

# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

## Re-entry: Coming Back into Foster Care

A new law called the California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB12/212/1712) has made important changes to foster care. Now that your case is closed, you have the option to come back into Extended Foster Care. If your case was open with DCFS, you will come back under dependency jurisdiction. If your case was open with probation, you will come back under transition jurisdiction.

### Who is eligible to re-enter foster care?

- ☞ You must be under an order for foster care placement with an open case on your 18th birthday.
- ☞ You must be younger than 20 in 2013 or younger than 21 in 2014.



### What is extended foster care?

It is foster care for young adults. Youth under extended foster care are entitled to housing and help that will prepare you to live on your own, including learning to manage finances, support to go to school, assistance finding a job, etc.

### How do I ask the court to re-open my case?

To get started, call, or go in person to your local Child Welfare or Probation office. When you call, tell them you need help re-opening your case.

- ☞ When you call the DCFS hotline or probation, tell them you need help re-opening your case.
- ☞ DCFS/Probation will ask you basic questions to see if you are eligible.
- ☞ Make sure you give them good information about how they can contact you.

### There are two important documents you will need to complete:

- ☞ Voluntary Re-entry Agreement (VRA, SOC 163): This says you want to come back into foster care.
- ☞ 388(e) Petition (also called JV-466): This is a legal document asking the court to re-open your case.

It is recommended that you sign the VRA (SOC 163) before or on the same day that you file the 388(e). *If you sign the VRA, the social worker/DPO is responsible for helping you file the 388(e).*

**If you are having problems reaching DCFS/Probation, it is your right to file the 388(e) petition on your own. To file on your own, go to the clerk's office at the Juvenile Court you attended or the county where you now live and request these forms: SOC 163 and JV-466. Fill them out and give them back to the clerk.**



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## Important tips

- ☞ Once you start the re-entry process, it could be up to six weeks before you go to court. If you signed the VRA, you should be getting help from Child Welfare/Probation right away.
- ☞ You will be assigned an attorney before your hearing. Child Welfare/Probation should give you the contact information.
  - ◆ Call your attorney ASAP and make sure s/he has your contact information.
  - ◆ If you are not getting appropriate housing or help, make sure to let your attorney know.
  - ◆ If you are having problems reopening your case or contacting your lawyer,

**contact the CA Youth Ombudsman**

**1-877-846-1602**

For more information, visit [kids-alliance.org](http://kids-alliance.org) or [clcla.org](http://clcla.org).



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