

Foster Care Transportation Training Information: Office of School Transportation Indiana Department of Education

Initial Transportation Coordination:

- The school / corporation Foster Care Point of Contact (POC) should know who the Director of Transportation is and vice-versa, each having the appropriate contact information for the other person.
- Once a request for services for a foster care or homeless student is initiated, transportation should be contacted immediately so that they can start planning. The most frequent complaint about transportation is the extended time it is taking to get transportation in place. Many times that is because transportation is not contacted until well after the initial request for services.
- Transportation deadlines to begin providing transportation services:
 - In district, in school of origin boundary – next day at the latest.
 - In district, out of school of origin boundary – two days maximum.
 - Out of school of origin district boundary – three to five days maximum.
- Transportation cannot be refused!
- School of origin district is responsible for coordinating with transitional school district for transportation.
- If the transitional school district is unable to assist with transportation, the school / district of origin is responsible for providing transportation and then billing the transitional school district for one half of the cost for providing transportation services.

Vehicle:

- School bus – should always be first and best option. This does not have to be a standard full size school bus as there are school buses available that are less than 16 passenger capacity (capacity includes driver) that do not require a CDL to drive the bus.
- Special purpose bus (activity style bus). This bus would be required for use if you are not using a school bus and if the number of students being transported on one route exceeds seven students.
 - Student pickup/drop-off would be in the driveway or parking lot. No loading or unloading on the roadway!
- Alternative vehicles – this is a district owned vehicle that is neither a school bus, nor a special purpose bus. This would include a sedan, truck, SUV, or mini-van.
 - Maximum capacity would be seven students for any of these vehicles.
 - All passenger restraint systems would be required to be used at all times.
 - Student pickup/drop-off would be in the driveway or parking lot. No loading or unloading on the roadway!

- Contracted services – individuals (e.g. community member) or companies a district would contract with to provide services for foster care transportation. Any contracted service provider would have to meet the same vehicle requirements as would be required for alternative vehicles owned by the school district.
 - Recommend defined vehicle inspection standards.
 - Student pickup/drop-off would be in the driveway or parking lot. No loading or unloading on the roadway!

Driver:

- School bus – appropriate license and school bus driver certification. If the bus is less than 16 passenger capacity a CDL is not required to drive the bus. Certification is always required regardless of size of the vehicle.
- Special purpose bus – appropriate license is required and possibly certification.
 - If the bus is less than 16 passenger capacity a CDL and schools bus driver certification is not required to drive the bus.
 - If the bus is more than 15 passenger capacity a CDL would be required to drive the bus as well as a school bus driver certification.
- Alternative district owned vehicles – appropriate license is required and certification is not needed.
 - Background checks exactly like those for school bus drivers.
 - Recommend checking driving records exactly like those required for school bus drivers.
 - Initial driving record.
 - Continuing driving record checks – minimum every six months.
 - Recommend considering drug testing, can be integrated into current drug testing for school bus drivers but would be non-DOT testing.
- Contracted services – individuals (e.g. community member) or companies a district would contract with to provide services for foster care transportation. Any contracted service provider would have to meet the same vehicle requirements as would be required for alternative vehicles owned by the school district.
 - Background checks exactly like those for school bus drivers.
 - Recommend checking driving records exactly like those required for school bus drivers.
 - Initial driving record.
 - Continuing driving record checks – minimum every six months.
 - Recommend considering drug testing, can be integrated into current drug testing for school bus drivers but would be non-DOT testing.
 - Recommend defined insurance requirements.

Laws:

The laws governing homeless transportation also apply to foster care transportation, in fact in many cases the laws for homeless transportation below also reference foster care students.

Chapter 12. Transportation of Homeless Students

IC 20-27-12-0.1 "Appropriate vehicle"

Sec. 0.1. (a) As used in this chapter, "appropriate vehicle" means a vehicle that:

- (1) is owned by the school corporation or contracted for by the school corporation; and
 - (2) has a seating capacity of not more than eight (8) passengers, including the driver.
- (b) The term includes a car, truck, sport utility vehicle, or minivan.

IC 20-27-12-0.3 "Foster care"

Sec. 0.3. As used in this chapter, "foster care" has the meaning set forth in IC 31-9-2-46.7.

IC 20-27-12-1 "Original school corporation"

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "original school corporation" refers to a school corporation in which a homeless student's school of origin is located.

IC 20-27-12-2 "School of origin"

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "school of origin" means the school:

- (1) that a homeless student attended when the student last had a permanent residence; or
- (2) in which the homeless student was last enrolled.

IC 20-27-12-3 "Transitional school corporation"

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "transitional school corporation" refers to a school corporation in which a homeless student temporarily stays.

IC 20-27-12-4 Transportation of homeless student to school of origin; agreement between school corporations; shared responsibility

Sec. 4. (a) If a homeless student temporarily stays in the homeless student's original school corporation but outside the attendance area for the school of origin, the original school corporation shall provide transportation for the homeless student from the place where the homeless student is temporarily staying to the school of origin.

(b) If:

- (1) a homeless student's school of origin is located in a school corporation in which the homeless student does not temporarily stay; and
 - (2) the homeless student does not elect to attend a school located in the school corporation in which the homeless student is temporarily staying;
- the original school corporation and the transitional school corporation shall enter into an agreement concerning the responsibility for and apportionment of the costs of transporting the homeless student to the school of origin.

(c) If the original school corporation and the transitional school corporation are unable to reach an agreement under subsection (b), the responsibility for transporting the homeless student to the school of origin is shared equally between both school corporations, and the cost of transporting the homeless student to the school of origin is apportioned equally between both school corporations.

IC 20-27-12-5 Vehicles used to transport homeless students and students in foster care

Sec. 5. (a) This section applies to homeless students and students in foster care.

(b) A school corporation may use the following types of vehicles in transporting a student to a school of origin:

(1) If more than seven (7) students are being transported to schools in the same school corporation, a special purpose bus must be used to transport the students.

(2) If seven (7) or fewer students are being transported to schools in the same school corporation, an appropriate vehicle may be used to transport the students.

(c) The driver of a vehicle used to transport students to a school of origin under subsection (b) must meet the qualifications set forth in IC 20-27-9-5(c).

Chapter 3. Transportation of Students in Foster Care

IC 20-50-3-1 Application

Sec. 1. This chapter applies after June 30, 2009.

IC 20-50-3-1.1 "Foster care"

Sec. 1.1. As used in this chapter, "foster care" has the meaning set forth in IC 31-9-2-46.7.

IC 20-50-3-2 "Original school corporation"

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "original school corporation" means the school corporation in which the school of origin of a student in foster care is located.

IC 20-50-3-3 "School of origin"

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "school of origin" means the school:

- (1) that a student in foster care attended when the student last had a permanent residence; or
- (2) in which a student in foster care was last enrolled.

IC 20-50-3-4 "Transitional school corporation"

Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, "transitional school corporation" means the school corporation in which a student in foster care temporarily stays.

IC 20-50-3-5 Transportation of students in foster care

Sec. 5. (a) If a student in foster care temporarily stays in the student's original school corporation but outside the attendance area of the student's school of origin, the original school corporation shall provide transportation for the student from the place where the student is temporarily staying to the school of origin and from the school of origin to the place where the student is temporarily staying.

(b) If:

- (1) the school of origin of a student in foster care is located in a school corporation other than the school corporation in which the student is temporarily staying;
 - (2) transportation of the student in foster care is in the best interest of the student; and
 - (3) the student does not elect to attend a school located in the school corporation in which the student in foster care is temporarily staying;
- the original school corporation and the transitional school corporation shall enter into an agreement concerning the responsibility for and apportionment of the costs of transporting the student to and from the school of origin.
- (c) If the original school corporation and the transitional school corporation described in subsection (b) are unable to reach an agreement under subsection (b), the responsibility for transporting the student in foster care to and from the school of origin is shared equally between both school corporations, and the cost of transporting the student to and from the school of origin is apportioned equally between both school corporations.