



## Help Spread the Word:

### Former Foster Youth Now Eligible for Medicaid until Age 26

Under the *Affordable Care Act*, youth who were enrolled in Medicaid and aged out of foster care on or after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday are eligible for free Medicaid health care coverage until age 26, regardless of their income.

#### Who Is Eligible in Rhode Island?

Former foster youth who are living in Rhode Island and have been in Rhode Island foster care (DCYF, foster homes, or group homes) and enrolled in Medicaid health insurance (aka Rite Care, Anchor Card, or Neighborhood Health) when they turned age 18 are eligible for this free health insurance until age 26. There are no income requirements for this coverage. If an eligible former foster youth is enrolled in a health plan at work, they can drop that coverage and enroll in Medicaid for free. Coverage periods should be coordinated when making this transition to ensure there are no gaps in coverage or care.

#### How Do Eligible Former Foster Youth Enroll?

- Eligible former foster youth should contact RI DCYF enrollment specialists who can verify eligibility and enroll them.
- Youth should not apply through HealthSource RI.
- Youth should call the RI DCYF enrollment specialist that matches the first few letters of their last name (see below) Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
  - **A – De** ... Call **401-528-3638**, Lisa McInnis
  - **Df – Lag** ... Call **401-528-3637**, Lauren Joaquin
  - **Lah – Ral** ... Call **401-528-3643**, Steven Woodruff
  - **Ram – Z** ... Call **401-528-3642**, Daisy Castrillon
- Youth will have to provide a copy of their birth certificate, if not on file with RI DCYF, and a photo ID (i.e. license, state ID, student ID, or employer ID) to complete the application. No information regarding their income will need to be provided.
- Youth can apply at anytime during the year.
- Youth who are under age 21 and are already enrolled in former foster youth coverage (“Chafee Coverage”) do not need to complete a new application to extend their coverage until age 26. Their coverage is extended automatically upon completion of their annual renewal. Only those eligible former foster youth not currently enrolled in Chafee Coverage need to apply through RI DCYF at this time.

## How Do Youth Maintain Their Coverage?

- Youth must maintain Rhode Island residency, notify RI DCYF and their health plan of any changes in their address, and annually mail RI DCYF a renewal application, which will be sent to their listed address on file with RI DCYF. Former foster youth who move out-of-state will lose this free coverage, but can re-apply if they move back to Rhode Island and meet all eligibility requirements.
- When a young person is turning age 26, they will be screened for eligibility for Medicaid under other categories (based on income, disability, or other categories) before their coverage ends. Youth who are no longer eligible for Medicaid may be eligible for financial assistance to help purchase commercial coverage through HealthSource RI.

## How Can My Organization Help?

- Check with young adults regarding health insurance coverage. If they are uninsured, check whether they were in foster care in Rhode Island at age 18. If they were, tell them about free Medicaid coverage and how to apply.
- Help spread the word about this new option for coverage. There are an estimated 900 young people age 21 – 25 in Rhode Island who are eligible. Share our [English](#) and [Spanish](#) flyer with your clients, patients, and fellow community members.
- If you have questions about this coverage or feedback regarding how enrollment or outreach is going, please contact ...
  - Kat Keenan, Deputy Director, Foster Forward, [kat.keenan@fosterforward.net](mailto:kat.keenan@fosterforward.net)