



# Frequently Asked Questions

## ? What is Pandemic Aid for Washington State Foster Care Alumni?

Pandemic Aid for Washington State Foster Care Alumni is a time-limited, direct economic aid program for young adults who are alumni of foster care. There are an estimated 2,800 young adults who are eligible for this funding, which is provided to help alumni of foster care recover and stabilize from the financial hardships caused by the pandemic.

## ? Who is eligible?

To be eligible, you must currently be between the ages of 23 and 26 and meet one of the following: 1) were dependents of Washington state through the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) or a dependent under a tribal child welfare agency with an out-of-home placement for at least 30 days between the ages of 15-18; or 2) are residents of Washington state and would have been eligible for these funds through their home state but were unable to access them due to no longer living in that state. If you were placed in out-of-home care in another state, please contact your home state first to access funds.

## ? How much funding can eligible young adults receive?

Eligible young adults will receive direct cash payments of up to \$1,000. Payments will be made directly to the young adult, or a vendor of their choice, i.e. a landlord, a college or university, etc. You may be eligible for additional supports.

## ? When can I apply? What is the deadline?

Applications open up on July 16, 2021 and will close on September 24, 2021. Treehouse and DCYF will begin processing applications on July 16th and expect to begin dispersing funds on July 26th, on a first come, first-served basis after verifying applicant's eligibility.

Eligibility verification and application processing is estimated to take 1-2 weeks, assuming no delay in receiving necessary information from the applicant. Once eligibility is confirmed, applications and payments will be processed.

Per federal law, all applications and payments must be processed and initiated by September 30, 2021. The deadline to apply reflects the minimum verification and processing time needed to ensure payments can be initiated by the September 30, 2021 deadline. Treehouse and Washington State DCYF have no control over the deadline to process and initiate funding payments.

## ? How will payments be dispersed to approved applicants?

Treehouse will disperse direct cash payments to approved applicants. Treehouse prefers to use electronic payment methods whenever possible. Included electronic payment options are Google Pay and PayPal. For more information, visit [Google Pay](#) or [PayPal](#) to learn how to set up an account.

Treehouse can also disperse funds via check. Please allow up to three weeks for processing and mailing. Checks can only be made out in the name of the eligible applicant and cannot be picked up in person.

Treehouse can also pay a vendor or business directly, if desired.

## ? What can this funding be used for?

Funds can be used for the same purposes as outlined by the federal John H. Chafee program.

Funding can be used to help pay for anything related to housing, basic needs, transportation, education, employment and much more.

Applicants only need to indicate how they intend to use the funds in the application. For more information on funding options, [click here](#).

## ? Who is providing the funding?

Funding is provided by the United States Congress through the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which awarded Washington state additional, one-time [John H. Chafee Foster Care Program](#) funds to be awarded to eligible youth and young adult alumni of foster care throughout the state. These funds are often called "Chafee Funds."

Treehouse is partnering with the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to disperse approximately \$1.65 million in funding Washington state has received.

*Continue to next page*





# Frequently Asked Questions



## What information/ documents will I need to apply for funding?

Applicants will need their birthdate, legal name and city/state of where they were in foster care. Applicants will also need to have the appropriate payment details to provide Treehouse i.e., electronic payment handle, address and contact information for direct vendor and/or check payments.



## What if I was in foster care in another state but now live in Washington and meet all the other eligibility criteria. Am I eligible?

Yes, if you were a dependent of another state's child welfare agency or federally recognized tribe and were eligible for your states Independent Living Program, you are eligible. Please apply for funds in your home state and if they are not available to you, then you may be eligible for funds through Washington state.



## What if I am 22 now, but will turn 23 before September 30, 2021? Am I eligible for this funding?

Yes, if you turn 23 before September 30, 2021 and meet the other criteria, you are eligible for this funding.



## Are there pandemic relief funds for youth in foster care or foster care alumni under the age of 23?

Yes, there are several programs in Washington state that you may be eligible for:

- If you are eligible for Independent Living, you may be eligible for additional housing or cash supports through your IL provider. [Check with your IL provider for more information.](#)
- The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program offers financial assistance to eligible youth and young adults attending an accredited college, university, vocational or technical college. ETV funds can be used for tuition, fees, books and supplies, housing, transportation and other education related costs. The maximum ETV award has been temporarily increased from \$5,000 to \$12,000 per academic year. [Click here for more information.](#)
- The Treehouse Driver's Assistance program has received additional pandemic relief funding to assist youth and young adults currently in foster care or Extended Foster Care in obtaining their driver's license or auto insurance and expects to provide more support to more young people this year. [Click here for more information.](#)
- The Treehouse CARES program provides support for tutoring and to eliminate financial barriers to success in school for youth in foster care and young adults in Extended Foster Care (EFC). In addition to tutoring, the funding will cover a variety of materials and resources that encourage engagement in school, including school supplies and equipment, extracurricular activities, summer school and summer camp. [Click here for more information.](#)

## For additional information, please visit these resources:

- [The National Youth in Transition Database \(NYTD\)](#)
- [Supporting Youth in Foster Care Through the Pandemic](#)
- [John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood; Congressional Report April 2021](#)

For any other questions or assistance, please email:  
[pandemicaid@treehouseforkids.org](mailto:pandemicaid@treehouseforkids.org)

