



# Meaningful Aftercare in RHY Programs

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Wednesday, June 17 | 1:00 - 4:00 pm ET

**RHYTTAC**

Runaway and Homeless Youth Training,  
Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building Center

# Welcome

NOW



## Meaningful Aftercare in RHY Programs

*90 Minute Training*

2:30 PM ET



## Transition

*15 Minute Break*

2:45 PM ET



## Program-Specific Sessions

*Join your program track: BCP, TLP, MGH (No SOP track)*

3:55 PM ET



## Closing

*We'll share the CEU and evaluation form*

# Meet the Presenters

**Tim D. Joyce, MPA**

Program Specialist

Division of Runaway and Homeless Youth

Administration for Children and Families

# Learning Objectives

1. Gain understanding of formal aftercare requirements
2. Identify best practices in aftercare for your program(s)
3. Apply best practices to common aftercare challenges

# Agenda

- Explain statutory, regulatory, and sub-regulatory aftercare requirements for BCP, MGH, and TLP.
- Examine aftercare best practices to meaningfully and effectively support youth exiting RHY programs.
- Explore common aftercare challenges and solutions through real-world scenarios.
- Respond to participant questions.

# Aftercare Requirements for RHY Programs



# Aftercare Definition

**Aftercare**, according to the RHY Rule ([45 CFR § 1351.1](#)), means additional services provided beyond the period of residential stay that offer continuity and supportive follow-up to youth served by the program.

# General Aftercare Requirements



Grantees shall develop an aftercare plan, covering at least 3 months, to stay in contact with youth who leave the program to ensure their ongoing safety and access to services.



A youth's individual aftercare plan shall outline what services are and will be provided as well as the youth's housing status during and after the program.

# General Aftercare Requirements (cont.)



The aftercare plan shall be provided to the youth in exit counseling or before.



Follow-up efforts shall be made for all youth.



For those contacted after 3 months, the aftercare plan shall be updated to record the rate of participation and completion of the services in the plan at 3 months after exiting the program. (45 CFR 1351.26)

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

**Fiscal Year 2025  
Basic Center Program**



## **NOFO Requirements:**

- You must continue to provide services for 3 months after the youth has left your shelter.
- You must develop an aftercare strategy with each youth within 3 days of beginning shelter and services.
- The strategy must include a plan for permanent placement as well as the youth's input about the support and services they need to achieve their personal goals.
- Prepare youth for transitioning from your project and how you will provide aftercare services for a period of 3 months after project exit. The description must include, at a minimum:
  - Develop a written transition plan with each youth that meets their needs and supports safe and stable living.

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

**Fiscal Year 2025**

**Basic Center Program**



## **NOFO Requirements Continued:**

- Ensure youth have access to important documents and paperwork, as needed (such as birth certificates, social security cards, driver's licenses or state identification cards, medical records, and credit reports).
- Conduct aftercare services for each youth who exits your program for at least three months: How your project will develop an aftercare strategy that outlines how you will maintain contact to ensure each youth's ongoing safety and documents the following: services, referrals, and counseling offered related to healthcare and insurance coverage.
- Document the youth's housing status, educational services, and rates of participation in and completion of the services.

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

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**Fiscal Year 2025**

**Basic Center Program**



## **NOFO Requirements (Cont.):**

- Document evidence of regular contact (including all attempts to contact) for a period of three months and how, if applicable, services beyond 3 months will be documented.
- Provide assistance in obtaining appropriate educational, vocational, training, or employment services (including coordination with McKinney-Vento school district liaisons, designated under the McKinney-Vento Act).
- Provide supportive services to assist in job advancement or post-secondary education and training.
- Provide support in improving social and emotional well-being and permanent connections.

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

**Fiscal Year 2025**

**MGH & TLP**



## **NOFO Requirements:**

- You must also provide services to youth for a minimum of three months after they leave your program.
- You must develop an aftercare strategy with each youth prior to exit counseling.
- The strategy must include a plan to maintain contact with each youth to ensure their ongoing safety, stability, and access to services.

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

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**Fiscal Year 2025**

**MGH & TLP**



## **NOFO Requirements Continued:**

Aftercare must include, at minimum, the following:

- Documentation of evidence of regular contact (including attempts to contact) for at least three months.
- Documentation of the youth's housing status, educational services, and the rate of participation and completion of the services in the plan beyond three months, if services are still provided.
- A referral process that ensures partnering agencies provided support to the referred youth.

# Aftercare Requirements

*Notice of Funding Opportunity-specific*

**Fiscal Year 2025  
MGH & TLP**



## **NOFO Requirements Continued:**

- A plan to help the youth and their dependent children stay connected with their schools or obtain appropriate educational services, including coordination with McKinney-Vento school district liaisons.
- Proactive and reactive strategies to encourage retention in education, employment, and housing.
- Proactive and reactive strategies to encourage dependent children's retention in school, child care, and regular well-child checkups.
- Supportive services to help youth advance to better jobs.
- Help improve social and emotional well-being and permanent connections.

# Aftercare Best Practices: Effectively Supporting Youth



# Guiding Principles of Aftercare Work

- Focuses on long-term stability
- Encourages authentic youth leadership role
- Diverse and high-quality aftercare supports
- Continuous quality improvement
- Realistic/attainable goals



# Effective Aftercare

## What Makes Aftercare Effective?

- Enabling youth-led aftercare plans
- Empowering opportunities
- Comprehensive & collaborative work
- Flexibility

# Aftercare Starts at Intake

- Using a positive youth development (PYD) approach
- Resource mapping
- Opportunities to build supports
- Identify needs and strengths

# Connections to Resources

- Plan for the future
- Linkage to resources and support network in youth's local community
- Opportunities to engage in productive learning or employment

# Programmatic Focus on Aftercare

- Culture of aftercare
- Beyond basic requirements
- Individualized aftercare plans



# Accountability and Monitoring

- Aftercare plans are living documents
- Establish regular and intentional contacts
- Co-design shared expectations and guidelines
- Involve youth

# Transition Plan: Key Questions

- Where are you going to live?
- Will you be attending school or working?
- How will you pay your bills?
- What is your transportation plan?
- Do you have all the documents you need?
  - Identification Card/Birth Certificate/Social Security Card
  - Insurance Information
- Who will you contact in case of an emergency?
- Do you have necessary medical/mental health provider information?
- What are your concerns?

# Aftercare Contacts: Key Questions

- How, when, and where was the contact made?
- How are you doing?
- What is your current living situation?
- How long have you been at the location?
- What services are you receiving (e.g., medical, mental health, other)?
- Have they been engaging with referral partners?

# Aftercare Contacts (Cont.)

- Any change in employment status?
- School attendance or progress on educational goals?
- Do any revisions need to be made to the aftercare plan?
- Does the youth have any specific requests for your organization?
- Were any new referrals made?



# Aftercare Contacts for Parenting Youth

- Any updates on infant/child?
- Any Child & Youth Services (CYS) involvement or changes since last contact?

# Organizational Focus on Aftercare

- Not just for workers and youth
- Broad network of traditional supports
- Community partnerships and collaboration
- Documentation and outcomes
- Prevention as aftercare
- Mentorship opportunities
- Board opportunities

# Aftercare Challenges and Opportunities: Real-World Scenarios



# Challenge: Anthony, age 21

Anthony is set to transition out of the Transitional Living Program (TLP) in 25 days. During his stay, he has engaged in some aspects of his Life Skills Plan, including maintaining employment at over 30 hours a week, engaging in therapy with the Clinical Counselor, working with his Case Manager to shop for apartments, and has even signed a lease for a one-bedroom that's near the job. Anthony told the overnight Resident Advisor that he feels that developing a formal aftercare plan with his Case Manager negates the huge accomplishments he's made over the past year and a half, stating he can depend on himself and his friends if any challenges arise after exiting the program.

***What is the opportunity in this scenario?***

## Challenge: Alex, age 17

Alex seems to be doing a great job two months after leaving the BCP program. According to text messages to his Case Manager, he has been sticking to their aftercare plan, maintaining employment, continuing an evening class, and attending most of his scheduled therapy appointments. However, the Case Manager is frustrated because, despite Alex originally agreeing to meet at the program site every two weeks for aftercare sessions, he has canceled every time, stating that he is too busy with “life stuff” to make it all the way to the site. The Case Manager is worried about compliance issues due to not meeting aftercare requirements, and has several donated food and household items piling up, that Alex was supposed to pick up.

***What is the opportunity in this scenario?***

# Challenge: Danielle

Danielle, a Life Skills Counselor, attended the *Meaningful Aftercare* session at the 2024 RHY National Training, and learned about some of the best practices to incentivize youth who have exited the program to stay in engaged in aftercare. She brought these ideas to her Supervisor, since many program youth have been inconsistent in meeting or even maintaining contact during the three-month aftercare period. Her program's Director states that unfortunately they don't have the capacity to afford incentives like gift cards or gas cards, let alone creating an Aftercare Case Manager position. Danielle is unsure how to incentivize youth to meet for aftercare services sessions.

***What is the opportunity in this scenario?***

# Challenge: Jasmine

Jasmine left the Maternity Group Home (MGH) program abruptly with her eight-month-old baby after having the opportunity to rent an apartment with some friends. The Case Manager worked to quickly provide Jasmine with a list of resources for outpatient mental health therapy, food and diaper banks, and a place which will provide free gently used furnishings for the apartment. Due to the abrupt exit from the residential stay, Jasmine and the Case Manager were unable to finalize a formal aftercare plan. The program site is still receiving mail for Jasmine from the County benefits office and the State subsidized child care office, and the staff are concerned that Jasmine's medical assistance, SNAP, and child care are about to be cut off. Jasmine has not responded to calls, texts, or DMs which the Case Manager has been sending at least twice a week.

***What is the opportunity in this scenario?***

# Breakout Question 1

Sam is an RHY program case manager. There are currently 16 youth requiring aftercare services. The program is short-staffed, so Sam is responsible for all aftercare tasks, in addition to a caseload of 11 youth currently residing in the program. Some youth are actively engaged in following through on their aftercare plans, but many are not. Sam doesn't have a budget for things like gift cards or bus passes to use as incentives for youth to meet for aftercare sessions. What is the opportunity in this scenario?

## Breakout Question 2

Jessica left the program about two months ago and has been hard to get a hold of. Last night, she sent several long texts to the program's supervisor, stating that almost every aspect of her aftercare plan has not worked out. Housing fell through, so now she is couch surfing and sleeping in her car. She was constantly late to work due to a longer commute, and consequently lost her job. She has not kept up with her outpatient behavioral health therapy and 12-step meetings. She's also just realized her Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are shut off. She states she needs help from the program to find a new apartment immediately. What is the opportunity in this scenario?