

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 6: Court Section 04: Providing Notice of Hearings	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 9

POLICY OVERVIEW

Written notices for Child in Need of Services (CHINS) and Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) hearings are sent according to Indiana Trial Rules and related statutory law to help ensure these cases move forward timely.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will give notice about CHINS and TPR hearings. This notice will be given by mail, hand delivery, or verbal notice to:

1. The child;
2. Each parent, guardian, or custodian and their attorney;
3. The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or Guardian Ad Litem (GAL); and
4. The resource parent or long-term foster parent.

Note: Resource parents who are required to be notified, also have the right to be heard in all court proceedings pertaining to a child in their care.

For Periodic Case Reviews and Permanency Hearings, DCS will also send notice to:

1. Any fit and willing relative or person whom DCS identifies as having a significant relationship with the child,
2. The prospective adoptive parent (if required consent to adoption has been received or TPR filed), and
3. A Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) representative currently providing services to the child so they may attend the child's CHINS and TPR court proceedings.

When Notice Must Be Given

DCS must give legal notice at least 10 calendar days before these hearings:

1. Periodic Case Review Hearings;
2. Permanency Hearings; and
3. TPR proceedings.

How Notice Can Be Given

DCS will use one of the following to provide notice of a hearing:

1. **Mail:** Must be sent at least 10 calendar days before the hearing;
2. **Hand delivery:** A written notice can be delivered in person. The person delivering it must confirm to the court at the hearing that notice was given; or
3. **Verbal Notice:** Verbal notice may be the only option if the court hearing is less than 48 hours away from when it was set by the court (not counting weekends or state holidays):

- a. Verbal notice should be given in addition to the written notice in any other circumstance,
- b. The person delivering it must confirm to the court at the hearing that notice was given,
- c. It must include the date, time, location, and purpose of the hearing, and
- d. It cannot be left on voicemail or with someone that is not a party to the case.

Notice of Placement Change

If a child has been in the same placement for 12 months or more, DCS must notify all persons affected before making a planned placement change. Those people have 10 calendar days to file an objection.

Note: The child's placement cannot be changed before the court gives permission – unless the child's safety cannot be ensured.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-76.5: "Long term foster parent"](#)
- [IC 31-32-1-4: Hearing notices regarding CHINS or delinquent cases](#)
- [IC 31-32-2-3.5: Right of attendance at hearings](#)
- [IC 31-34-2.3-4: Hearing; notice](#)
- [IC 31-34-5-1: Time for hearing; notice; petition alleging a child is a child in need of services](#)
- [IC 31-34-10-2: Initial hearing; service of petition and summons; determination of referral for dual status assessment; CHINS petition; additional initial hearings](#)
- [IC 31-34-11-1: Hearing requirements; extension of time; notice; opportunity to be heard](#)
- [IC 31-34-19-1.3: Notice of disposition of hearing; duties of court](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-4: Notice of case review; testimony in periodic case review](#)
- [IC 31-34-22-2: Providing copies of reports and factual summaries of reports](#)
- [IC 31-34-23-3: Notice and hearing requirements; change in out-of-home placement; temporary order for emergency change of placement](#)
- [IC 31-34-23-6: Notice and hearing requirements; change in out-of-home placement](#)
- [IC 31-35-2-6.5: Notice of hearing](#)
- [Indiana Trial Rule 5](#)