



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services

Section 05: Out-of-County Placements

Effective Date: May 1, 2022

Version: 5

- [Procedure definitions](#)

- [Forms and Tools](#)
- [Related Policies](#)

- [Legal References](#)
- [Practice Guidance](#)

POLICY OVERVIEW

When a child must be removed from the parent, guardian, or custodian, placement within the child's community minimizes trauma by helping to maintain the child's bonds with friends and other emotional supports and allowing stability in the child's school setting. However, careful assessment and evaluation must be utilized when making placement decisions to promote placement stability for the child.

[Back to Top](#)

PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make every effort to place a child in out-of-home care within the county of origin of the child, unless one (1) or more of the following circumstances exists:

1. The noncustodial parent resides in another county;
2. A suitable relative or kinship caregiver resides in another county;
3. Parental reunification is not an option and/or all efforts toward parental reunification have failed and an alternative permanency placement for the child exists in another county;
4. The county of origin does not have an appropriate resource home available;
5. Placement in another county will allow a sibling group to be placed together; and/or
6. The child requires residential treatment or must temporarily be placed in Emergency Shelter Care (ESC) and there is no facility in the county of origin that can meet the child's needs.

If the resource home is unlicensed, the receiving county has the responsibility for licensing of the home regardless of where the Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition has been filed.

Note: The receiving county must notify the placing county if licensure for the home is denied.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Engage the Child and Family Team (CFT) as partners in placement planning and decision-making (see policies 8.01 Selecting a Placement Option and 5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings);
2. Contact the Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) to request placement recommendations, if a home has not been identified;
3. Review the case information and the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment results with the FCM Supervisor and the CFT to ensure a less

restrictive placement is not appropriate and that there is no other placement available to meet the child's needs;

4. Present the FCM Supervisor with information regarding the child's needs and the reasons for recommending out-of-county placement (include the name of the recommended resource parent's home);
5. Contact the Staff Attorney to request court approval for the child's placement change;
6. Notify the DCS local office or the Kinship Navigator (KN) Supervisor (formerly known as the Relative Support Specialist [RSS] Supervisor) of the receiving county if a child is placed out-of-county in relative or kinship care. See policy 8.48 Relative or Kinship Placements for additional guidance;
7. Develop a Visitation Plan for the child with the parent, guardian, or custodian and any siblings not placed with the child. See policy 8.12 Developing the Visitation Plan; and
8. Document all communications, recommendations, approvals, plans, and placements in the case management system.

The FCM Supervisor in the placing county will:

1. Review with the FCM information about the child's needs, the recommended resource parent's home, and any additional information to support the recommendation for out-of-county placement; and
2. Ensure all involved parties (e.g., FCM, RFCS, and KN in the placing and receiving counties) know what arrangements have been made for supervision of the resource home and face-to-face contact with the child.

The RFCS will:

1. Review the case information and the CANS Assessment results with the FCM and make recommendations regarding placement. See policy 5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment for additional information;
2. Present the RFCS Supervisor with information regarding the child's needs and reasons for recommending out-of-county placement (including the name of the recommended resource parent);
3. Assist homes desiring to be licensed, through the licensing process; and
4. Notify the county of origin if the unlicensed home is denied licensure.

The DCS Staff Attorney will request court approval for the child's placement change, upon request from the FCM.

[Back to Top](#)

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

N/A

Forms and Tools

- [8.A Tool: Placement Needs Summary](#)
- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment- Available in the case management system

Related Policies

- [5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings](#)
- [5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths \(CANS\) Assessment](#)
- [8.01 Selecting a Placement Option](#)

- [8.12 Developing the Visitation Plan](#)
- [8.48 Relative or Kinship Placements](#)

[Back to Top](#)

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-34-6-3: Placement in facility located outside child's county of residence](#)
- [IC 31-34-23: Modification of Dispositional Decrees](#)

[Back to Top](#)

PRACTICE GUIDANCE – DCS POLICY 8.05

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

N/A

[Back to Top](#)