

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 15:</b> Eligibility	<b>Effective Date:</b> October 1, 2018
	<b>Section 5:</b> Assistance Group	<b>Version:</b> 2

## STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Department of Child Services (DCS) will collect and verify information about the child's household composition upon removal from the home in order to determine the child's Title IV-E assistance group. The assistance group includes members of the household from which the child was removed whose income, resources, and needs are considered when determining whether the child meets the Title IV-E financial need criteria. The relationship between the child for which eligibility is being determined and the various household members will determine who should be included in the child's assistance group. More information about mandatory members, mandatory members excluded, and optional members may be found in [Practice Guidance](#).

### Code References

1. [42 USC 672\(a\)\(2\): Removal and foster care placement requirements](#)
2. [42 USC 672\(a\)\(3\): AFDC eligibility requirement](#)
3. [42 USC 672\(j\): Children placed with a parent residing in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility for substance abuse](#)
4. [45 CFR 233.10: General provisions regarding coverage and eligibility](#)
5. [45 CFR 233.20: Need and amount of assistance](#)

## PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Verify all persons living in the removal household at the time of removal and document the relationship of each person to the child;
2. Upload documentation to support the household composition to the Management Information Gateway for Kids (MaGIK). See [Practice Guidance](#) for examples of supporting documentation; and
3. Contact the DCS Central Eligibility Unit (CEU) ([centralized.eligibility@dcs.in.gov](mailto:centralized.eligibility@dcs.in.gov)) if information is discovered regarding the child's assistance group that would impact the initial eligibility determination during the out-of-home care episode.

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Assist the FCM to ensure information is collected; and
2. Ensure necessary information is documented in MaGIK.

The DCS CEU will:

1. Review the eligibility information in MaGIK, and
2. Determine the child's assistance group composition.

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Documentation to support the child's assistance group may include but is not limited to copies of the:

1. Removal petition or case notes documenting persons living in the removal home at the time of removal and their relationship to the child;
2. [Preliminary Inquiry](#);
3. Birth certificates;
4. Statements from reliable persons cognizant of the facts;
5. [Title IV-E and Title IV-A/EA Information \(SF 55435\)](#); and
6. Award letter of Social Security Income (SSI) benefits covering the month of removal.

### **Mandatory Members**

The following individuals are mandatory members of the child's assistance group:

1. The child for which eligibility is being determined;
2. The child's whole, half, or adoptive sibling(s) who are under the age of 18 and deprived (see separate policy, [15.6 Deprivation](#)); and
3. The biological or adoptive parent(s) of any child included in the assistance group.

### **Mandatory Members Excluded**

The following mandatory members should be excluded from the child's assistance group:

1. Recipients of SSI;
2. Recipients of Adoption Assistance periodic payments;
3. Recipients of a Foster Care per diem;
4. Recipients of Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) periodic payments;
5. Unqualified aliens (see separate policy, [2.23 Verifying Citizenship or Immigration Status](#) for more information);
6. The focus child's half sibling who is not deprived of parental support by the non-mutual parent; and
7. The non-mutual parent, of the focus child and the child's half sibling, when that child's half sibling is excluded from the assistance group.

### **Optional Members**

The following household members are optional members of the child's assistance group and should only be included in the child's assistance group when it is advantageous for the child's Title IV-E eligibility (i.e., the addition of the optional member increases the size of the child's assistance group, making the standard of need higher, but does not increase the amount of income or resources of the child's assistance group):

1. The spouse of the focus child's physically or mentally incapacitated parent (i.e., the focus child's step-parent);
2. A relative caretaker, other than a parent; and

**Note:** In instances where a caretaker relative who has the responsibility for care and control of the child and the parent lives in the same household as the child, both the parent and the relative caretaker may be included in the child's assistance group.

3. The child of a minor parent.

**Note:** A child placed with a parent residing in a licensed residential family-based treatment facility for substance abuse may be eligible for Title IV-E regardless of whether

the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) criteria are met. See separate policy [15.1 Title IV-E Foster Care \(Overview\)](#) for additional information.

#### FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Title IV-E and Title IV-A/EA Information \(SF 55435\)](#)
2. [Preliminary Inquiry](#)

#### RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

ARCHIVED (10/1/2018-12/31/2019) V2