**Toolkit to Promote the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program in California**

This toolkit includes documents that we hope will aid advocates to help young people access FYI vouchers and support stakeholders to build their FYI programs and spread the word about the availability of vouchers. There are three types of documents: (1) Fact Sheets for various stakeholders; (2) Template documents to refer young people for FYI vouchers, and (3) A Template request to ask your county child welfare agency for information about its FYI program.  Below is more information about how you can use these documents.

1. **Introductory Fact Sheets for Key Stakeholders**

**What are these documents?**

There are short fact sheets developed for each of the following stakeholders:

1. [**FYI for Advocates**](#Advocates)
2. [**FYI for Child Welfare Agencies (CWAs) & Probation Departments**](#Agency)
3. [**FYI for Landlords**](#Landlord)
4. [**FYI for Housing Authorities (PHAs)**](#PublicHousing)
5. [**FYI for Young People**](#YoungPeople)
6. [**FYI for Judges**](#Judges)

These one-page fact sheets provide an introduction to the FYI program for various key stakeholders and explains how each stakeholder can help facilitate the FYI program.

**How can you use these documents?**

We recommend that you use these fact sheets as you need them based on the stakeholder groups you are working with to introduce them to the FYI program and to enlist them as partners. For example, attorneys and case workers can share the youth one-pagers with their clients. Advocates seeking to recruit landlords to take FYI vouchers can use the landlord one-pager to initiate a meeting and conversation. In addition, we encourage you to edit these resources to suit your role and needs.

1. **Template Referrals**

**What are these documents?**

1. [**Template Referral Letter for FYI Advocates in CA**](#bookmark=id.tyjcwt)
2. [**Template Letter for a Youth to Request an FYI Referral**](#bookmark=id.3dy6vkm)

These template forms that can be used by various stakeholders to make a referral to the Child Welfare Agency for an FYI voucher for a young person.  These template referrals can be used by: advocates or attorneys for young people and by young people themselves. The person

making the referral will need to insert information about the young person being referred and information about the person to whom the referral is being made, for example, the point person

for the FYI program at the child welfare agency, the Independent Living Coordinator, or the youth’s current or former caseworker.

**How can you use these documents?**

You can use these templates to refer young people for an FYI voucher.

Please note that while all counties can provide FYI vouchers (because all Public Housing Authorities are eligible to request vouchers once they establish a collaboration with the child welfare agency), not all counties are at the same place in the implementation process. Ideally, you are making a referral to a fully operational program, but in some cases your referral may be part of your advocacy efforts to get your county to move forward with their FYI program if they are not already.

1. **Template Request for Information from the County Child Welfare Agency**

**What is this document?**

This document is a [**Template Letter to Request Information from Child Welfare Agencies**](#bookmark=id.1t3h5sf)**.**

**How can you use this document?**

If you are facing challenges getting information from your county child welfare agency or probation department about their FYI program or their efforts to develop a program, you could use this request for information to try to gather information and get the conversation going.

For an overview of the FYI Program, please click  [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

*For more information, contact: info@ylc.org.*

*Last updated: July 2023*

**Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers: The Role of Advocates**

1. **What is the Foster Youth to Independence Housing Voucher Program?**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides a type of housing choice voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care. FYI was designed by young people who were in foster care and experienced homelessness after aging out. These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies of probation departments. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person. These support services are voluntary. FYI vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/fss) (FSS) or similar programs. These are programs that support employment, education, and incentivize saving.

1. **Who is eligible for an FYI voucher?**

Eligible youth (including probation supervised foster youth) meet the following criteria.

1. Are 18 through 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday), and
2. Have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, and
3. Are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless when they were age 16 or older.
4. **How does the FYI program benefit young people?**

Stable housing is crucial for young people to successfully transition to adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals. But young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including their age and lack of family support, which many young adults rely on for their first apartment. The FYI program can be a critical stepping stone for young adults as they move from foster care into the adult world.

1. **What is the role of advocates in helping young adults secure stable housing by accessing FYI vouchers?**

Advocates can play a critical role in helping young people access FYI vouchers by taking the following actions:

* If the young person is still in foster care, ask the child welfare agency to refer the youth to the FYI program as part of the transition planning process. The referral to the PHA can be made as early as 90 days before leaving foster care. Ask the court to order the referral at the review hearing if it has not been done and that a status report be provided to the court about the referral.
* Assist young people who have already aged out make a request that the child welfare agency refer them to the PHA for an FYI voucher. Here is a link to a [template](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/FYI-and-FUP-Template-Letters-082022.pdf) you can use.

1. **What should an advocate do if their county is not accessing FYI vouchers?**

If the child welfare agency has not yet connected with local PHAs so that they can distribute FYI housing vouchers or you are confronting other barriers with your advocacy, you can connect with the CA FYI Advocacy Group to help you make these connections. Please email Madeleine Wykstra at mwykstra@ylc.org.

Advocates should be aware that many PHAs may not be familiar with the FYI/FUP programs.

Advocates should also be prepared to coordinate with the relevant child welfare agency.

For more information on FYI, see [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

**The Foster Youth to Independence Housing Voucher Program: The Role of the Child Welfare Agency and the Probation Department**

1. **What is the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program?**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides a type of housing choice voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care. In fact, the FYI program was the idea of young people across the country who created the Fostering Stable Housing Opportunities Coalition (FSHO). Their advocacy, led by ACTION Ohio and the National Center for Housing and Child Welfare, led to the FYI program becoming law and ensuring that housing vouchers can be provided “on demand” for young adults with experience in foster care to improve their transition to adulthood.

These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person. These support services are voluntary. FYI vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://vimeo.com/338260366) (FSS) or similar programs. These are programs that support employment, other activities, and assist with savings.

1. **Who is eligible for an FYI voucher?**

Young adults are eligible for an FYI voucher if meet the following criteria:

* 1. Are 18 through 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday), and
  2. Have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, and
  3. Are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless when they were age 16 or older.

Eligible youth include probation supervised foster youth who meet the above criteria.

1. **How do FYI vouchers benefit young people?**

Stable housing is crucial for young people to successfully transition to adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals and will have a hard time developing a good transition plan. But young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including their age and lack of family support. The FYI program is a critical stepping stone for young adults as they move from foster care into the adult world. It can help stabilize their housing situation so they can focus on work, school, saving money, and meeting their goals.

1. **What is the role of Child Welfare Agencies and Probation Departments in helping young adults secure stable housing by accessing FYI vouchers?**

Child welfare agencies and probation departments are the critical and valued partners of the PHAs that make it possible for our communities to access FYI vouchers. If you are an agency director, we urge you to establish partnerships with any of the PHAs in your county. Here is a [list](https://jbay.org/resources/pha-ca/)

of all the PHAs in California. You can partner by doing an MOU or a letter of intent. If you are

facing barriers to making connections with the PHAs in your county, please email Madeleine Wykstra at [mwykstra@ylc.org](mailto:mwykstra@ylc.org) to reach the FYI Advocacy Group.

Your role is to make referrals of eligible youth to the PHA and provide or offer support services to the young person.The child welfare agency can also elect to designate other agencies to make an FYI referral. A great idea is to develop a tickler system to alert the agency to the 90 mark prior to discharge to prompt a referral for FYI. In terms of service provision, you can simply connect young people with existing community services and leverage your existing ties to community-based organizations. There are many community-based organizations that are eager to work with child welfare agencies and probation departments to help provide support services.

If you are a caseworker or probation officer, you should be informing young people of the availability of the FYI program and making referrals as soon as you identify–or get a request from–eligible young. You should refer youth who are still in foster care as part of the transition planning process. You can make referrals at least 90 days before discharge. Providing youth friendly materials and identifying a clear point of contact will help young people accessing the program and will help ensure that you get the information you need to make referrals.

The FYI application process can take some time, so it is especially important for caseworkers and probation officers to help the young person through the process. FYI is one option among many. Other options include, but are not limited to: Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-Plus), Chafee room and board, as well as State & Federally Funded Homelessness Response, which may be facilitated through your community’s [Homeless Continuum of Care](https://www.jbaforyouth.org/cocroster/). More information on these options can be found [here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bYZ3RsjgaGSU07qoECeVmr18E8Ms_Z_2LZMON8cB2zI/edit?usp=sharing).

You can find more detailed information about the FYI program [here.](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf)

**Foster Youth to Independence Housing Vouchers: The Role of Landlords**

1. **What is Foster Youth to Independence Housing Voucher Program?**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides a type of housing choice voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care and are an excellent resource for our communities to support young people who face unique barriers to housing security when they leave foster care.

These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies to support young people. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person to help the young adult as they continue to meet their goals. These types of vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://vimeo.com/338260366) (FSS).

1. **Who is eligible for FYI vouchers?**

Young adults who are under age 25 and were in foster care are eligible for the FYI program. Stable housing is crucial for young people to achieve independence and to successfully transition into adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals. In particular, young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including a lack of family support. The FYI program can be a lifeline and critical stepping stone for these young adults as they work towards independence and move from foster care into the adult world.

1. **How does the FYI program benefit landlords?**

Landlords who take housing choice vouchers, including FYI vouchers, can expect to get consistent rent. They will get their rent no matter whether the young adult experiences changes like those related to employment. Young adults in the FYI program will also have access to community supports and services. Your county PHA or homeless prevention agencies may also provide financial and other incentives to landlords who take Housing Choice Vouchers, including FYI.

1. **How can landlords help young people secure stable housing with FYI vouchers?**

By accepting FYI vouchers and renting to young adults leaving foster care, landlords can make a critical difference in the lives of young people who may not have the family and other support that many young people rely on as they begin adulthood. You can become an ally for young adults leaving foster care by partnering with your local child welfare agency, Independent Living Program, and community-based agencies so that they know you will take FYI vouchers and so that you have the support of those who work with young adults leaving foster care. There are many partners who want to work with you and make your participation in the FYI program as easy as possible.

You can find more about the FYI program [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

**Fostering Youth to Independence Vouchers: The Role of Public Housing Authorities**

1. **What is the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Voucher Program?**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides housing choice vouchers (HCVs) for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care and are an excellent resource for our communities to support young people. Their advocacy, led by ACTION Ohio and the National Center for Housing and Child Welfare, led to the FYI program becoming law and ensuring that housing vouchers can be provided “on demand” for young adults with experience in foster care to improve their transition to adulthood.

These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies or juvenile probation departments to support young people. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person. These types of vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/fss) (FSS).

1. **Who is Eligible for an FYI Voucher?**

The FYI program provides housing vouchers for young people with experience in foster care, including probation-supervised foster youth. Eligible young adults meet the following criteria:

* 1. 18 through 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday), and
  2. Have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, and
  3. Are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless when they were age 16 or older.

1. **How Does FYI Benefit Young People?**

Stable housing is crucial for young people to successfully transition into adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals. But young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including their age and lack of family support, which most young adults rely on for their first apartment. The FYI program can be a lifeline and critical stepping stone for young adults as they move from foster care into the adult world.

1. **What is the Role of PHAs in Helping Young Adults Secure Stable Housing by Distributing FYI Vouchers?**

PHAs are a critical partner in making FYI vouchers available to young people in our communities. Any PHA capable of administering HCVs are eligible to request FYI vouchers. Once the PHA partners with the Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA), it is able to request FYI vouchers for young people following the PCWA’s referral of an eligible young adult. Once the PHA verifies the young person’s HCV eligibility, it will simply email HUD and request an FYI voucher. PHAs can provide or connect the individual with any of their services or programs, but it is the PCWA that is responsible for arranging or providing any support services.

PHAs can partner with as many PCWAs as they want. PHAs can request up to 50 FYI vouchers a year. They can request up to 25 and then ask for another 25 vouchers per year as long as they meet certain requirements related to voucher utilization, which have been expanded pursuant to a [recent notice from HUD](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/OCHCO/documents/2023-04pihn.pdf). PHA’s may request additional vouchers even if they do not meet the required utilization rates in certain exceptional circumstances, which includes when a voucher has been issued, but a unit has not yet been leased up.

For more information about the FYI program go [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

**Foster Youth to Independence Housing Vouchers: What Young People Need to Know**

1. **What is the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Housing Voucher Program?**

The FYI Program provides a type of housing voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care. A housing voucher pays for a portion of your rent: usually a voucher holder pays 30% of their income in rent or is asked to pay some minimum amount of rent. The voucher covers the remaining portion of your rent. You can use the voucher to rent an apartment in the community that you select in the area covered by the Housing Authority.

In the FYI program, the child welfare agency (or for probation-supervised foster youth, the juvenile probation department) refers you to the local housing authority for a voucher and offers you supportive services, then the housing authority gives you the voucher. While the child welfare agency refers you for a voucher, this is not a foster care program; the voucher belongs to you. You can stay in the FYI program for three years, with the opportunity for two more years if you participate in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://vimeo.com/338260366) or a similar program. These are programs that help you save money while you maintain stable housing.

1. **Who is eligible for FYI?**

You may be eligible for FYI if you answer yes to all of the following:

* Are you currently, or were you previously, in foster care?
* Are you currently between ages 18 and 25?
* Since you turned 16, have you ever been or are you now homeless or at risk of losing your housing?

1. **How does FYI benefit young people?**

An FYI voucher helps you stay housed so you can focus on work, school, planning and meeting goals for your future. When you are in the FYI program, you can choose to be connected with support services to help you maintain your housing and meet your goals. Examples of these **optional** support services include: 1. help with employment or school, 2. getting connected with mental health services, 3. financial management support

1. **How can I get an FYI voucher?**

Ask your social worker, probation officer, or your Independent Living Program (ILP) Worker (if you have one) to refer you to the housing authority for a FYI voucher. If you don’t have a current caseworker, you can contact your prior social worker or probation officer, or your county’s ILP coordinator; a statewide list available [here](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yk5YMFRTDSccxqWyRAvCm2WuoyRdvUjQeu6IxEu39t8/edit#gid=0). The child welfare agency will confirm your eligibility and then can make the referral.

Once your application is submitted to the housing authority, the housing authority will ask you to complete forms to determine your eligibility for the voucher. This includes asking you about your income and how many people you live with, for example. Once the housing authority determines you are eligible, they can email HUD (the Department of Housing and Urban Development) and ask them to distribute a voucher that the housing authority will give to you.

The timeline for this process can vary. It is important to know that some counties have been slower to get their FYI programs up and running. If you have asked your caseworker, ILP worker and/or dependency attorney or juvenile defender (if you have one) to make a referral

but nothing has happened, you will likely need help from a legal aid attorney. Here is a [website](https://www.lawhelpca.org/) where you can find your local legal aid attorneys.

You can find out more information about the FYI program [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

**Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers: The Role of Judges**

1. **What is the Foster Youth to Independence Housing Voucher Program?**

The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program provides a type of housing choice voucher for young people who are leaving or have left foster care.  These vouchers were developed to improve housing security for youth aging out of foster care. FYI was designed by young people who were in foster care and experienced homelessness after aging out. These vouchers can be requested by Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) when they collaborate with local child welfare agencies of probation departments. The PHA will provide the voucher and the child welfare agency provides or arranges for support services for the young person. These support services are voluntary. FYI vouchers last for three years, but can be extended for two additional years if the young adult is participating in the [Family Self Sufficiency Program](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/fss) (FSS) or similar programs. These are programs that support employment, education, and incentivize saving.

1. **Who is eligible for an FYI voucher?**

Eligible youth (including probation supervised foster youth) meet the following criteria.

1. Are 18 through 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday), and
2. Have left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, and
3. Are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless when they were age 16 or older.
4. **How does the FYI program benefit young people?**

Stable housing is crucial for young people to successfully transition to adulthood. Without stable housing, young adults face significant challenges to meet their education and employment goals. But young people aging out of foster care face many barriers to securing safe and affordable housing, including their age and lack of family support, which many young adults rely on for their first apartment. The FYI program can be a critical stepping stone for young adults as they move from foster care into the adult world.  

1. **What is the role of judges in helping young adults secure stable housing by accessing FYI vouchers?**

Judges can help ensure that young people in their community access FYI vouchers as part of their role in overseeing the transition planning process and as a key child welfare leader who can bring important stakeholders together.

**In individual cases, judges should:**

* Oversee the transition planning process, which begins at age 16, at permanency review hearings and ensure that the plan contains a thoughtful and concrete plan for housing that includes a consideration of all options such as FYI.
* Order that a referral to the Housing Authority(ies) in the county for an FYI voucher be made at least 90 days before the youth discharges from foster care and ask for frequent updates on the status of the referral.
* Order that the child welfare agency assist the youth in completing any applications required by the Housing Authority.
* Refuse to discharge the youth’s case (if the youth is in agreement) in accordance with the law if the youth does not have an adequate housing plan and the child welfare agency has
* not made a referral for an FYI voucher or assisted the youth in moving forward with a referral; request frequent updates on the status of the referral.

**If the county child welfare agency or probation department has not yet implemented the FYI program, judges should:**

* Require the county child welfare agency and probation department to report to the court on a quarterly basis the number of young people who leave both systems who are homeless or are housing insecure.
* Convene a meeting between the child welfare agency and probation department and Housing Authorities located in the county to facilitate collaboration to implement FYI.
* Use the leadership role of the court to encourage the involvement of community-based agencies that can provide and connect young people with voluntary support services.

For more information on FYI, see [here](https://www.ylc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FYIFUP-Housing-as-a-Former-or-Current-Foster-Youth.pdf).

***Instructions for use****: This template can be used by an advocate or attorney to ask that the child welfare agency make a referral for a young person to the Public Housing Authority for an FYI voucher. However, all of the areas in highlighted yellow require editing to include the relevant factual information for your situation.*

**REQUEST TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR A FYI PROGRAM for FUP VOUCHER TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Dear [Child Welfare of Probation Department Administrator] and [ILP Coordinator]:

I am the [advocate or lawyer] for [name of young person]. I am requesting that you make a referral to the local housing authority for a Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Voucher for this young person. If Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers are available in the county, I request that the young person be referred for a FUP voucher as well.

[Youth] is eligible for the FYI and FUP program. [She/he/they] is age [enter youth’s current age, which must be at least age 18 and under age 25 ];[will age out of foster care or has aged out, depending on the facts of your case]; and [is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless depending on your case]. The young person is receiving the following support services [describe any support services the youth is receiving, including any Chafee Independent Living services, behavioral health services or supports, workforce services, campus-based supports, mentoring etc. If they are not receiving any services, delete this sentence].

[If the youth is still in foster care and aging out, add: I am requesting that the transition plan for the youth include making a referral for a FYI voucher and any other housing assistance that they are eligible for and that I be invited to the next transition planning meeting to discuss housing supports.]

[If the youth is out of foster care, but under 21 and therefore eligible for Chafee services add: I am requesting that a case plan for Chafee services be developed and that a referral for a FYI voucher and any other housing assistance that they are eligible for be included in that plan and that a planning meeting be convened to discuss this referral and housing supports.

Per PIH Notice 2021-26, Public Housing Authorities (PHA) that administer Housing Choice Vouchers may request FYI vouchers for eligible young people like [YOUTH’S NAME] as long as they are collaborating with the child welfare agency or probation department and that the child welfare agency is able to document the provision of services for the young person. The child welfare agency does not need to provide the services themselves. The PHA can request vouchers in increments as small as one at a time, making it possible for [name of child welfare agency or probation department] to request one voucher for [YOUTH’S NAME].

Because [YOUTH’s NAME] is eligible for an FYI voucher I am happy to work with you to prepare the request to the PHA for a FYI voucher.

Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. I am happy to meet and talk further about how we can work together to support [YOUTH’s NAME] in making a safe and stable transition to adulthood.

Sincerely,

cc: [Youth’s attorney if in foster care or recently discharged]

***Instructions for use****: This template can be used by a young person to ask that the child welfare agency make a referral to the Public Housing Authority for an FYI or FUP housing voucher. Please input the information requested in the highlighted sections to fit your situation.*

**REQUEST TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR A FYI PROGRAM for FUP VOUCHER TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Dear [Child Welfare or Probation Department Administrator]:

My name is [ ]. I am requesting that you make a referral to the local housing authority for a Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Voucher for me for the reasons described below. If Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers are available in the county, I request that I be referred for a FUP voucher as well.

I am [enter your age age, which must be at least age 18 and under age 25] and I [will age out of foster care or have aged out, depending on your situation]. I am [homeless or at risk of becoming homeless depending on your situation].

I believe that I am eligible for an FYI voucher or FUP voucher and ask that you refer me to the Housing Authority right away. I am happy to work with you to prepare the request to the PHA for an FYI or FUP voucher.

Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. Please contact me [include the best way and times to get in contact with you] I am happy to meet and talk further about how we can work together so I can get into stable housing.

Sincerely,

***Instructions for use****: This template can be used by an advocate to ask that the child welfare agency make a referral to the Public Housing Authority for an FYI or FUP housing voucher. Please input the information requested in the highlighted sections to fit your situation.*

**REQUEST TO THE CHILD WELFARE AGENCY OR PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR A FYI PROGRAM for FUP VOUCHER TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Dear [Child Welfare or Probation Department Administrator] and [ILP Coordinator]:

My name is [full name] and I am an advocate for young people with experience in foster care. I am writing to request information about the Foster Youth to Independence Program (FYI). Finding affordable and safe housing continues to be a significant challenge for young people as they leave foster care. We were thrilled to find out that innovations in the Foster Youth to Independence Voucher Program in the last few years make it an important resource for providing housing stability for young people. Here are a few highlights:

* Not only can your agency work with a Housing Authority to potentially request as many as 100 vouchers per year, you can work with more than one Housing Authority to maximize the number of vouchers available to young people.
* By participating in the Family Self Sufficiency Program, a young adult’s 3-year voucher can be extended an extra two years while they build up savings.
* Child welfare agencies and probation departments can provide support services or simply arrange for them or connect young people with community-based services.

Given the critical nature of the FYI program, I am writing to request the following information:

1. Who is the main point of contact for the FYI program?
2. What is the referral process for the FYI program?
3. How many Housing Authorities are you working within the county?

[Please add any additional questions. This is a list to get you started.]

[If you or your agency is interested in playing a specific role, like making referrals to the child welfare agency or directly to the PHA, make that request here.]

Please contact me within 7 business days to let me know your response to my request. I can be reached at [include your contact information]. I am happy to meet and talk further about how my organization can collaborate to improve housing stability for young people through access to FYI vouchers.

Sincerely,