

**House Bill 700**  
Senate Amendments  
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 1. Section 264.121(a-6), Family Code, is amended to read as follows:

SENATE VERSION (IE)

SECTION 1. Section 264.121, Family Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a), (a-2), (a-6), (e-1), and (g) and adding Subsections (a-7) and (e-4) to read as follows:  
[FA1(1)]

(a) The department shall address the unique challenges facing foster children in the conservatorship of the department who must transition to independent living by:

(1) expanding efforts to improve transition planning and increasing the availability of transitional family group decision-making to all youth age 14 or older in the department's permanent managing conservatorship, including enrolling the youth in the Preparation for Adult Living Program before the age of 16;

(2) coordinating with the commission to obtain authority, to the extent allowed by federal law, the state Medicaid plan, the Title IV-E state plan, and any waiver or amendment to either plan, necessary to:

(A) extend foster care eligibility and transition services for youth up to age 21 and develop policy to permit eligible youth to return to foster care as necessary to achieve the goals of the Transitional Living Services Program; and

(B) extend Medicaid coverage for foster care youth and former foster care youth up to age 21 with a single application at the time the youth leaves foster care; ~~and~~

(3) entering into cooperative agreements with the Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards to further the objectives of the Preparation for Adult Living Program. The department, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the local workforce development boards shall ensure that services are prioritized and targeted to meet the needs of foster care and former foster care children and that such services will include, where feasible, referrals for

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short-term stays for youth needing housing;

(4) addressing barriers to participation in the Preparation for Adult Living Program for a youth who has a disability by making appropriate accommodations that allow the youth to meaningfully participate in the program; and

(5) documenting in the youth's case file any accommodations made under Subdivision (4).

(a-2) The experiential life-skills training under Subsection (a-1) must include:

(1) a financial literacy education program developed in collaboration with the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner and the State Securities Board that:

(A) includes instruction on:

(i) obtaining and interpreting a credit score;

(ii) protecting, repairing, and improving a credit score;

(iii) avoiding predatory lending practices;

(iv) saving money and accomplishing financial goals through prudent financial management practices;

(v) using basic banking and accounting skills, including balancing a checkbook;

(vi) using debit and credit cards responsibly;

(vii) understanding a paycheck and items withheld from a paycheck;

(viii) understanding the time requirements and process for filing federal taxes;

(ix) protecting financial, credit, and personally identifying information in personal and professional relationships and online;

(x) forms of identity and credit theft; and

(xi) using insurance to protect against the risk of financial loss; and

(B) assists a youth who has a source of income to:

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(a-6) The department, in coordination with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [stakeholders], shall establish a work group to develop a plan to ensure that foster youth who complete [standardize] the standardized curriculum for the Preparation for Adult Living Program are eligible to receive college credit for completing the program. The work group must include representatives from urban and rural institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, Education

(i) establish a savings plan and, if available, a savings account that the youth can independently manage; and  
(ii) prepare a monthly budget that includes the following expenses:  
(a) rent based on the monthly rent for an apartment advertised for lease during the preceding month;  
(b) utilities based on a reasonable utility bill in the area in which the youth resides;  
(c) telephone service based on a reasonable bill for telephone service in the area in which the youth resides;  
(d) Internet service based on a reasonable bill for Internet service in the area in which the youth resides; and  
(e) other reasonable monthly expenses; and  
(2) for youth who are 17 years of age or older, lessons related to:  
(A) insurance, including applying for and obtaining automobile insurance and residential property insurance, including tenants insurance; [and]  
(B) civic engagement, including the process for registering to vote, the places to vote, and resources for information regarding upcoming elections; and  
(C) the documents the youth is required to receive under Subsection (e-1) prior to being discharged from foster care and how those documents may be used. [FA1(2)]

(a-6) The department, in coordination with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [stakeholders], shall establish a work group to develop a plan to ensure that foster youth who complete [standardize] the standardized curriculum for the Preparation for Adult Living Program are eligible to receive college credit for completing the program. The work group must include representatives from urban and rural institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003, Education

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Code. In developing its evidence-based recommendations, the work group shall consider the feasibility of implementing each recommendation, a foster youth's access to the Preparation for Adult Living Program, and the average length of time a foster youth will remain in a placement [that ensures that youth 14 years of age or older enrolled in the program receive relevant and age-appropriate information and training]. The department shall report the plan to the legislature not later than November [December] 1, 2022 [2018]. This subsection expires September 1, 2023.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

Code. In developing its evidence-based recommendations, the work group shall consider the feasibility of implementing each recommendation, a foster youth's access to the Preparation for Adult Living Program, and the average length of time a foster youth will remain in a placement [that ensures that youth 14 years of age or older enrolled in the program receive relevant and age-appropriate information and training]. The department shall report the plan to the legislature not later than November [December] 1, 2022 [2018]. This subsection expires September 1, 2023.

(a-7) The department shall ensure that before a youth leaves foster care, each youth who is 14 years of age or older has an e-mail address through which the youth may receive encrypted copies of personal documents and records.

(e-1) If, at the time a youth is discharged from foster care, the youth is at least 18 years of age or has had the disabilities of minority removed, the department shall provide to the youth, not later than the 30th day before the date the youth is discharged from foster care, the following information and documents unless the youth already has the information or document:

- (1) the youth's birth certificate;
- (2) the youth's immunization records;
- (3) the information contained in the youth's health passport;
- (4) a personal identification certificate under Chapter 521, Transportation Code;
- (5) a social security card or a replacement social security card, if appropriate; and
- (6) a Medicaid card or other proof of the youth's enrollment in Medicaid or an insurance card from a health plan that provides health coverage to foster youth [if appropriate].

(e-4) The youth's caseworker shall:

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(1) assist the youth with developing a plan for keeping the documents described by Subsection (e) in a safe place; and  
(2) inform the youth about the documents the youth is required to receive before the date the youth is discharged from foster care.

(g) For a youth taking prescription medication, the department shall ensure that the youth's transition plan includes provisions to assist the youth in managing the use of the medication and in managing the child's long-term physical and mental health needs after leaving foster care, including:

(1) provisions that inform the youth about:

(A) ~~(1)~~ the use of the medication;

(B) ~~(2)~~ the resources that are available to assist the youth in managing the use of the medication; and

(C) ~~(3)~~ informed consent and the provision of medical care in accordance with Section 266.010(1); and

(2) for each youth who is 17 years of age or older and preparing to leave foster care, a program supervised by a health care professional to assist the youth with independently managing the youth's medication. [FA1(3)]

No equivalent provision.

SECTION \_\_. Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.1214 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.1214. HOUSING FOR HOMELESS YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE. (a) For a youth who will voluntarily enter extended foster care on the youth's 18th birthday, the youth's caseworker shall, not later than six months before the youth's 18th birthday, complete any necessary transitional living or supervised independent living paperwork to ensure the youth has housing on the date the youth enters extended foster care. Not later than the 90th day

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before the youth's 18th birthday, the caseworker shall review the qualifications and requirements for the youth's housing.

(b) If a youth intends to continue living with the youth's substitute care provider after the youth's 18th birthday, the department shall waive any background check otherwise required for the youth to remain living with the substitute care provider.

(c) For a youth who continues living with the youth's substitute care provider after the youth's 18th birthday, the youth may share a bedroom with another youth who is 16 years of age or older provided the age difference between the youths does not exceed two years.

(d) A substitute care provider who prohibits a youth from living in the facility after the youth's 18th birthday shall notify the youth's caseworker of that fact:

(1) not later than:

(A) the 90th day before the youth's 18th birthday if the facility is a foster home; or

(B) six months before the youth's 18th birthday if the facility is a cottage family home or general residential operation; or

(2) as soon as possible if the youth is placed in a foster home, cottage family home, or general residential operation less than six months before the youth's 18th birthday.

(e) After receiving notice under Subsection (d), the youth's caseworker shall verbally communicate with the youth about the youth's living arrangements and document the substance of the communication in the youth's case file.

(f) The department shall assist a youth living in a supervised independent living program arrangement to develop a rental history by allowing the youth to cosign the lease for the youth's housing provided the property owner does not object.

(g) The department by rule shall establish a protocol that may

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be implemented for a youth to prevent the youth from aging out of a residential treatment center. The protocol, if implemented, must be implemented not later than the youth's 17th birthday or at the time the youth is placed in a residential treatment center after the youth's 17th birthday. [FA1(4)]

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.

SECTION 2. Same as House version.