

ACS Report on Government-Issued Personal Identification for Youth in Foster Care, 2015

Youth 17 and Older in Foster Care in 2015

Number with birth certificate	2,475
Number who applied for passports	463
Number with social security card	2,360
Number with state-issued id	1,918
Total Youth who obtained identification with assistance of ACS	2,530

Youth Discharged to APPLA in 2014

Number with birth certificate	487
Number with social security card	474
Number with state-issued id	441
Total Youth who obtained identification with assistance of ACS	499

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The ACS Division of Family Permanency Services (FPS) has a centralized Vital Records Unit that works with foster care agencies to obtain vital identification, birth and death certificates and social security cards for children and youth in foster care. The unit collaborates with external stakeholders, including foster care providers and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), and the Social Security Administration (SSA) to obtain vital identification records. The works directly with the SSA to acquire social security cards for children in foster care from New York City. The Unit also serves as a central hub for vital records requests and also provides technical assistance to our providers by communicating with other city agencies to ensure that children and families have necessary documents.

In December of 2015, ACS and DOHMH signed a Memorandum of Understanding that would help expedite our ability to obtain birth certificates for children and youth in foster care. These efforts have resulted in the implementation of a birth certificate request tracking system and the development of protocols that allow ACS to directly request copies of birth and death certificates. Our Vital Records Unit also assists with obtaining copies of birth and death certificates from out-of county/state and foreign countries. The centralized Birth Certificate Liaison contacts other jurisdictions including foreign consulates and embassies to obtain documents, pursuant to the individual requirements of the respective jurisdiction

FPS, in collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Immigration Affairs discussed the Municipal IDNYC program as a resource youth in care, particularly older youth who often face barriers to obtaining appropriate identification.

In May of 2015, ACS hosted a Municipal IDNYC pop up center for two weeks our central office located at 150 William Street. ACS worked with our contracted foster care agencies to assist with encouraging young people to obtain a Municipal ID. We emailed our contracted providers a memorandum describing the benefits of the IDNYC program and ACS' involvement. We emphasized that, although youth can apply for an IDNYC card independently, this was an opportunity to apply for the identification with minimal wait time. We scheduled appointments where evening hours were available so youth could come after school to apply. ACS developed a verification letter that accompanied the IDNYC applications to allow youth in foster care to obtain this identification expeditiously.