

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 1: Introduction	Effective Date: January 1, 2012
	Section 0: Introduction to the Department of Child Services (DCS) Manual	Version: 3

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), through its Child Welfare Division, provides services to children and their families to prevent problems that lead to child abuse and neglect and ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. DCS also investigates allegations of child abuse and/or neglect and oversees the licensing service for resource families and child caring institutions. The DCS Child Welfare Policy Manual is designed to be a reference guide for DCS staff members, relative to the policies, procedures and rules required by laws and administered or supervised by DCS Central Office.

This DCS Child Welfare Policy Manual provides:

- Legal cites to both federal and state laws, rules and regulations which establish the authority of the agency, and set statutory parameters of agency authority within those areas;
- A clear description of each service administered;
- The policies governing each service;
- The procedures to be followed in carrying out each service;
- Practice guidance which assists with implementing policies; and
- Case management information, including reference to Indiana's automated child welfare information system.

[NEW] Policies are requirements set forth to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters.

[NEW] Procedures are a series of steps taken to accomplish the directives set forth in policy.

[NEW] Practice Guidance is designed to provide DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and good social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes.

The DCS Child Welfare Policy Manual is comprised of various chapters that contain information directly related to the duties of DCS staff members.

THE PRACTICE OF CHILD WELFARE

Child welfare services is a field of practice within social work whereby workers carry out the legal charge to prevent and remedy social problems within a family unit. Only when such social problems result in a dysfunction between parents and children, or when the law authorizes other reasons for intervention, should service intervention occur.

The preservation of family and community ties is essential to the safety, well-being, and permanency for children. DCS recognizes and supports the preservation of family and community connections through our mission, vision, and values.

MISSION

DCS protects children from abuse and neglect. DCS does this by partnering with families and communities to provide safe, nurturing, and stable homes.

VISION

Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive families and communities.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Children:

- Every child has the right to a safe and nurturing home free from abuse and neglect.
- The most desirable place for children to grow is with their own families when these families are able to provide safe, nurturing, and stable home.
- Vigorous early intervention services should be offered to at-risk families to enable a child to remain safely in their own home.
- A timely, thorough, and thoughtful response to child safety concerns is critical in effectively protecting children.
- Every child has the right to appropriate care and a permanent home. The ultimate goal in permanency shall be to provide a safe and nurturing home, and for a child to develop and sustain meaningful relationships.
- Children should be in family settings. Siblings shall be placed together. Children under the age of 6 should never be placed in congregate care (i.e. group home, shelter care, and institutions).
- If a child is determined to be unsafe, DCS and the family will develop a timely plan to keep the child safe, with all efforts toward services to protect the child in his/her own home.

- When children cannot live safely with their families, the first consideration for placement will be with an appropriate relative in order to provide a familiar, safe, and nurturing environment to minimize loss.
- When children require out-of-home placements, careful assessment and evaluation shall be utilized when making placement decisions in an effort to promote a single placement for children.
- When children require out-of-home placements, they should maintain essential connections through frequent and meaningful contact with significant persons in their lives.
- All efforts should be made for children to remain in their own neighborhoods and maintain existing connections with families, schools, and friends.
- Reunification and permanency is accelerated when visitation between parents and children is frequent and in the most normalized environment possible.
- Success in school is more likely to occur when planning for safety, stability, and permanency is fully integrated with a child's educational plan.
- While transitioning to adulthood, children in foster care are most successful in achieving independence when they have established relationships with caring adults.

Families:

- Parents should be empowered and given the opportunity to take responsibility for their children and resolve issues of abuse and neglect.
- Families will be engaged with honesty, empathy and openness. Through listening and helping, families will develop their strengths to meet current and future needs.
- Children and families will receive prompt and individualized service planning.
- Every person has value and worth and will be treated with honesty and dignity. Every family has strengths that can be developed.
- Family members are experts of their own families. Service planning will consider the family rules, traditions, history, and culture.
- Family perspectives, goals and values will be regarded as critical to creating and maintaining child safety.
- To facilitate reunification, parents must be involved in treatment planning and service plan delivery, because when the strengths and voices of children and families are recognized, respected and affirmed, they are more likely to use them for a change.
- Families will receive ongoing supports that will enable them to safely sustain their children in their homes.
- Families are core members of the decision-making team, therefore decisions about child and family team interventions shall be relevant, comprehensive, and effective.
- Parents must be supported in accessing services and understand that incorporating those services is necessary to improve outcomes for children.

- The family's network is essential to supporting and sustaining change. Families shall meet their needs through their own strengths and with the support of their networks.
- Coordination of the family team and accomplishment of its goal is essential and works most effectively when it occurs via regular face-to-face meetings that ensure more successful and positive outcomes.
- When children require out-of-home placement, safety must be ensured through regular and frequent contact with those children and caregivers.

Communities

- Families and communities are responsible for ensuring that children thrive.
- DCS will work jointly with service providers who adhere to effective social work practices in the delivery of services and providers will be held responsible for demonstrating expected outcomes.
- Developing effective services is a shared responsibility best achieved by families, community partners, and public agencies working collaboratively.
- DCS will assist families in this community/ family collaboration to find resources that make children and families safe.
- Services provided to children and families will respect their cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage.
- DCS staff relationships and communications with community partners will be conducted with empathy, honesty, and openness.
- Services to children and families shall be planned and delivered through a straightforward, flexible individualized service plan developed by the child, family, and service team.
- Services planning implementation should be built on a comprehensive array of services designed to create the opportunity for children and families to achieve the goals of safety, well-being, and permanency.
- Strengths-based service plans are developed using a family team and a comprehensive assessment of the child and family's needs. Plan should be needs based and should specify steps to be taken by each member of the team, time frames for accomplishment of goals, and concrete measurements to monitor the progress of the child and family.

LEGAL BASE

The direct delivery of child welfare services by DCS local office under the administration or supervision of the Central Office of DCS is based upon federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The foundation for public welfare is found in the 1935 federal Social Security Act, as amended.

The Indiana Juvenile Code became effective October 1, 1979. In its “General Policy and Provisions,” Indiana Code 31-10-2-1 affirms that it is the policy of this state “to ensure that children within the juvenile justice system are treated as persons in need of care, protection, treatment and rehabilitation.” Further, the Code states that it is Indiana’s policy to “strengthen family life by assisting parents to fulfill their parental obligations;” and “to remove children from their families only when it is in the child’s best interest or in the best interest of public safety.”

The federal Social Security Act, Title IV, Part B, Section 425(a)(1) [42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 625] offers this further definition:

For purposes of this title, the term “child welfare services” means public social services which are directed toward the accomplishment of the following purposes: (A) protecting and promoting the welfare of all children, including handicapped, homeless, dependent, or neglected children; (B) preventing or remedying, or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in, the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children; (C) preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems, assisting families in resolving their problems, and preventing the breakup of the family where the prevention of child removal is desirable and possible; (D) restoring to their families children who have been removed, by the provision of services to the child and the families; (E) placing children in suitable adoptive homes, in cases where restoration to the biological family is not possible or appropriate; and (F) assuring adequate care of children away from their homes, in cases where the child cannot be returned home or cannot be placed for adoption.

Information regarding other federal and state laws that influence public child welfare services can be found in the related sections of the DCS Child Welfare Manual.

NON-DISCRIMINATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY TO CLIENTS

Title IV of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 U.S.C. 2000d], Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12132), and all regulations related to these Acts, which deal with non-discrimination in services delivery to clients. All local offices must ensure that no one, based on race, color, sex, national origin, or handicap, shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any service or activity for which the federal government provides funding.

SUMMARY

DCS is outcome driven by a child's need for safety, permanency, and well-being. A child's health and safety are always the paramount concern.

DCS requires a system that is community-based, quality-driven, and accountable to clients, community partners, and other stakeholders to be successful.

An effective system of care also requires the active participation of a broad range of professionals working as a team with and/or on behalf of children and their families.

DCS recognizes that families and children need timely access to a broad range of services to assist the family with safely caring for its children.

The DCS child welfare policy manual is updated frequently to reflect new policies, legislative changes, and revisions to existing policies. Please review the manual periodically to stay informed about current DCS policies.

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 1: Introduction	Effective Date: July 1, 2011
	Section 1: Community Child Protection Team (CPT)	Version: 2

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will establish a countywide, multidisciplinary community Child Protection Team (CPT) comprised of 13 members. The members are specified by Indiana statute. Some members are appointed by the DCS Local Office Director. See Related Information for the composition of the CPT.

The CPT will elect a Team Coordinator from the team's membership. The Team Coordinator will supply the CPT with the following:

1. Copies of reports of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) under [IC-31-33-7-1](#); and
2. Any other information or reports that the coordinator considers essential to the team's deliberations.

Note: See separate policy, [4.25 Completing the Assessment Report](#) for further information.

The CPT will meet:

1. At least one (1) time each month; or
2. At the times that the CPTs services are needed by DCS.

Meetings of the CPT will be called by the majority vote of the members of the team. The Team Coordinator or at least two (2) other members of the team may determine the agenda.

Note: Meetings of the Team are open only to persons authorized to receive information under this article.

[REVISED] The CPT may recommend to DCS that a petition be filed in the juvenile court on behalf of the subject child if the team believes this would best serve the interests of the child.

The CPT may receive and review:

1. Any case that DCS has been involved in within the county where the CPT presides; and
2. Complaints regarding CA/N cases that are brought to the CPT by a person or an agency.

Note: The members of the CPT are bound by all applicable laws regarding the confidentiality of matters reviewed by the CPT. See [IC 31-33-18](#) for further details.

A member of the CPT, who is not a DCS employee, will serve on the DCS Screen-Out Committee. See separate policy, [3.7 Review of Screened-Out Child Abuse and/or Neglect \(CA/N\) Intake Reports](#).

The CPT will prepare a periodic report annually regarding the CA/N reports and complaints that the CPT reviews. The periodic report may include the following information:

1. The number of complaints the CPT receives and reviews each month; and/or
2. A description of the CA/N reports that the Team reviews each month including the following information:
 - a. The scope and manner of the interviewing process during the CA/N assessment,
 - b. The timeliness of the assessment,
 - c. The number of children removed from the home,
 - d. The types of services offered,
 - e. The number of CA/N cases filed with a court, and
 - f. The reasons that certain CA/N cases are not filed with a court.

Code Reference

1. [IC-31-33-3: Community Child Protection Team](#)
2. [IC 31-33-7-1: Arrangement of receipt of reports](#)
3. [IC 31-33-18: Disclosure of Reports, Confidentiality Requirements](#)

PROCEDURE

The DCS Local Office Director will appoint to the CPT, with the approval of the DCS Agency Director:

1. Either:
 - a. A public school superintendent or that person's designee, or
 - b. A director of a local special education cooperative or that person's designee.
2. Two (2) persons, each of whom is a physician or nurse with experience in pediatrics or family practice; and
3. Two (2) residents of the county.

The CPT will ensure that accurate minutes are completed and disseminated to members of the team from each meeting. These minutes will be utilized to prepare the periodic report.

The DCS Local Office Director will prepare the periodic report annually and distribute the report to:

1. The members of the CPT; and
2. The DCS Regional Manager.

The Supervisor will forward a copy of any completed assessment with one or more CA/N substantiated allegation to the Coordinator of the CPT for review and input, including recommended action. See separate policy, [4.25 Completing the Assessment Report](#) for further information.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS

1. [Acknowledgement of Appointment to Child Protection Team \(CPT\) \(SF45003/DCS0320\)](#) – Available in ICWIS in Administrative Module
2. [Certificate: Certification for Child Protection Team Members \(SF44869/CW3307A\)](#) – Available in ICWIS in Administrative Module
3. [Child Protection Team \(CPT\) Confidentiality Agreement](#) – Available in ICWIS in the Administrative Module
4. [Notice of Review by Child Protection Team \(CPT\) \(SF49212/CW0007\)](#) – Available in ICWIS

RELATED INFORMATION

Composition of the Community Child Protection Team (CPT) [IC-31-33-3-1](#)

A community child protection team (CPT) is a countywide, multidisciplinary team. This team must include the following 13 members who reside in, or provide services to residents of, the county in which the team is to be formed:

1. The DCS Local Office Director or designee;
2. Two (2) designees of the juvenile court judge;
3. The county prosecuting attorney or designee;
4. The county sheriff or designee;
5. Either:
 - a. The president of the county executive in a county not containing a consolidated city or their designee, or
 - b. The executive of a consolidated city in a county containing a consolidated city or their designee.
6. A director of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) program or the director's designee in the county in which the team is to be formed.
7. The chief law enforcement officer of the largest Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) in the county (other than the county sheriff) or their designee.

Other members are appointed by the DCS Local Office Director, subject to final approval by the DCS Agency Director. They are as follows:

8. Either:
 - a. A public school superintendent or that person's designee, or
 - b. A director of a local special education cooperative or that person's designee.
9. Two (2) persons, each of whom is a physician or nurse with experience in pediatrics or family practice; and

10. Two (2) residents of the county.

Review of Screened-Out Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) Intake Reports

According to DCS policy, [3.7 Review of Screened-Out Child Abuse and/or Neglect \(CA/N\) Intake Reports](#), a member of the local community CPT is designated as a member of the Screen-Out Committee. However, this particular representative may not be a DCS employee.

DCS Administrative Reviews

The individual identified by DCS to conduct the Administrative Review may at his or her discretion and subject to the time limits stated herein, refer the request to the DCS local office CPT to review and make a recommendation. See separate policy, [2.2 Administrative Review Process](#) for further details.

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 1: Introduction	Effective Date: July 1, 2009
	Section 2: The Child Protection Plan	Version: 1

POLICY	OLD POLICY: 202.3
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Each Indiana Regional Services Council (RSC) must hold a public hearing prior to the preparation of the local Child Protection Plan for the delivery of child protection services. The Child Protection Plan is required to be completed prior to February 2 of each even-numbered year.

Each RSC (after a public hearing) will:

1. Prepare a local plan for the provision of child protection services; and
2. Submit the plan to:
 - a. The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) Agency Director,
 - b. Each juvenile court within the region,
 - c. The community Child Protection Team (CPT), and
 - d. Appropriate public and voluntary agencies, including organizations for the prevention of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N).

The local Child Protection Plan must describe the implementation for the delivery of child protection services in the region by the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), including:

1. Organization;
2. Staffing;
3. Mode of operations;
4. Financing of the child protection services; and
5. The provisions made for the purchase of service and interagency relations.

The DCS Agency Director will certify whether the local plan fulfills and meets the provision of child protection services no later than **60** days after receiving the Child Protection Plan.

If the DCS Agency Director certifies that the local plan does not fulfill the purposes and meet the provisions of child protection services, the DCS Agency Director will:

1. State the reasons for the decision;
2. Make revisions to the plan that the Director determines are necessary to meet the requirements and fulfills the purpose of child protection services; and
3. Approve and certify the revised plan as the local plan required by [IC 31-33-4](#).

Code Reference

[IC 31-33-4: Local Plan for Provision of Child Protection Services](#)

[IC 31-26-6: Regional Service Strategic Plans](#)

PROCEDURE

The RSC will:

1. Prepare a local plan for the provision of child protection services; and
2. Submit the plan to the DCS Agency Director, each juvenile court within the region, the community CPT and appropriate public and voluntary agencies, including organizations for the prevention of CA/N no later than February 2 of each even-numbered year.

The DCS Agency Director will certify whether the local plan fulfills and meets the provisions of child protection services no later than **60** days after receiving the Child Protection Plan.

If, the plan does not fulfill the purposes and meet the provisions of child protection services, the DCS Agency Director will:

1. State the reasons for the decision,
2. Make revisions to the plan that are determined to be necessary to meet the requirements and fulfills the purpose of child protection services, and
3. Approve and certify the revised plan as the local plan.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

RSC Hearing Guidelines

See separate policy, Chapter 1, Regional Services Councils and the [Regional Services Council \(RSC\) Protocol](#) for details.

FORMS

[Request for Approval of Child Protection Plan \(DCS 660A\)](#) – Available in ICWIS

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 1: Introduction	Effective Date: July 1, 2009
	Section 3: Regional Services Council	Version: 1

POLICY [NEW]

Each county in Indiana will participate in a Regional Services Council (RSC) for the service region in which the county is located. The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will determine the county or counties that comprise each service region. A county may not be divided when establishing a service region.

The DCS Regional Manager will serve as the chairperson of the RSC. The council will select one (1) of its members as vice chairperson. See Related Information for the composition of the RSC.

While quarterly meetings are required by statute, the RSC will meet monthly in order to accomplish the following:

1. Evaluate local child welfare service needs and a determination of appropriate delivery mechanisms to meet those needs. The RSC will take public testimony regarding local service needs and system changes. The needs are to be tailored to those children and families:
 - a. Alleged to be or adjudicated in a Child in Need of Services (CHINS)/Informal Adjustment (IA)/Juvenile Delinquency (JD)/Juvenile Status (JS) proceeding, or
 - b. Identified by DCS as substantially at risk of becoming children in a CHINS/IA/JD/JS proceeding and have been referred to DCS for services (by or with the consent of the parent, guardian, or custodian), in accordance with a child's individual case plan.
2. Develop, approve and recommend a Biennial Regional Services Strategic Plan designed to meet the needs identified in #1 above and recommend allocation and distribution of funds allocated to the service region used for the expenses of child welfare programs and child services administered by DCS within the region. Public and private funds available for consideration by the RSC in the Plan include funds available through;
 - a. Title IV-B of the Social Security Act,
 - b. Title IV-E of the Social Security Act,
 - c. Title XX of the Social Security Act,
 - d. The Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act,
 - e. Special Education programs under IC 20-35-6-2,
 - f. All programs designed to prevent child abuse, neglect or delinquency or to enhance child welfare and family preservation administered by or funded through DCS, DFR, prosecuting attorneys and juvenile courts, including programs funded through IC 31-26-3.5 and IC 31-40, and
 - g. A child advocacy fund.

3. Develop, review, or revise a strategy for implementation of an approved Regional Service Strategic Plan (Plan). Prepare, approve and recommend revisions, additions and updates to the Plan that identify:
 - a. The manner in which prevention and early intervention services will be provided or improved,
 - b. How local collaboration will improve children's services, and
 - c. How different funds can be used to serve children and families more effectively.
4. Review applications to establish, continue or modify child welfare programs for the region and make recommendations to the department director;
5. Prepare a local Child Protection Services Plan and recommend the plan to the DCS Director for approval;
6. Review the implementation of the Plan and prepare revisions, additions, or updates of the Plan that the RSC considers necessary or appropriate to improve the quality and efficiency of early intervention child welfare services provided in accordance with the Plan;
7. Reorganize as needed and select its vice chairperson for the ensuing year;
8. Collaborate with Central Office for obtaining services (Request for Proposals/RFPs); and
9. Make sure the meeting agenda, minutes and notices are posted on the DCS website.

The chairperson or vice chairperson of a RSC may convene any additional meetings of the RSC that are, in the chairperson's or vice chairperson's opinion, necessary or appropriate.

A majority of the voting members appointed to the RSC constitutes a quorum for the transaction of official business that includes taking final action (as defined in [IC-5-14-1.5-2\(g\)](#)). The RSC may hold a meeting in the absence of a quorum to discuss any items of public business related to its responsibilities and functions, without taking final action.

Note: All meetings of a RSC are subject to applicable provisions of [IC 5-14-1.5](#). The RSC meeting agenda and notes are posted and available to the general public on the DCS internet website at <http://www.in.gov/dcs/2346.htm>. See Related Information for specifics of the Open Door Law.

Each RSC through the Regional Manager, will transmit copies of:

1. The Biennial Regional Services Strategic Plan;
2. Each local Child Protection Services Plan
3. Each annual report;
4. Each revised Plan; and
5. Any other report or document described by administrative rules to the following:
 - a. The Director,
 - b. DCS Central Office for posting on the DCS website,
 - c. Each DCS local office in the service region; and
 - d. Each juvenile court in the service region.

The RSC will publicize to residents of each county in the service region the existence and availability of the Plan, including information concerning access to the Plan on the DCS website.

Each RSC will transmit and recommend each Plan it develops and approves to the Agency Director. The council will transmit its biennial Plan to the Director not later than February 2 of each even-numbered year. All plans must be approved by the DCS Agency Director.

Code Reference

1. [IC 31-26-6: Regional Service Strategic Plans](#)
2. [IC 5-14-1.5: Public Meetings \(Open Door Law\)](#)
3. [IC 20-35-6-2: Contracts for services; payments of costs; rules](#)
4. [IC 31-26-3.5: Child Welfare Programs](#)
5. [IC 31-40: Juvenile Law: Funding](#)

PROCEDURE

The DCS Regional Manager will:

1. Serve as the chairperson to conduct the RSC meeting;
2. Author the meeting minutes and distribute them to the members of the RSC;
3. Post the date, time and location of monthly meetings at least 48 hours before the meeting. Once meeting schedules are established, annual posting of the regularly scheduled meetings will be placed on the DCS website. Updates regarding scheduling changes will be made as necessary;
4. Deliver a notice by regular mail, electronic mail or fax to all news media and other persons that request written notice; and
5. Post the Agenda no less than 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting at the entrance of the meeting location;

The DCS Agency Director or designee, not later than **60** days after receiving the Plan, will do **one (1)** of the following:

1. Approve the Plan as submitted by the RSC;
2. Approve the Plan with amendments, modifications, or revisions; or
3. Return the Plan to the RSC with directions concerning:
 - a. Subjects for further study and reconsideration, and
 - b. Resubmission of a revised Plan.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Participation in Meeting by Certain Means of Communication; Memoranda of Meeting

This applies to a meeting of a RSC at which at least four (4) voting members of the Council are physically present at the place where the meeting is conducted.

A member of the RSC may participate in a RSC meeting in person or by speakerphone or other means of communication that allows all other members participating in the meeting and all members of the public physically present at the same place where the meeting is conducted to communicate simultaneously with each other during the meeting.

Note: A member who participates in a meeting is considered to be present at the meeting.

The memoranda of the meeting prepared under [IC 5-14-1.5-4](#) must state the name of each member who:

1. Was physically present at the place where the meeting was conducted;
2. Participated in the meeting by using a means of communication where all other members participating in the meeting and all members of the public physically present at the same place where the meeting is conducted to communicate simultaneously with each other during the meeting; or
3. Was absent.

FORMS

[Regional Services Council Proxy](#) – Copy provided

RELATED INFORMATION

Regional Services Council Membership

The make-up of the RSC will depend on the number of counties in the region. If the service region consists of at least three (3) counties, the RSC is composed of the following members appointed from the service region:

1. The Regional Manager, who must be an employee of DCS;
2. Three (3) members who are juvenile court judges or their designees;
3. Three (3) DCS Local Office Directors;
4. Two (2) Family Case Manager (FCM) Supervisors;
5. Two (2) FCMS;
6. Two (2) licensed foster parents;
7. One (1) Guardian Ad litem (GAL) or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA);
8. One (1) member who is a prosecuting attorney or their designee;
9. One (1) non-voting individual who:
 - a. Is at least 16 and less than 25 years of age,
 - b. Is a resident of the service region,
 - c. Has received or is receiving services through funds provided, directly or indirectly, through DCS.

Note: This individual should not currently be participating in services to avoid potential ethical conflict situations for other members (i.e., This is to eliminate any potential conflict between the child or youth whose case may have been heard in the same court as the respective juvenile court judge who may be a member of the council).

10. (Optional) One non-voting parent of a child who has received services through funds provided, directly or indirectly, by DCS.

If the service region consists of one (1) or two (2) counties, the RSC must include at least the following members from the service region:

1. Three (3) employees of DCS, including the Regional Manager;
2. One (1) juvenile court judge or judicial hearing officer;
3. Two (2) members who are designees of a juvenile court judge;
4. Two (2) Family Case Manager (FCM) Supervisors;
5. Two (2) FCMs;
6. One (1) licensed foster parent;
7. One (1) Guardian Ad litem (GAL) or Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA);
8. One (1) member who is a prosecuting attorney or their designee;
9. One (1) non-voting individual who:
 - a. Is at least 16 and less than 25 years of age,
 - b. Is a resident of the service region,
 - c. Has received or is receiving services through funds provided, directly or indirectly, through DCS.

Note: This individual should not currently be participating in services to avoid potential ethical conflict situations for other members (i.e., This is to eliminate any potential conflict between the child or youth whose case may have been heard in the same court as the respective juvenile court judge who may be a member of the council).

10. (Optional) One non-voting parent of a child who has received services through funds provided, directly or indirectly, by DCS.

For service regions consisting of one (1) or two (2) counties, the DCS Agency Director will appoint the members of the RSC upon recommendation of the DCS Regional Manager with the exception of judges or judicial hearing officers and prosecuting attorneys or their designees.

Note: The juvenile court judges or their designees, 1 juvenile court judge or judicial hearing officer, and members who are designees of a juvenile court judge will be selected by the juvenile court judge or judges in the service region.

Note: The prosecuting attorney or their designee will be selected by the prosecuting attorneys in the counties comprising the service region.

Each member of the RSC will serve upon the approval of the member's appointing authority.

Service Region

A service region means an area of Indiana consisting of one (1) or more counties.

Proxy

Members of the judiciary, prosecuting attorney, and DCS employees have the ability to appoint a proxy. The DCS Regional Manager will approve or deny all proxy requests. Proxy requests will utilize the [Regional Services Council Proxy](#) form, and approval of the proxy will be included in the minutes of the appropriate meeting. Proxies have voting rights.

Quorum

A majority of the appointed voting members of the RSC or voting members representatives, or proxies, constitutes a quorum for the official business that includes taking final action (as

defined in [IC 5-14-1.5-2\(g\)](#)). At least four (4) voting members of the RSC must be physically present to conduct business. The remaining membership may join telephonically or via videoconferencing. While electronic attendance is acceptable, no email voting is permissible. As long as a majority of the voting membership is present (either physically or telephonically) the RSC can convene to conduct business. Agenda items can be discussed, but the RSC is unable to vote on action items unless a majority of the membership is physically or telephonically present.

Ethics

As provided by 42 IAC 1-4-1, most members of the RSC, except judges and prosecutors, must complete online Ethics Training provided through the Office of the Inspector General. This requirement must be completed prior to the member or proxy member's attendance in a voting role for the RSC.

Proxies who are employees of the judicial or legislative departments of state government or are employees of political subdivisions or state educational institutions do not need to complete ethics training. Any other person serving as a proxy to a member of the RSC must complete the state-mandated ethics training as provided online by the Office of the Inspector General.

It is also important to remind all members of the RSC that confidentiality laws apply to the conversations held during the meetings, as they may be exposed to privileged information. Non-case specific information should be utilized as often as possible.

IC 5-14-1.5: Public Meetings (Open Door Law)

RSC meetings fall under the Open Door Law as specified by [IC 5-14-1.5](#).

Early Intervention Programs

These particular statutes (31-34-24 and 31-37-24) have been repealed and replaced by the Local Child Protection Services Plan.