

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 10: Guardianship and Adoption Section 01: Planning for Adoption – Overview	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 6

POLICY OVERVIEW

When reunification is not in a child's best interest, adoption as the permanency plan or second permanency plan (if concurrent planning) may be best to help children find a permanent, loving home.

POLICY STATEMENT

Adoption planning may start when:

1. A court rules that reasonable efforts to reunify the family are not required;
2. A child has been under a dispositional decree for at least six (6) months with no significant progress toward reunification; or
3. Termination of parental rights (TPR) is filed.

Note: DCS will not sign the Consent to Adoption until a prospective adoptive parent has been identified and:

- a. The time to appeal the TPR has passed, or
- b. Any appeals are fully resolved, and
- c. The negotiations for adoption subsidy have been finalized.

DCS will conduct a diligent search throughout the case to locate all possible relatives and kin before looking for a non-relative adoptive family.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-99.2: "Prospective adoptive parent"](#)
- [IC 31-19-11-1.1: Prohibited discrimination and considerations for petitions for adoption filed by persons with a disability](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-4: Notice of case review; testimony in periodic case review](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-5.7: Permanency plan; requirement; approval; reports and orders not required](#)
- [25 USC 1903\(4\): Indian child welfare definitions](#)
- [25 USC 1911: Indian tribe jurisdiction over Indian child custody proceedings](#)
- [25 USC 1913: Parental rights; voluntary termination](#)
- [25 USC 1915: Placement of Indian children](#)
- [42 USC 1996b: Interethnic adoption](#)
- [42 USC Ch. 126 12102: Definition of disability](#)