

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JULY 3, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 10, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 23, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 27, 2025

SENATE BILL

No. 624

Introduced by Senator Caballero
(Coauthors: Senators Ashby, Cortese, Wahab, and Weber Pierson)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bryan and Quirk-Silva)

February 20, 2025

An act to add Section 10618.7 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 624, as amended, Caballero. Nonminor dependents: tax guidance.

Existing law establishes the Independent Living Program (ILP), that, among its purposes, provides training in daily living skills, budgeting, locating and maintaining housing, and career planning for foster youth up to 21 years of age. Existing federal law authorizes a state, under certain circumstances, to expand eligibility for the ILP to former foster youth who have not attained 23 years of age. Existing law requires the State Department of Social Services, with the approval of the federal government, to amend the foster care state plan to permit all eligible children to be served by the ILP up to 21 years of age.

The Personal Income Tax Law allows a refundable foster youth tax credit for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2022, to a qualified taxpayer in a specified amount multiplied by the earned income tax credit adjustment factor, as provided.

This bill, the Foster Outreach and Support for Tax Education Readiness (FOSTER) Act, would require, by no later than July 1, 2026, the department to issue guidance to county welfare departments and juvenile probation departments with information about practices for supporting nonminor dependents in filing state and federal income tax returns and accessing the foster youth tax credit. The bill would require the guidance to be updated as needed and reissued no less than every 2 years. The bill would specify the information to be included in the guidance issued, including, but not limited to, a description of the foster youth tax credit, outreach strategies to increase awareness among nonminor dependents and former foster youth about the foster youth tax credit, and opportunities to partner with local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites. The bill would require county welfare departments and juvenile probation departments to annually send by mail to every nonminor dependent information about filing state and federal income tax returns and, among other things, the foster youth tax credit and information about local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites, as specified. By increasing the duties of county welfare departments and juvenile probation departments, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 10618.7 is added to the Welfare and
- 2 Institutions Code, to read:
- 3 10618.7. (a) This section shall be known, and may be cited,
- 4 as the Foster Outreach and Support for Tax Education Readiness
- 5 (FOSTER) Act.
- 6 (b) (1) By no later than July 1, 2026, the department shall issue
- 7 guidance to county welfare departments and juvenile probation
- 8 departments with information about practices for supporting
- 9 nonminor dependents in filing state and federal income tax returns

1 and accessing the foster youth tax credit, as described in Section
2 17052.2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

3 (2) This guidance shall be updated as needed and reissued no
4 less than every two years thereafter.

5 (3) The guidance issued pursuant to this subdivision shall
6 include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

7 (A) A description of the foster youth tax credit.

8 (B) The mailing requirement described in subdivision ~~(b)~~: (c).

9 (C) Outreach strategies to increase awareness among nonminor
10 dependents and former foster youth about the foster youth tax
11 credit.

12 (D) Opportunities to partner with local Volunteer Income Tax
13 Assistance sites.

14 (E) Hosting workshops for foster youth to educate them about
15 tax filing through the Independent Living Program or
16 community-based organizations.

17 (F) Hosting workshops through the Independent Living Program
18 or community-based organizations to assist foster youth with filing
19 their taxes, in partnership with a local Volunteer Income Tax
20 Assistance site certified by the Internal Revenue Service.

21 (G) Resources available from stakeholders or state agencies to
22 aid with executing strategies described in paragraphs (B) through
23 (F), inclusive.

24 (c) (1) The county welfare department and juvenile probation
25 department shall annually send by mail to every nonminor
26 dependent information about filing state and federal income tax
27 returns and the foster youth tax credit.

28 (2) The mailing pursuant to this subdivision shall occur between
29 November 1 and January 31, inclusive, of each year.

30 (3) The mailing pursuant to this subdivision shall include, but
31 not be limited to, all of the following information:

32 (A) Eligibility requirements for the foster youth tax credit
33 pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 17052.2 of the Revenue and
34 Taxation Code.

35 (B) The maximum amount of the foster youth tax credit for the
36 forthcoming tax season pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision
37 (a) of Section 17052.2 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

38 (C) The availability of other tax credits, including, but not
39 limited to, state and federal earned income tax credits, the federal
40 Child Tax Credit and state Young Child Tax Credit, the federal

1 Child and Dependent Care Credit and state Child and Dependent
2 Care Expenses Credit, the federal American Opportunity Tax
3 Credit, the federal Lifetime Learning Credit, and the state Renters'
4 Credit.

5 (D) The location of and how to set up an appointment with or
6 otherwise receive services from local Volunteer Income Tax
7 Assistance sites certified by the Internal Revenue Service within
8 the county where the nonminor dependent resides, or, if none are
9 available, those located in nearby counties.

10 (E) Resources to assist the nonminor dependent with self-filing
11 federal and state tax returns at no cost.

12 SEC. 2. To the extent that this act has an overall effect of
13 increasing the costs already borne by a local agency for programs
14 or levels of service mandated by the 2011 Realignment Legislation
15 within the meaning of Section 36 of Article XIII of the California
16 Constitution, it shall apply to local agencies only to the extent that
17 the state provides annual funding for the cost increase. Any new
18 program or higher level of service provided by a local agency
19 pursuant to this act above the level for which funding has been
20 provided shall not require a subvention of funds by the state or
21 otherwise be subject to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California
22 Constitution.