

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 5: General Case Management Section 15: Concurrent Planning/Second Permanency Plan	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 10

POLICY OVERVIEW

Concurrent Planning means working on two plans at the same time to help children get a safe, permanent home faster:

1. **Reunification** – helping the child return home safely.
2. **Another permanency plan** – like adoption or guardianship, in case reunification is not possible.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will look at each case to decide if concurrent planning is best. If it is, DCS will recommend it to the court. See policy [6.10 Permanency Plan](#).

When Concurrent Planning is Required

DCS will use concurrent planning at the beginning of a case if any of these are true:

1. A parent has had their parental rights terminated (TPR) before;
2. A parent, guardian, or custodian has been diagnosed with a mental illness or substance use disorder that renders them unable to provide for or protect the child and, upon assessment, indicates:
 - a. A history of treatment without response, or
 - b. A pattern of not complying with their medication or treatment plan.
3. The parent, guardian, or custodian has asked to give the child up on more than 1 occasion following initial intervention;
4. A parenting is a youth under 16 that:
 - a. Has no support system, and
 - b. A past placement together with their child did not work because of their behavior.

When Concurrent Planning May Be Used

DCS may develop a Case Plan/Prevention Plan with two permanency plan goals for a child that meets at least 1 of the following potential Concurrent Planning Indicators:

1. There has been a severe incident of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N), such as:
 - a. A near fatality of the child,
 - b. A near fatality of the sibling, or
 - c. A fatality of a sibling.
2. The family has a history of trying multiple times to correct the conditions which resulted in child maltreatment;
3. The child or siblings:

- a. Have been in out-of-home care on at least one other occasion for a period of 6 months or more, or
 - b. Have had two or more prior placements with DCS involvement.
4. There has been an ongoing pattern of documented domestic violence (DV) lasting at least one year in the household; or
 5. The parent, guardian, or custodian has a developmental disability or emotional impairment, which upon assessment by a qualified provider, indicates the parent, guardian, or custodian may be unable to provide for, protect, or nurture the child and does not have relatives or social supports able or willing to assist in parenting.

Note: If any of the above indicators are present, the case should be staffed with the Family Case Manager (FCM) Supervisor to determine the appropriateness of Concurrent Planning.

Other Important Rules

DCS may consider Concurrent Planning for other children in DCS care when appropriate.

If a child has been removed from the child's parent, guardian, or custodian for 12 of the last 22 months, the recommended permanency plan **must** include a goal that does not return the child to the person they were removed from.

Reunification services will be provided for:

1. 15 months if the child was removed between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, or
2. 12 months if the child was removed after June 30, 2026.

Exception: The court can give up to two 90 day extensions.

The court can give more time if:

1. The parent, guardian, or custodian was not given a chance to participate, or
2. They are following the dispositional decree and it's in the child's best interest for an extension to be granted.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-22.1: "Concurrent planning"](#)
- [IC 31-34-15-4: Form; contents](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1.6: Limitation on provision of reunification services to parent, guardian, or custodian following removal of child](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-5: Determination; written findings; permanency plan requirements](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-5.6: Exceptions to requirement to make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify families](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-7: Deadline for permanency hearing; permanency plans; continuing juvenile court jurisdiction](#)
- [Adoption and Safe Families Act \(ASFA\) of 1997](#)