

THE JOHN H. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE PROGRAM FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Program (Chafee Program) was established by the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 and **provides money to tribes for material and other supports for current and former foster youth**. Tribes may use some of their Chafee funding to provide “room and board” support for youth ages 18 to 21 (and up to 23 where the foster care age has been extended to 21).

The Chafee Program includes additional funding for the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program. Tribes may use ETV funding to provide a voucher of up to \$12,000 for FY 2021 and 2022 based on the cost of attendance (whichever is less) for a Chafee-eligible youth to attend an institution of higher education. Funds are available under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.ⁱ

WHY CONSIDER THE CHAFEE PROGRAM?

As mentioned above, the Chafee Program can provide direct financial assistance to help youth in foster care and young adults transition successfully to adulthood. The Chafee Program funds are highly flexible and can be used to meet any of the immediate needs of young people, including supplemental support for housing, food, and education and vocation support.

FUNDING AMOUNT

The statute provides \$143 million in mandatory funding for the Chafee program; allocation is dependent on the size of the foster care population being served. Funds allocated to states are based on their relative share of children in foster care and eligible to tribes (out of the states’ allotment) based on the share of tribal children in foster care in the state.ⁱⁱ

TRIBAL FUNDING EXAMPLES

Chafee funds are being used in a variety of ways by tribes and by states for native youth in care. Some examples include:

- staffing
- providing resources directly to youth and young adults in need
- regalia or other culturally-significant items
- transportation assistance to ceremonies

REQUIREMENTS

To receive funds, a five-year plan (and annual plan updates) must be submitted to the funder that describes how the program intends to carry out its Chafee-funded program and affirms that it meets the requirements of the law (e.g., the state coordinates the program with other youth programs).

Tribes must provide a 20% cash or in-kind match to receive their full federal Chafee and ETV allotments.

Tribes must annually request to receive their allotments and must spend the funding in a two-year period.ⁱⁱⁱ

RESOURCES

The U.S. Department of Labor, Youth Programs

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) supports a wide variety of programs to ensure that all youth have the skills and training they need to successfully make the transition to adulthood and careers.

Child Welfare Policy Manual

This Child Welfare Policy Manual contains policy questions and answers applicable to child welfare programs operated by the Children's Bureau.

Transition & Aging Out

The Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs supports a number of efforts to build the skills and resources of youth ages 16-24. Whether they are called "youth in transition", "transition-age youth", "youth aging out", or other terms, youth in this age group experience a number of challenges on their path to a successful adulthood.

Supporting Native Youth into Adulthood

The resources listed in this document can help child welfare professionals support the health, well-being, and cultural connectivity of native youth while they journey into adulthood.

If you'd like to explore the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program further, please [contact your federal Regional Office Program Manager.](#)

ⁱ [John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood](#)

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