0.30 per kilometer.

Meals

36. Where a youth is required to be away from his or her home community to attend medical appointments, school activities, and family visitation or in other situations as approved by the supervisor, the youth may be provided with a meal allowance of up to \$20 per day to a maximum of \$200 per year.

Social/Recreational Activities

37. The cost of social/recreational activities may be approved by a supervisor to a maximum of \$500 annually, if the activity is outlined in the Youth Services Plan. Community subsidies, such as the Jump Start Program shall first be explored prior to the social worker requesting the approval of funding.

Support for Pregnant and Parenting Youth

38. Youth who are pregnant are eligible to apply for the Mother Baby Nutritional Supplement, where they may receive benefits throughout their pregnancy. Information on this program can be accessed online at: <http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/income-support/nutritionssupplement.html>
39. The social worker shall encourage the youth to file their annual income tax return in order to be eligible for assistance provided by the Governments of Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, including the Canada Child Tax Benefit and Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit.

Child Care and Babysitting for Parenting Youth

40. The social worker shall assess the need for child care services on a case-by-case basis and may recommend approval of funding for child care for a parenting youth where the youth is employed full time or is attending an educational program. Based on the assessment and recommendation of the social worker, a supervisor may approve up to 40 hours of child care per week.
41. Where full-time child care is approved, the social worker shall work with the youth to secure a placement for the child in a regulated child care centre or regulated family child care home.
42. A child care subsidy, administered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, shall be explored if the child is to attend a regulated child care centre or family child care home. If required, the social worker shall assist the youth in completing the application for this program.
43. If there is no space available in a regulated child care centre or regulated family child care home, a non-regulated child care provider may be used. In these cases, the social worker shall advise the youth that Canada Revenue Agency's guidelines must be followed. Please refer to: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/pyrll/clcltng/spclsttns/crgvr-eng.html>
44. Babysitting is short-term care for a child to provide the youth with an ability to attend to personal matters. A social worker may approve funding for 5 hours of babysitting per month on a case-by-case basis when the youth must attend health related appointments or other appointments as outlined in his or her Youth Services Plan.

Child Care and Babysitting Rates

45. The maximum rates for payment, as established by CSSD, for child care in a regulated or unregulated child care centre are as follows:

Age Group	Full Day (up to 8.5 hours)	Part Day (up to 4.5 hours incl. lunch)	Hourly After 8.5 hours
Birth up to 2 years	\$44	\$23	\$5
2-12 years (incl. kindergarten)	\$30	\$16	\$3.50
After School Care (when school is in session)			\$14 per day

46. The rates for payment, as established by CSSD, for child care where the youth is the employer are as follows:

Number of Children	Rate
One - two children	Minimum wage hourly rate
More than two children	Up to a maximum of \$15 per hour

47. The rates for payment, as established by CSSD, for babysitting where the youth is the employer are as follows:

Number of Children	Rate
One - two children	Minimum wage hourly rate
More than two children	Up to a maximum of \$15 per hour

48. If a youth is considered the employer for an hourly child care provider or babysitter, the employer benefits are in addition to the hourly rates outlined in this policy.

Burial Expenses

49. A supervisor may approve the costs of burial expenses, including the purchase of a headstone for a deceased youth in accordance with the rates established by the *Income Support Program*: <http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/policymanual/incomesupport/index.htm>

EXCEPTIONS:

1. Due to a limited number of affordable housing options, a youth may be unable to find accommodations within the monthly housing allowance limit. In these circumstances:
 - a) a supervisor may approve up to \$700 per month
 - b) a zone manager may approve up to the basic foster care rate
2. Where a youth requires financial support that exceeds the rates outlined in this policy, the Regional Director may consider approval of additional funding.
3. Where tutoring is required and recommended by the youth's school and included in the Youth Services Plan, the supervisor may approve funding up to a maximum of \$125 per week for tutoring services from a qualified tutor, at a maximum rate of \$25 per hour. Prior to recommending for approval, the social worker shall work with the youth to explore whether there are educational supports or services offered through the school or another community program/service that could meet the youth's needs.
4. Single youth without dependents will only be provided with financial support to rent his or her own apartment in exceptional circumstances and as approved by the zone manager.
5. A youth who is receiving rates higher than those which are outlined in this policy (when this policy comes into effect) may continue to receive the higher rate until their YSA is terminated.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:

- *Medical Care Plan (MCP)* <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/mcp/index.html>
- *Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program*
<http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/prescription/>
- *Children's Special Allowances* <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/csfct-eng.html>
- *Canada Revenue Agency* <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>
- *Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour*
<http://www.aesl.gov.nl.ca/policymanual/incomesupport/index.htm>
- *Vital Statistics* <http://www.servicenl.gov.nl.ca/birth/fees/index.html>
- *Motor Registration* <http://www.servicenl.gov.nl.ca/drivers/index.html>