

 <p>NH Department of Health &amp; Human Services Division for Children, Youth &amp; Families</p>	<b>DCYF Standard Operating Procedure</b>	
	<b>1977.1 ENGAGING IN THE HOPE PROGRAM</b>	
	Policy Directive: <b>20-05</b> Effective Date: <b>April 2020</b> Implements Policy: <b>1977</b>	Approved:  Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

This SOP defines practices for engaging youth and young adults in the HOPE Program.

### Procedure

*The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document should not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.*

- I. CPSW/JPPOs should advise youth of the HOPE Program and their potential eligibility if they remain in placement until they turn 18, according to the following:
  - A. Upon turning age 16 or entering placement at age 16 or older, if their permanency plan is APPLA; or
  - B. Upon turning 17.5 or entering placement at age 17.5 or older, if their permanency plan is not APPLA.
- II. The CPSW/JPPo should document the discussion and the youth's decision about participation in the HOPE Program in the youth's contact log at the time of the youth's 90-day transition meeting.
- III. DCYF has established 3 ways for approved young adults to participate in the HOPE Program.
  - A. Option 1 –
    1. Young adults meet eligibility criteria by participating in one or more qualifying activities at the time of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or being incapable of engaging in a qualifying activity.
    2. The CPSW/JPPo should:
      - (a) Inform the Court of the youth's interest and intention to participate in the HOPE Program and how they meet eligibility criteria no less than 30 days before the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday;
      - (b) Request an order for the HOPE Program prior to the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday;

- (c) Email notification with the order to the DHHS Fiscal Specialist Inbox once the order is granted; and
- (d) Work with the young adult to review the transition plan developed at the 90-day transition meeting and to assist in the development of a case plan that coordinates care among existing providers in accordance with DCYF policy and practice.

B. Option 2 –

1. Young adults who have **completed** High School or **obtained** their GED/HiSET at the time of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday or at any age while participating in the HOPE program and continue to meet eligibility criteria by participating in one or more qualifying activities.
2. The CPSW/JPPPO should:
  - (a) Motion the Court and all parties involved in the case with the following information:
    - (1) The youth's current court case will close the day they turn 18 or the day they are expected to complete High School or obtain their HiSet/GED, as applicable;
    - (2) The youth will be signing a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) the date of Court closure in order to access extended foster care services, pursuant to RSA 170-E:53, through the DCYF HOPE program;
    - (3) The HOPE Program is a voluntary program which allows a young adult to reside in a paid foster care placement after turning 18 if they are eligible and participate in a qualifying activity; and
    - (4) Attach an unsigned copy of the HOPE Program Voluntary Placement Agreement (Form 1987).
  - (b) Ensure the youth signs Form 1987 the day that their Court case closes which should be on their 18th birthday or the day they complete High School or obtain their HiSet/GED if not already completed and open a Social Services Case (see SOP 1977.2 HOPE Program Case Management); and
  - (c) Work with the young adult to review the transition plan developed at the 90-day transition meeting and assist in the development of a case plan that coordinates care among existing providers in accordance with DCYF policy and practice.

C. Option 3 –

1. Young adults who meet the eligibility criteria, by participating in one or more qualifying activity may apply to the program, regardless of whether they previously **declined** to participate upon turning 18, or previously ended participation in the HOPE Program.
2. Any office contacted by a young adult requesting participation in the HOPE Program should refer them to the District Office whose catchment area covers the location where the young adult is currently living.
  - (a) The young adult will be connected to the Supervisor of the field service discipline that managed the young adult's most recent case.
  - (b) The Supervisor and Field Administrators should jointly determine which discipline will case manage young adults who had joint case management upon their most recent case closure.
  - (c) DCYF may allow young adults to request a change in District Office upon agreement of the Supervisors and Field Administrators for each of the District Offices.
3. Within 3 business days of the young adult requesting participation in the HOPE Program, the Supervisor will assign a staff to begin completing a HOPE Program Application (Form 1977) with the young adult, including:
  - (a) Assisting the young adult with completing the authorizations for a criminal records and DCYF Central Registry check; and
  - (b) Reviewing the eligibility criteria with the young adult and appropriateness of available placements and services.
4. The completed Form 1977 and supplemental information should be reviewed and signed by the Supervisor indicating approval or denial.
5. All requests to participate which are denied should be reviewed and signed by the Field Administrator:
  - (a) If the Field Administrator does not concur with a denial, steps to reopening a case should commence within 3 business days;
  - (b) If the Field Administrator concurs with a denial, Form 1977 should be sent to the Adolescent Program Administrator; and
  - (c) Young adults not approved for the HOPE Program should be referred to other services as appropriate including DCYF Aftercare Services.

6. Young adults should be informed of the decision within 15 business days.
  7. A Social Services case should be opened for young adults approved and a contact log entry stating the purpose *Independent Living* and the first line stating "HOPE Program request by youth to reenter DCYF care approved".
- III. Considerations that might exclude an eligible youth or young adult from participating in the HOPE Program due to their own needs include, but are not limited to:
- A. Current engagement in gang activity resulting in violent criminal behavior against persons;
  - B. Expressing no desire to disengage from criminal activity;
  - C. Exhibiting symptoms of acute, untreated psychosis or significant mental health impairment requiring a higher level of care;
  - D. Drug use requiring a higher level of care;
  - E. Active suicidal or homicidal ideation; or
  - F. The young adult refuses to commit to the requirements of the HOPE Program.
- IV. A CPSW/JPPPO assessing a youth or young adult with any of the above, who requests participation in the HOPE Program, may require the youth or young adult to complete a Form 1977.
- V. For any youth or young adult approved for the HOPE program, the CPSW/JPPPO should:
- A. Develop a case plan with the young adult prior to their entering into a foster care placement;
  - B. Enter the young adult's housing status at intake in the Independent Living Post Care Screen in Bridges;
  - C. Screen young adults who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless for possible referral to the Family Unification Program or Foster Youth Independence voucher program and results should be recorded in the Post Care Screen comments section; and
  - D. Work with young adults to complete their Form 1987 which must be signed by re-entering young adults the day they enter foster care placement.
    1. Young adults with an assigned adult guardian should have the Form 1987 signed by their legal guardian; and

2. Form 1987 should be forwarded to the DHHS Fiscal Specialist Inbox.

Applicable Forms	
Form	Title
1977	HOPE Program Application
1987	HOPE Program Voluntary Placement Agreement

### Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

A - B    C - D    E - F    G - I    J - L    M - N    O - Q    R - S    T - V    W - Z

**For the Purpose of this Document:**

**"HOPE Program"** means extended foster care to young adults who voluntarily consent and meet criteria established by RSA 170-E:53. Extended foster care includes any other traditional services or programs for which a youth may be eligible, including but not limited to the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (42 USC section 677).

**"Young Adult"** means an individual who is age 18 to 21.

Document Change Log			
PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date