

Step Downs, Alternatives, & Services for the Target Population

As noted in the 2021 Realignment Plan, Alameda County does not believe that incarcerating youth in secure facilities represents an effective response to the underlying causes of delinquency; and it remains committed to decreasing the use such facilities as well as the length of time that youth are removed from their families and communities. To achieve the goals and objectives of decarceration the County will implement a multi-pronged targeting the following priority areas: community engagement and service gap analysis; increasing community-based prevention services and avoiding removal; expanding community-based supports and resources for family/home-based care models; developing an enhanced support model for transitional housing-NMD and PLUS; adapting Camp Sweeney for alternative use including as a step down; identifying, adapting, and developing additional nonsecure options to fill assessed gaps.

To meet the needs of the target population, and the legislature’s expressed goals for juvenile justice realignment, there must be a full continuum of services and placement to meet the youth’s needs. This includes everything from services to avoid removing children from their families or deepening involvement in the delinquency system to meaningful step down and reentry services to avoid returning to the system. While there are many gaps to fill and significant needs within the population, Alameda County is well-positioned to capitalize on a variety of developments in youth services and systems over the last several years—some of which have taken place since the passage of SB 823. The action plan described below is designed to make the best use of these options and as well as the County’s unique resources.

BREAKOUT OR SET APART

CalAIM

CalAIM is a multi-year, multi-billion dollar initiative designed to transform and strengthen the delivery of services through California’s Medicaid health system- Medi-Cal. The initiative’s [stated goals](#) are to: (1) identify and manage comprehensive needs through “whole person care,” (2) improve quality outcomes and reduce health disparities, and (3) make Medi-Cal more navigable for enrollees. Cal AIM expands and eases eligibility to access Medi-Cal services including key initiatives highlighted here. As a result of eligibility changes **all** youth with involvement in the child welfare system, juvenile justice system, or who are experiencing homelessness now automatically meet access criteria for specialty mental health services.

Justice Involved-Initiative

Recognizing that justice-involved individuals are at higher risk for poor health outcomes and “face disproportionate risk of trauma, violence, overdose and suicide,” [CalAIM offers a new](#)

[opportunity](#) to support individuals as they reenter the community and for the 90 days prior to their release. Individuals may now enroll in Medi-Cal and receive targeted services 3 months prior to release to provide continuity of care. Community providers may be working with individuals in facilities and continue upon release. It will ensure Medi-Cal enrollment prior to release and allow for coordinated community care including Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports. All incarcerated youth are eligible regardless of clinical criteria.

Enhanced Care Management

This represents California's first statewide [effort to address complex care management](#). The goal is to overcome barriers and obstacles that people with complex needs experience when attempting to access care of all kinds. It will address both clinical and non-clinical needs and work with individuals regardless of location or circumstances. An "enhanced care manager will physical, behavioral, dental, developmental, and social services delivery systems, making it easier for them to get the right care at the right time."

Community Supports

These [new resources](#) are designed to meet various unmet needs of individuals with complex needs to address some of the social drivers of health. Presently, there are 14 new Community Supports that plans are encouraged to offer including some of particularly relevant to the juvenile justice population: Housing Transition Navigation Services, Housing Deposits, Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services, Caregiver Respite Services, Personal Care and Homemaker Services, Sobering Centers, and Asthma Remediation.

Transitional Rent Waiver Program

This service allows payment of rent or provision of housing for up to 6 months to support individuals during a transition from an institutional level of care, incarceration, or the foster care system who are at risk of inpatient patient hospitalization or emergency room visits.

Complex Care Resources

Child-Specific Support

Beginning in FY 2021/22, the State began offering a new source of funding for individual youth services or care that will keep them in a family setting or in the least restrictive environment. Some examples of covered services include: additional intensive mental health services that are not billable to Medi-Cal, respite care provided by ISFC/TFC parents as part of a step-down plan, a higher stipend so a caregiver can serve as a "professional" foster parent, enhanced rates for FFA-based ISFC programs that provide additional supportive services to youth and families, provision of coaching visits for parents, payment for extracurricular activities, supplementing current wraparound contracts, paying for open bed space to allow for immediate placement, respite care, or to hold a bed when a youth needs more acute treatment temporarily, intensive

family finding activities, and costs of travel and activities to support bonding between a youth and family members to re-establish familial connections.

Capacity Building Funds

Housing

Home Key-

END BREAK OUT SET APART

Community Engagement and Gap Analysis

- Community Partner Meetings
- Anonymous Engagement from Youth with Experience in County Facilities
- Youth Advisory Group Engagement
- County Resource and Placement Analysis – including specific to girls and gender nonconforming youth as recommended by VERA
- Data Review – including specific to girls and gender nonconforming youth as recommended by VERA

Increasing Community-Based Prevention Services and Avoiding Removal

- Assessing Use and Enhancing Effectiveness of Available Options
- CalAIM Newly Available Resources
- FFPSA Prevention Services
- Early, Coordinated, Non-punitive case plan development by a qualified social worker or health professional

Expanding Community-Based Supports and Resources for Family/Home-Based Care Models

Alameda County Probation Department and the County's community partners are dedicated to keeping youth in and returning youth to family settings whenever and wherever possible. To accomplish this goal the Department will make the most effective use of child-specific complex care supports; develop a pilot to establish a supportive, family-based foster home model; and utilize capacity-building funds to establish alternative options for justice-involved youth with complex needs.

Child-Specific Complex Care

- Add current steps and efforts that the department has already undertaken
- Steps that the Department will undertake
 - Establish a dedicated team within probation to partner with community providers
 - Develop expertise in identifying and creatively meeting complex needs
 - Receive training and technical assistance regarding the available funding and support for complex care needs and individual case planning
 - Contract for next-level needs assessments and service plan development (e.g. UC Davis)
 - Streamline and support requests for individualized services and/ or specialized rates

Supportive, family-based foster home model

Alameda County aims to provide a structured and service rich family-based setting for young people in the juvenile justice system that both avoids incarceration and supports youth in their transition from more restrictive settings to the community as they navigate toward adulthood. There is a current lack of family-based settings for justice-involved youth in the County, particularly of homes that can provide support and services tailored to young people in and leaving the juvenile justice system. There are also gaps in programming to provide the needed support and training for caregivers to provide this type of care effectively.

To address this, the Department will engage with community providers to plan and implement a pilot program for young people under the age of 21 who are removed from their homes of origin, and could benefit from a family-based placement wrapped in robust community-based services and supports.

Potential Funding to Explore:

- Title IV-E for young people with orders for foster care placement for placement maintenance and administrative costs;
- Medi-Cal for an array of physical and behavioral health services;
- Chafee funds;
- Child specific complex care funds (to provide for any additional child specific needs [ACL 21-119](#);
- Capacity building complex care funds pursuant to [ACL 21-143](#).

Desired Collaborators: Juvenile Probation Department, ACBHCS, ACSSA, Mockingbird Society, Catalyst Center, YLC's Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), CURYJ, the Young

Women's Freedom Center

Resources:

- **Videos and Background:** <https://www.mockingbirdsociety.org/our-work/mockingbirdfamily>
- **Reports and Evaluations:** <https://www.mockingbirdsociety.org/reports> (scroll down)
- **The Mockingbird Family Model: An Innovative Approach to Child Welfare Reform,** https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/MFM_Brochure_2010.pdf

Pilot Details

- This model aims to provide enhanced support to youth and to caregivers by creating a group of foster homes that are connected to one another and connected to the support of a central “hub” home.
- The pilot will serve 8 young people through the provision of 8 family foster care/kinship homes (one youth per home) and 1 hub home with no young people assigned.
- The hub home is staffed by foster parents with more experience, who are able to support the satellite homes through peer-to-peer support and training, respite care, and as the hub of the community for events, celebrations, and other gatherings.

Mockingbird Family is a specific model developed by the Mockingbird Society. This pilot proposes to adopt that model in Alameda County for this population of young people. The following supports are provided to satellite homes, made up of resource parents or existing kin resources:

1. Training
2. Peer support
3. Resource and service navigation
4. Family counseling/clinical support for family unit
5. Financial assistance
6. Emergency in-home caregivers
7. Respite provided by other satellite homes or hub home

Supports for Hub Home Caregivers

1. Training
2. Clinical support
3. Financial assistance to support increased expectations for community activities and support.
4. The Pilot may include professional foster parents for the Hub Home to

provide enhanced support and structure.

Supports for Youth

1. Peer support
2. Funding for enrichment activities
3. Supervision based on need that can be provided during time in the community and at home
4. Connection to and coordination of all Medi-Cal services
5. Academic and employment advocacy and coaching

Youth-specific interventions developed identified through the child-family team (CFT). These could include: additional intensive specialty services that are not billable to Medi-Cal, supplementing current wraparound contracts, providing additional coaching for caregivers.

Developing an Enhanced Support Model for Transitional Housing- NMD and PLUS

Justice-Involved Youth face extraordinary challenges with finding and maintaining housing. Even when they are eligible for existing transitional housing options, their particular constellation of needs often prevent them from accessing transitional housing or cause them to lose the housing they receive. To address this challenge, and to provide a new and more supportive option to a wider group of young people, the county will under take two related pilots to developed Enhanced Transitional Housing Placements using the existing NMD and PLUS models.

[Enhanced Transitional Housing Placement for Non-Minor Dependents \(E-THP-NMD\)](#)

This pilot will provide a structured and service rich semi-independent living arrangement for young people who are involved with or were involved with the juvenile justice system. It will create both an alternative to the use of custodial options and also serve as a step down and much needed bridge from the system and to the community and into adulthood.

Currently, there is no age-appropriate settings for transition-aged youth involved in the justice system that can provide tailored support and appropriate levels of supervision, guidance, and independence to meet young people's needs and satisfy the conditions of the Court. To meet this need, the Department will collaborate with transitional housing providers and community members to design an Enhanced THP program for people between ages 18 and 21 who are eligible for AB 12 placement and services and are either at risk of secure confinement or moving from a secure placement to a less restrictive

setting.

Potential Funding Sources to Explore:

- Title IV-E to cover placement maintenance and administrative costs at the current THP-NMD rate;
- Medi-Cal for an array of physical and behavioral health services;
- Medi-Cal/ CalAIM Community Support Services to help stabilize and maintain youth in this less restrictive setting;
- Chafee Funded Services;
- Child specific complex care funds (to provide for any additional child specific needs [ACL 21-119](#);
- Capacity building complex care funds pursuant to [ACL 21-143](#)

Desired Collaborators: Juvenile Probation Department, ACBHCS, ACSSA, Catalyst Center, Transitional Housing Providers, CURYJ, the Young Women’s Freedom Center

Background on THP-NMD: THP-NMD programs offer supervised, transitional housing services to nonminor dependent foster youth under the supervision of the county welfare department or the juvenile probation department. THP-NMD can be provided in various forms. For this pilot, we are recommending a staffed site in which a participant lives in an apartment owned, rented, or leased by a transitional housing placement provider either with an adult employee of the provider who provides supervision, or in a building in which one or more adult employees of the provider reside and provide supervision. THP-NMD is a foster care placement for youth in extended foster care and is federally reimbursable.

Pilot Details

- The pilot will serve 8 young adults (with or without children)
- The pilot will take the already developed THP-NMD model and enhance it to serve this population of young people.
- The pilot will use the staffed site model for THP-NMD in which the young person lives in an apartment rented or leased by the THP-NMD provider, with a resident advisor or staff person living on site. See HSC 1559.110(d)(2).
- Young people will receive all of the services provided in THP-NMD programs, which are detailed here at page 33:
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CCL/Childrens-Residential-Licensing/ILS/AB12-THPP-ILSVer2.pdf?ver=2021-11-04-122728-973> These services are geared at supporting a young person in developing the skills and competencies they need to thrive in the adult world.

In addition to these services, E-THP-NMD will provide the following to young people:

- Provision of a peer coach
- Provision of a mentor
- Educational advocacy for secondary and postsecondary programs.
- Employment advocacy and career counseling
- 24-hour crisis intervention and support
- Family finding and engagement
- Family counseling and support
- Provision of the following Medi-Cal services: medication support services, targeted case management, therapeutic behavioral services, Pathways to Well-Being services (Intensive Care Coordination, crisis intervention services, crisis stabilization services, day treatment intensive services, day rehabilitation services)
- Public benefits advocacy
- Connection to community resources and services
- Funding for enrichment and leisure activities
- Reentry services as indicated by the youth's individualized plan
- Services specific to parenting youth
- Young people will be provided incentives for service engagement and for taking leadership roles in program activities. This builds on the insights that adolescents and young people learn through practice and through reward.

[Enhanced Transitional Housing Program Plus for Young People Ages 21-25 \(E-THP-Plus\)](#)

In addition to the NMD pilot described above, the County will also work with transitional housing providers and community members to develop a similar program using the existing THP-Plus model for young people between ages 21-25 who were AB 12 eligible.

Potential Funding Streams to Explore:

- THP-Plus funds;
- Medi-Cal for an array of physical and behavioral health services;
- Housing navigation and maintenance funds
- Medi-Cal/ CalAIM Community Support Services;
- CalAIM Transitional Rent Waivers.

Desired Collaborators: Juvenile Probation Department, ACBHCS, ACSSA, Catalyst Center, Transitional Housing Providers, CURYJ, the Young Women's Freedom Center

Background on Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus): THP-Plus is a state-funded transitional housing program designed to provide housing and supportive transitional services to former foster youth who are 18 to 25 years of age, including youth who were placed in foster care by juvenile probation.

THP-Plus provides eligible young people housing and support services. This program can be provided for up to 36 months or when a young adult turns 25.

Pilot Details

- The pilot will serve 8 young adults (with or without children)
- The pilot will take the already developed THP-Plus model and enhance it to serve this population of young people.
- The pilot will provide apartments for young people in a clustered fashion (ideally 4 units in one building or complex and 4 units in another building or complex.) There will be a staff apartment in each cluster of 4 units.
- Young people will receive all of the services provided in THP-Plus programs, which are detailed here:
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/ord/entres/getinfo/pdf/ssman4.pdf> (page 168-172).

These services are geared at supporting a young person develop the skills and competencies they need to thrive in the adult world and allow the young person to have growing independence while still receiving support and guidance.

In addition to the standard THP-plus services, E-THP-Plus will provide the same enhanced services as Pilot B1.:

- Provision of a peer coach
- Provision of a mentor
- Educational advocacy for secondary and postsecondary programs.
- Employment advocacy and career counseling
- 24-hour crisis intervention and support
- Family finding and engagement
- Family counseling and support
- Provision and coordination of Medi-Cal services including the following: medication support services, targeted case management, therapeutic behavioral services
- Public benefits advocacy
- Reentry services as indicated by the youth's individualized plan
- Services specific to parenting youth
- Connection to community resources and services

- Funding for enrichment and leisure activities
- Young people will be provided incentives for service engagement and for taking leadership roles in program activities. This builds on the insights that adolescents and young people learn through practice and through reward.

Adapting Camp Sweeney for Alternative Use Including as Step Down

Like all counties across the state, Alameda has struggled to quickly identify and implement a plan for youth to step down from secure its SYTF. It has taken some steps to prepare Camp Sweeney to serve in this capacity (described below) and to locate additional resources.

Updates on Progress or New Information Since Last Plan

- Action plan to build out programming, physical plant, staffing requirements, and community programming.
- Aspects of Programming:
 - Coordination in the transfer from Secure Track to Camp. College classes and other activities occur seamlessly when young people move from Secure Track to Camp.
 - Every young person has an individualized case plan.
 - Programs should be rooted in youth development not coercion and/or control.
 - Trauma screenings.
 - The activities should build on the strengths of the young people and those in their orbit.
 - A Clinical Case Management Team that works at the start of the step-down that follows the young person into the community.
 - Families and loved ones should be involved in the case planning and re-entry planning.
 - Therapy/Groups.
 - Access to therapists of color.
 - Transformative Mentoring (Credible Messengers.)
 - Everyone leaves with a CA DL, of ID and a Social Security card.
 - A third party outside of Probation does re-entry planning and execution.
 - There should be expectations for achievement (this is a bit tricky because it means different things to different people.)
 - School, a job and job training.

Identifying, Adapting, and Developing Additional Nonsecure Options to Fill Assessed Gaps

- Explore and develop options with Phoenix House
- Discuss partnership options with new transitional model being developed by the Young Women's Freedom Center
- Assess current contract and use of Malabar House – including options for relicensing under a currently available licensing category and adapting to meet different population needs