

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing Section 20: Variances (Foster Family Home Licensing)	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 4

POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may allow a foster family home (FFH) to meet the intent of a rule or regulation in a different way. This is called a variance. A variance must still protect the health, safety, and well-being of the child.

POLICY STATEMENT

A variance can only be granted for DCS rules and regulations, not for Indiana statutory requirements. Only the DCS Central Office Licensing Unit can approve or deny a variance.

A variance will expire on the earliest of the following dates:

1. When the foster home's license expires,
2. On the date set by the Central Office Licensing Unit Manager,
3. When a specific event (set by the Licensing Unit) happens, or
4. Four (4) years after the variance starts.

To request a licensing variance, documentation will be submitted that:

1. Explains the alternative plan for meeting the rule or regulation, and
2. Shows how the plan will protect the health, safety, and well-being of every child receiving services.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-27-2-8: Granting of variances and waivers](#)
- [IC 31-27-2-9: Expiration of variances and waivers](#)
- [IC 31-27-2-10: Renewal of variances and waivers](#)
- [IC 31-27-2-11: Revocation of variances and waivers](#)
- [IC 31-27-4-12: Eligibility for waivers and variances](#)