

September 8, 2006

DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NO. 06-07
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
 ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
 ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed. D.
 National Director
 Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Serving Students in the Foster Care System

1. Purpose. To provide information to the Job Corps community on connecting with foster care children in need of additional education and training, and providing transition assistance to current Job Corps students identified as foster children.

2. Background. The most recent data from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) show that over 500,000 American children live in foster care. Each year it is estimated that between 19,000 and 25,000 of these children, between the ages of 18 and 21, “age out” of the foster care system, and are forced to live on their own. Like many young adults, they are not equipped with the education, training, or life skills to successfully maintain employment, housing, and personal relationships. Furthermore, those aging out of foster care are less likely to have stable adult relationships with friends or family who can act as a safety net for them.

3. Resources. As outlined in our eligibility requirements, Job Corps is an ideal program to service foster children in need of additional education and training. Whether these youth are in stable homes or are in danger of aging out of the foster care system, Outreach and Admissions (OA) staff should take every opportunity to reach out to this population.

OA offices are encouraged to access the foster care system in their area by connecting with state agencies and programs. This includes speaking with state coordinators, participating on child welfare Youth Advisory Boards (YAB), and educating Job Corps staff on the various

assistance programs in their area. A state-by-state directory of these programs, state coordinators, and YABs can be found at the following Web site:

http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/state_pages.shtml.

In addition to educating eligible foster children about our program, it is also our obligation to ease the transition of current students who are foster children upon separation from the program. Effective immediately, foster children that separate from the program, who are eligible for placement services, will have the following casenote placed in their electronic file by the Job Corps Data Center.

“This Job Corps student has been identified to be part of the foster care system and may be eligible for additional federal funds and grants to assist with independent living, known as the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program. Check with your state's Independent Living coordinator by visiting <http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/resources/ilcoords.shtml>.”

As foster children begin career transition readiness, Job Corps centers and Career Transition offices should contact their state's Independent Living coordinator, at the address above, to connect eligible graduates and former enrollees with additional transition resources.

4. Action. Addressees are to ensure this Program Instruction is distributed to all appropriate staff.
5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.
6. Inquiries. Inquiries may be directed to Dennis Johnson at (202) 693-2876, or johnson.dennis@dol.gov.