



A TECHNICAL SUPPORT BULLETIN FOR JUDICIAL OFFICERS:

INDEPENDENT LIVING PLANNING

Juvenile Court Improvement Project
Oregon Judicial Department

SCOPE OF BULLETIN:

This Bulletin covers the 2003 legislative amendments to the juvenile code on independent living planning:

- ORS 419B.343, regarding case planning, and
- ORS 419B.476, relating to permanency hearings.

In cases where a ward is 14 years or older, if appropriate, and in all cases in which a ward is 16 or older, these amendments require DHS to ensure that case planning addresses “the ward’s needs and goals for a successful transition to independent living, including needs and goals related to housing, physical and mental health, education, employment, community connections and supportive relationships.”

REVIEW REQUIREMENT:

The requirement applies even when the permanent plan is “return to parent.”

The amendments require the court to review the plan for transition to independent living

- when the child is 16 years or older, and
- when the ward is 14 years or older and the plan includes services for independent living.

If the case plan for a ward, at the time of the permanency hearing, includes or should include such independent living planning, the court must make findings regarding whether (1) the plan is adequate to ensure the ward’s successful transition, (2) DHS has offered appropriate services under the plan, and (3) DHS has involved the ward in the development of the plan. These findings must be stated in the permanency hearing order along with a brief description of the efforts that the court reviewed.

The Citizen Review Board, in its reviews, will also inquire as to the planning in appropriate cases.