

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services	Effective Date: January 19, 2010
	Section 19: Clothing, Personal Items, and Permitted Per Diem Expenses	Version: 4

POLICY [REVISED]

When removing a child from his or her home the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make every effort to allow a child to take clothing and/or personal items, (e.g., photographs, a blanket, a favorite toy or book, video games, game systems , CD player, etc.). Any and all clothing and/or personal items removed and/or purchased for the child is the property of the child and/or DCS. All items (i.e. clothing, personal items, etc) brought with the child must be documented and maintained in the [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#).

Exceptions: If a child is removed from a home that is the site of a meth lab, personal items and clothing will not be removed. See [Indiana Drug Endangered Children \(DEC\) Response Protocol](#).

DCS will not allow a child to take weapons of any kind.

[REVISED] DCS will ensure that a child is provided with adequate clothing if he or she does not have clothing at the time of removal. DCS may provide the resource family with an Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment by way of a voucher/p-card of up to \$200.00 based on the child's need. The voucher/p-card shall be used to purchase the appropriate supply of clothing and/or personal items for the child and is not intended to provide a complete wardrobe for the child. Instead, the voucher/p-card is only intended to meet the immediate needs of the child that are adequate and appropriate to the season and the child's age and gender. The funds must be expended within 30 days of receipt from DCS. After the funds are expended, the resource family will use a portion of the monthly per diem to pay for clothing and/or personal items for the child on an ongoing basis.

[REVISED] The foster parent should utilize the per diem to cover expenses of caring for the child including, but not limited to:

1. Food;
2. Clothing (replacement clothing, repairs, mending, alterations, etc.);
3. Shelter;
4. Supervision that substitutes for daily supervision; such as summer programs (camp),
5. School supplies (paper, pens, calculator, etc.);
6. Child's personal Incidentals (tickets for sports and cultural events, personal hygiene items, sundries, infant and toddler supplies, activity fees, uniforms, etc.); and

[REVISED] Foster parents should utilize the per diem to cover expenses related to travel if the mileage is not in excess of 100 miles roundtrip and:

1. If the local travel is necessary to provide food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, and/or personal incidentals;
 - a. Child travel to and from activities that substitute for daily supervision such as extracurricular activities, licensed daycare, camp; and
 - b. Travel to and from cultural and sporting entertainment events.

2. If the child is being transported to and from visitation with the following people:
 - a. The child's parents,
 - b. The child's siblings, and/or
 - c. The child's other relatives.

3. Foster parent and child travel to and from school conferences at the child's school.

DCS will pay, in addition to the per diem, for any travel costs related to the foster child's continuing attendance at the school of origin while in foster care, if the school is not required to provide transportation under applicable state law.

[NEW] NOTE: For DCS authorized trips out of the county for the child to visit their home, siblings, other relatives, or resource parent and child travel to and from school conferences at the child's school of origin in excess of 100 miles round trip; the resource parent may be reimbursed for the portion of the trip that exceeds 100 miles. DCS will reimburse beginning with the 101st mile. The resource parent must obtain approval for reimbursement of travel from the FCM prior to travel, unless that travel is an emergency.

DCS will not pay for the child to take trips with the resource family.

DCS will provide liability insurance for each child under DCS care and supervision that the foster parents care for only if the foster parents are members of Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association (IFCAA).

Foster parent per-diem is not intended and should not be expected or represented to cover the foster parent's rent, mortgage, or routine housing maintenance cost.

[NEW] Each child in placement for 180 consecutive days will receive an annual personal allowance of up to \$100. These funds may be expended annually during each state fiscal year for things such as but not limited to musical instruments, sporting equipment, phone cards, electronic devices, toll fees, bus passes, gas cards and parking fees related to miscellaneous travel for the child.

All types of schools (pre-school, summer school, alternative school, or remedial school programs) will not be paid by DCS and may be the responsibility of the school district.

[REVISED] In special circumstances, additional clothing and/or personal allowance may be provided if the FCM, Supervisor, or DCS Local Office Director appeals for funds for the resource parent to cover unusual circumstances and situations. Appeals for additional funding must be a one page written document and will be reviewed by the Regional Manager and Regional Finance Manager with final determinations made by the Regional Manager.

Additionally, children in out-of-home care should have items specific to their age. DCS will also ensure that all of a child's clothing and/or personal items, including items purchased for the child while in out of home care, go with the child in the event that he or she returns home or moves to another placement.

Code References

1. [IC 20-50-3 Transportation for Students in Foster Care](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager will:

1. Ensure all appropriate clothing and/or personal items go with the child at the time of removal or placement change whenever possible;
2. If clothing and/or personal items will not be taken with the child, explain the reason why in a manner appropriate for the child's age and development, notify the Supervisor, and document this on the [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#) and in ICWIS 'Contacts';
3. If it is not possible to take the child's clothing and/or personal items at the time of removal, make efforts to pick them up within 48 hours;
4. Complete a thorough inventory of the child's clothing and/or personal items. Inventory of the child's clothing and/or personal items should be:
 - a. Taken anytime the child is removed from their home;
 - b. Reviewed with and signed by the resource parent acknowledging what items belong to the child and were brought with and/or for the child;

Note: The steps provided above should also be completed if the child is placed in a residential facility.

5. Request that the Supervisor evaluate the clothing and/or personal items situation and authorize issuance of a voucher/p-card if necessary;
6. If the child does not have adequate clothing and/or personal items at the time of removal provide the resource family with an Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment (voucher/p-card) and assist the resource family in acquiring clothing and/or personal items for the child;
7. Ensure that an inventory of the child's clothing and/or personal items is taken in the event that the child returns home or moves to another placement; and

Note: Additional vouchers/p-cards cannot be issued in the event a child is moved from one resource home to another. All items that belong to the child must be returned with the child in the event he or she is no longer placed in the resource home or residential facility. The [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#) should be reviewed and signed by the resource parent when a child is removed from their home for the purpose of ensuring all items are returned with the child.

8. If the foster family home is licensed through a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) notify the licensing agency if there are:
 - a. Concerns about the quantity and/or condition of the child's clothing and/or personal items, and
 - b. Problems gathering all the child's clothing and/or personal items prior to a placement change.

The Supervisor will provide assistance in evaluating the clothing and/or personal items situation if necessary.

If the child leaves the placement (e.g., returns home, moves to another placement, adopted by someone else, etc.) the resource family or residential facility will return all clothing and/or personal items to DCS, the child, or the child's new caregiver depending upon the situation.

[REVISED] Appeals for Additional Funding:

1. The FCM will prepare a one page written request (email is acceptable) detailing the unusual circumstances and situations and submit to the Supervisor for approval or denial;
2. The Supervisor will review and approve or deny the appeal for additional funding:
 - a. He or she will immediately notify the FCM if the request is denied, or
 - b. If the Supervisor approves the appeal for additional funding, then he or she should submit the written request to the DCS Local Office Director for his or her approval or denial.
3. The DCS Local Office Director will approve or deny the appeal of additional funding:
 - a. He or She will immediately notify the Supervisor of his or her decision;
 - b. If the DCS Local Office Director approves the appeal for additional funding, then he or she should submit the written request to the Regional Manager and Regional Finance Manager with a final determination made by the Regional Manager.
4. The Regional Manager will notify the Local Office Director of his or her final determination via written correspondence.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Indiana Drug Endangered Children Response Protocol](#)
2. [Clothing/Personal Items Inventory List](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Initial Clothing and Personal Items Allotment

Defined as a dollar amount, up to \$200, that is to be paid for use by the resource parent to meet the immediate needs of the child when the child is initially removed from his or her home and placed in out-of-home care.

Special Circumstance

Examples of special circumstances include clothing needed to accommodate unique circumstances such as a sudden large weight gain or loss due to medication, pregnancy, etc

Condition of Clothing

All clothing should be appropriate for the season, in good condition, free from damage and stains, and should fit the child appropriately. Second-hand clothing items that meet these guidelines are acceptable.

Packing Clothing and Personal Items

Every attempt should be made to pack the child's clothing and/or personal items in some form of luggage (e.g., suitcases, duffle bags, etc.). Sturdy boxes may be used if luggage is unavailable. However, garbage sacks and other disposable bags are not appropriate and should be used only as a last resort. Use of such items may cause a child to believe that his or her possessions are not valued.

Failure to Return All of Child's Clothing and Personal Items

At the end of a placement, if a resource family fails to return all of the clothing and/or personal items that the child had during placement; then, the FCM should assure that a report is made to the appropriate LCPA or DCS local office for entry into the resource home's file.

Voucher/P-Card

A voucher/p-card is issued to DCS to fund initial clothing and/or personal items expenses related to obtaining needed items for a child requiring out-of-home care.

[NEW] Per Diem Rate

The amount, set by DCS that licensed foster parents are paid per day for the care of a child in need of services (CHINS).

[NEW] Personal Allowance

Funds made available to resource parents annually for each child in out of home care for up to 180 consecutive days. The personal allowance is up to \$100 dollars and is based on the individuals needs of the child.

[NEW] Foster Care Liability Insurance

Protection and coverage for foster parents as it relates to risks associated with caring for children under the DCS care and supervision. The coverage includes damages to the home or property of the foster parents, harm done by the child to another party, and claims made against foster parents as agents of the State of Indiana.

[NEW] School of Origin

This refers to the school the child attended prior to out-of-home placement.

Archived