



Michigan
Office of the Auditor General
REPORT SUMMARY

Performance Audit
Youth Transitioning From Foster Care to
Self-Sufficiency
Department of Human Services

Report Number:
431-0279-11

Released:
February 2012

A youth in transition (YIT) from foster care is generally defined as a youth aged 14 to 21 years old who is currently placed in an eligible foster care placement or was previously placed in an eligible foster care placement until age 18. A priority of the Department of Human Services (DHS) is to improve the success of the youth transitioning from the State's foster care system into adulthood. DHS's goal is to help youth transition from the State's foster care system to independence with the ability to care for themselves physically, socially, economically, and psychologically (self-sufficiency).

Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness of DHS's efforts to evaluate services provided to youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that DHS's efforts to evaluate services provided to youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency were not effective. We noted one material condition (Finding 1).

Material Condition:

DHS had not developed or implemented a comprehensive process to evaluate the outcomes and value of the services it provided to transitioning youth (Finding 1).

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Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness of DHS's efforts to ensure the propriety and reasonableness of discretionary payments

and post-secondary educational assistance payments made on behalf of youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that DHS's efforts to ensure the propriety and reasonableness of discretionary payments and post-secondary educational assistance payments made on behalf of youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency were moderately effective. We noted one material condition (Finding 2) and one reportable condition (Finding 3).

Material Condition:

DHS's internal control did not ensure the propriety and reasonableness of discretionary payments it made using YIT resources. In addition, DHS had not fully established guidance for discretionary payments on behalf of transitioning youth using YIT resources (Finding 2).

Reportable Condition:

DHS's internal control did not always ensure that post-secondary educational assistance payments were within established limits and provided on behalf of eligible transitioning youth. In addition, DHS had not established clear and consistent policies to appropriately guide its staff to provide proper post-secondary educational assistance from Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program awards and other YIT resources (Finding 3).

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Audit Objective:

To assess the effectiveness of DHS's efforts to ensure that training for caseworkers is tailored to address youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency.

Audit Conclusion:

We concluded that DHS's efforts to ensure that training for case workers is tailored to address youth transitioning from foster care to self-sufficiency were effective. Our audit report does not include any reportable conditions related to this audit objective.

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Agency Response:

Our audit report includes 3 findings and 5 corresponding recommendations. DHS's preliminary response indicated that it agrees with 2 findings and agrees, in part, with 1 finding.

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A copy of the full report can be obtained by calling 517.334.8050 or by visiting our Web site at: <http://audgen.michigan.gov>



Michigan Office of the Auditor General
201 N. Washington Square
Lansing, Michigan 48913

Thomas H. McTavish, C.P.A.
Auditor General

Scott M. Strong, C.P.A., C.I.A.
Deputy Auditor General