

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2684 (Nguyen)

As Amended May 19, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Allows specified nonminor dependents (NMDs) who are placed out of state the option to have their monthly visit with their social worker or probation officer (caseworker) virtually rather than in-person. Requires the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to convene a working group to develop guidelines related to NMDs who are placed out of state.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires a caseworker to allow NMDs who are placed out of state the option to have their monthly visit through a virtual visit, defined as a real-time audiovisual interaction between the social worker or probation officer and the NMD.
- 2) Specifies these provisions shall not apply to an NMD placed in an out-of-state residential facility.
- 3) Requires the caseworker to, at a minimum, conduct a quarterly in-person visit with the NMD.
- 4) Authorizes a virtual visit to occur if the NMD provides informed consent to meet with the caseworker through a virtual visit and requires the virtual visit and NMD consent to be documented by the caseworker in the case plan.
- 5) Requires the virtual visit to include a private discussion between the NMD and the caseworker that is not conducted in the presence or immediate vicinity of a foster parent or caregiver, unless the NMD requests otherwise. Prohibits the contents of the private discussion from being disclosed to a foster parent or caregiver, except that the caseworker may disclose information under specified circumstances.
- 6) Requires virtual visits to include video capability for both the caseworker and NMD. Requires, if there is an unforeseen technical issue that prevents the video feed from functioning on the day of the virtual visit, that the caseworker make a second attempt within two business days.
- 7) Requires the location of monthly visits for each NMD who is placed out of state by a county agency to comply with existing federal requirements as described, including virtual visits. Requires, if the visit does not occur in the place of residence, including through a virtual visit, the caseworker to document in the case file and in the court report the location of the visit and the reason for the visit occurring outside the place of residence.
- 8) Requires, if the NMD makes a request to change a planned virtual visit to an in-person visit at least five business days prior to the scheduled visit, the caseworker to perform an in-person visit instead of the planned virtual visit. Requires the caseworker to accommodate the request for an in-person visit as soon as possible and may consult with their supervisor to ensure timely arrangements, including assigning another caseworker if necessary to complete the in-person visit.

- 9) Requires CDSS, no later than July 1, 2027, to convene a working group to develop guidelines for county placing agencies and attorneys representing NMDs related to engaging and supporting NMDs who are placed out of state.

COMMENTS

Background: *Monthly Visits*. All foster youth, regardless of age, are required to have monthly visits with their caseworker to ensure a youth's safety, permanency, and well-being. These check-ins allow caseworkers to monitor the foster youth's environment and to evaluate the quality of care being provided. During these visits, caseworkers can assess a youth's physical and emotional safety and monitor for potential or existing maltreatment. The monthly visits also provide a way for the caseworker to assess the foster youth's progress toward permanency goals such as independent living and whether the case plan needs to be updated to reflect any changes. These regular visits are also intended to strengthen the relationship between the youth and the caseworker so that the youth has an advocate to voice concerns when necessary. The monthly meetings are also crucial to allowing the caseworker to support the youth's caregivers and address any issues, needs, or gaps in order to maintain and preserve the placement. The requirement for monthly caseworker visits is enshrined in both federal and state law and specifically requires that the majority of visits occur in the foster youth's residence to ensure an accurate assessment of the living situation.

For youth who are placed out of state and are at least 18 years of age, *this bill* would allow them the option of having their monthly visit through a virtual visit, defined as a real-time audiovisual interaction between the caseworker and the NMD, as long as the youth is not placed in a residential facility. *This bill* would delineate between in-person and virtual visits and only require in-person visits to occur every quarter.

Extended Foster Care is a voluntary program in California, established by AB 12 (Beall), Chapter 559, Statutes of 2010, that allows eligible youth to remain in the foster care system until they turn 21 years of age. Because they are no longer minors, they are referred to as NMDs. The program is designed to provide a safety net of continued support, housing, and case management to help young adults transition more successfully into independent living. To participate, a youth must generally have been in a foster care placement on their 18th birthday and must meet at least one of five specific criteria, such as being enrolled in school, working at least 80 hours a month, or having a medical condition that prevents them from working or studying.

Out-of-State Placements. Some youth may move out of state to attend college or vocational school, and some may have found employment opportunities and reside in a Supervised Independent Living Placement (SILP). Permitted SILP settings can include apartments, shared residences, or college dorms. Other NMDs are placed with relatives or non-relative extended family members who happen to live outside of California. Out-of-state residential facilities that are licensed to provide an integrated program of specialized, intensive, 24-hour trauma-informed care and supervision are not included within these provisions.

This bill would allow out of state SILP and relative placement visits to be virtual with consent, while in-person quarterly visits continue.

Recent federal guidance. In October of 2025, the Administration for Children and Families¹ issued revised guidance which allows NMDs who have provided informed consent for virtual visits to use virtual caseworker visits to meet the requirements for monthly caseworker visits, stating

"For youth in foster care who have attained the age of 18 years, and who have provided informed consent for virtual visits, a title IV-B agency may use virtual caseworker visits to meet the requirements for monthly caseworker visits in 422(b)(17) of the Act.. . Furthermore, the Act requires State and Tribal title IV-B agencies to describe standards for monthly caseworker visits with all children and youth in foster care that are well-planned and focused on issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the child."

Working Group and Stakeholder Convening. The provisions of *this bill* would require CDSS to establish a working group by July 1, 2027, and to create specific guidelines for county agencies and attorneys who support NMDs living out of state. This working group would pull together a wide range of perspectives, including young people with lived experience, developmental experts, and representatives from behavioral health and Medi-Cal-managed care plans. The primary goal is to ensure that the support provided to these young adults is developmentally appropriate and focuses on their unique needs while they are living outside of California.

These new guidelines would specifically address how to handle virtual visits, ensuring that they are conducted in a way that protects the youth's privacy and accurately assesses their safety. The guidelines would also outline how to obtain meaningful, informed consent for these remote check-ins and how to keep young adults connected to supportive mentors and community resources. Additionally, CDSS would be tasked with creating a formal process to collect regular feedback from the youth themselves regarding the quality of the visits they receive, whether those interactions happen in person or online.

According to the Author

"California's Extended Foster Care (EFC) is a beneficial program that supports our foster youth as they transition into adulthood. It ensures they meet their longterm goals and are adequately supported. [This bill] modernizes California's Extended Foster Care Program by aligning it with federal law to allow non-minor dependents the option of conducting virtual monthly meetings with their social worker while maintaining quarterly in-person meetings."

Arguments in Support

According to the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the sponsor, "[This bill] modernizes visitation requirements to better reflect current federal policy and real-world practice. This bill promotes flexibility, strengthens caseworker relationships, and supports continued efforts to support older foster youth in their transition journey."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

¹ <https://cwpm.acf.gov/citations/title-iv-b/title-iv-b-programmatic-requirements> Social Security Act - section 422(b)(17); ACYF-CB-PI-10-01

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 14, 2026:

One-time General Fund costs to CDSS in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars in fiscal year 2027-28 for staff to convene a working group to develop guidelines related to NMDs who are placed out of state.

CDSS indicates minimal costs to social workers..

VOTES**ASM HUMAN SERVICES: 7-0-0**

YES: Lee, Castillo, Calderon, Elhawary, Jackson, Solache, Tangipa

ASM JUDICIARY: 12-0-0

YES: Kalra, Macedo, Bauer-Kahan, Bryan, Connolly, Dixon, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Sanchez, Stefani, Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

VERSION: May 19, 2026

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FN: 0003030