

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services Section 05: Out-of-County Placements	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 6

POLICY OVERVIEW

When a child must leave their parent, guardian, or custodian, placement within the child's community helps to lessen the trauma. The child can still see people they know and be in settings they are familiar with. Careful assessment and evaluation must be used when making placement decisions to promote placement safety and stability for the child.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will try to place a child in out-of-home care within their home county when possible. Sometimes the child may need to live in a different county. This can happen if one (1) or more of the following situations:

1. A parent who does not have custody lives in another county;
2. A suitable relative or kinship caregiver lives in another county;
3. The child cannot return to their parent or efforts toward reunification have failed and an alternative permanency placement is in another county;
4. The child's home county does not have an appropriate resource home available;
5. The child has siblings in another county and they may be placed together; and/or
6. The child needs special care (i.e. residential treatment or Emergency Shelter Care [ESC]) and that option is not available in their home county.

If the resource home is unlicensed, the receiving county has the responsibility for licensing 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.

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](#)