

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES YOUTH WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 11: Independent Living	Effective Date: July 1, 2006
	Section 5: Driver's Training and Driver's License	Version: 1

POLICY	OLD POLICY: 404.53
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Indiana statute does not permit the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) to **authorize** any youth in out-of-home care to apply for a driver's license or permit. However, DCS does not prohibit youth in out-of-home care from participating in driver's education and/or obtaining a driver's license.

DCS assumes no responsibility for any injury or damage caused by a minor while driving.

DCS will allow responsible youth aged 16 years of age and older who are Child In Need Of Services (CHINS) or probation youth to participate in driver's training with court approval when there is an appropriate adult willing to sign an authorization assuming financial liability for the youth. Youth aged 18 and older must have court permission to sign for themselves while they are wards of the court.

DCS will fund driver's training for responsible youth between the ages of 17 years and six (6) months to 21 through Emancipation Goods and Services (EG&S) funds.

Code References

[42 USC 677: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) and/or the Chafee Independent Living (IL) contracted service provider will:

1. Assist the youth's caregiver in locating driver's training if the youth's legal parent or legal guardian is willing to sign authorization for the youth to participate in driver's training and accept liability;
2. Request approval for EG&S funds for youth aged 16 years of age and older who have permission to participate in driver's training;
3. Request approval for EG&S funds for youth aged 18 to 21 years who are receiving voluntary IL services when requested by the youth; and
4. Obtain documentation of any youth receiving driver's training and maintain in the youth's case file.

The IL Specialists will assist the FCM and Chafee IL contracted service provider in locating driver's training programs throughout the state.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Can a Resource (including Relative) Parent Assume Liability for a Youth to Participate in Driver's Training?

Resource parents may sign for a youth to participate in driver's training, however by doing so, they are assuming full financial responsibility for any damage or injuries caused by the youth while driving.

Can a Resource (including Relative) Parent Sign an Application for a Driver's License or Permit?

Indiana law allows for any adult to sign an application for a driver's license or permit, thus a resource (including relative) parent can legally sign an application. However, the resource parent must understand that by signing the application process he or she must assume full responsibility both for authorizing the child to receive driver training and for providing full insurance coverage for the youth. Furthermore, in accordance with [IC 9-24-9-3](#), any person signing a minor's application is accepting joint responsibility for any injury or damage caused by the minor.

Can the Youth's Legal Parent or Legal Guardian Sign an Application for Driver's Training, a Driver's License, or Permit?

The youth's legal parent or legal guardian can sign an authorization assuming liability for the youth as long as the court approves this decision. The parent or guardian assumes full financial responsibility for the youth.

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

Driver's Training Schools

There are private driver's education programs all over the state and programs through high schools in which foster youth can participate in classroom instruction and in-car observation time prior to turning 18. That portion of the program may not require a financial responsibility signature. There are training programs willing to work with youth who are wards of the state. Once a youth turns 18, the youth can sign the financial responsibility forms and complete the driving portion of the program.

Insurance companies identify teens as one of the highest risk drivers for accidents. Providing youth with driver's training is one way that DCS can assist the youth in developing driving skills and also help to lower the youth's auto insurance rates. EG&S can be used to fund driver's education training for youth in foster care. Approval must be obtained from the DCS Local Office Director or designee prior to authorization of driver's training expenditures.