

Child Welfare Policy Manual

Questions & Answers

3.5A Youth Eligibility

1. Question: Must a youth be 18 years of age to receive a Chafee Educational and Training Voucher?

Answer: No. The statute does not place any minimum age restrictions for the Chafee Educational and Training Voucher program.

- **Source/Date:** 4/4/05
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act - Section 477(i)(1)

2. Question: If a State amends its title IV-E State plan to define youth at age 14 as eligible for Chafee services, can the State also make foster care youth who are adopted at age 14 eligible for Educational and Training Vouchers (ETV) under the "youth otherwise eligible" criteria in section 477(i)(1) of the Social Security Act (the Act)?

Answer: No. For purposes of the ETV program, section 477(i)(2) of the Act permits former foster youth who have been adopted from foster care to be considered as "youth otherwise eligible" for services. However, it restricts eligibility to youth who are adopted on or after the youth's 16th birthday.

- **Source/Date:** 4/4/05
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act - Section 477(i)(1) and (2)

3. Question: Must students attend school full-time to receive a Chafee Educational and Training Voucher?

Answer: No. Federal law does not require that students attend school on a full-time basis to receive a voucher.

- **Source/Date:** 4/4/05
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act - Section 477(i); Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended - Section 472.

4. Question: If a youth has been receiving a Chafee voucher to attend college, but is not taking classes during the semester the youth turns age 21, will the youth continue to be eligible for a voucher through age 23?

(Deleted 10/04/2019)

5. Question: Would a voucher be available for a youth to get an adult high school certificate or General Equivalency Degree (GED) at a community college?

Answer: Typically, no, because Chafee requires that a youth attend an institution of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended. Among other things, HEA defines what constitutes an "institution of higher learning" based on certain criteria. We encourage the State to consult the specific community college or institution of higher education about whether such a youth is considered a student for whom the institution can calculate the cost of attendance and whether the college or institution of higher education meets the criteria in sections 101 and 102 of HEA.

- **Source/Date:** 4/4/05
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act - Section 477(i); Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended - Section 472