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| | **INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES**<br>**CHILD WELFARE POLICY** | |
| | **Chapter 10:** Guardianship and Adoption<br>**Section 10:** Unlicensed Relative or Kinship Adoption | |
| | **Effective Date:** July 1, 2026 | **Version:** 7 |

## POLICY OVERVIEW

When a child cannot safely return to their parent, guardian, or custodian, DCS will first look for legal permanency with an appropriate relative or kin. This helps them stay connected with their family, community, and culture.

## POLICY STATEMENT

DCS will not delay or deny an adoption based on the race, color, or national origin of the child or adoptive family, according to federal law. DCS will also not deny an adoption based solely on a prospective adoptive parent's disability.

Background checks are required for everyone living in the adoptive home (see policies 13.07 and 13.08).

DCS will provide a report to the court within 60 calendar days of the date the adoption petition is filed, including information outlined in law.

## LEGAL REFERENCES

- IC 31-9-2.1-192: "Prospective adoptive parent"
- IC 31-19-2-2: Adoption of minor child; petition; venue; substituting petitioner
- IC 31-19-2-7.5: Submission of information, forms, or consents for criminal history check
- IC 31-19-2-15: Information provided to current foster parent and prospective adoptive parent; explanation of information; signature
- IC 31-19-8-5: Agency report and recommendation; filing requirements; waiver of report
- IC 31-19-8-6: Contents of report
- IC 31-19-11-1.1: Prohibited discrimination and considerations for petitions for adoption filed by persons with a disability
- IC 31-19-26.5: Adoption Subsidies
- 42 USC 673: Adoption and guardianship assistance program
- 42 USC Ch. 126 12102: Definition of disability
- 42 USC Sec. 1996b: Interethnic Adoption (Inter-ethnic Placement Act [IEPA])