Frequently Asked Questions: Foster Care Allowance Changes

Young people in care turning 18.

To support a young person’s transition to adulthood, Child Safety will pay the fortnightly caring allowance to all approved carers as well as to long-term guardians and permanent guardians when they are caring for a young person who has turned 18, up until they reach 19 years, regardless of their education status.

This adds to supports already provided by Child Safety funded programs such as the Smith Family’s Care 2 Achieve scholarships, Next Steps Plus) and the Pyjama Foundation.

Please find below a list of frequently asked questions in relation to these changes. If there is a query that is not listed below, please contact your Foster and Kinship Care Agency or Child Safety Officer (CSO) to seek further information and monitor Child Safety webpage for updates.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this important?

Child Safety recognises that transition to adulthood is not achieved simply because the young person reaches 18 years of age. The transition to adulthood is not a point in time occurrence, but a developmental process. Child Safety is committed to supporting young people through their transition to adulthood to ensure ongoing consistency and stability and that their best interests remain paramount.

What if a young person leaves or becomes absent from the placement while 18?

Under these circumstances the general procedure for the payment of the Fortnightly caring allowance is to be followed. Please refer to Procedure: Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and inter-state payments (365).

When will the fortnightly caring allowance end?

The allowance will stop if the young person ceases to reside at the carers home as their principal place of residence or on the young person’s 19th birthday, whichever comes first.

Will the CSO and the Child Safety Service Centre (CSSC) continue to provide case management for the young person?

Case Management will not continue for a young person who has turned 18, however a support service case will be opened.

Is a Support Service Case required to facilitate the ongoing provision of the Fortnightly Caring Allowance?

The support service case will enable the provision of payments for the ongoing Fortnightly caring allowance.

Will a young person remain in the care of the department under this arrangement?

Once a young person turns 18, they are no longer subject to a Child Protection Order. However, they will be invited to continue to work with Child Safety under a Support Service Case.

If a young person is placed with a General or Kinship Carer and the approval status is due to expire after the young person turns 18, do they need do go through a renewal?

Foster Carers and Kinship Carers will not be required to go through a renewal as the young person is now considered an adult. If there are other children in care in the household, the young person will be considered an Adult Household Member and will be required to apply for and/or hold a valid Blue Card.
What if the young person had approved planned respite arrangements before turning 18, can these continue?

Given the intent of the allowance is to support YP transition to adulthood the circumstances for respite would need consideration in the young person’s transition to adulthood plan.

Will carers continue to receive support through their Foster and Kinship Care agency for the young person?

As the young person will be classified as an adult there will be no requirement for the Foster and Kinship Care agency to provide support to the carer.

Does the Expenses – Fortnightly caring allowance and inter-state foster payments include Residential Care?

The policy does not extend to young people being cared for in Residential Care. Alternative arrangements will need to be discussed between the Residential Care provider and Child Safety for the ongoing care requirements for young people who turn 18 whilst enrolled in school and who are placed in Residential Care.