

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services Section 38: Placement Changes	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 10

POLICY OVERVIEW

When a child's placement changes and includes residential treatment, see policies 8.04 and 8.53.

The child's safety and best interest must always come first. A placement change may be recommended if the current home is unsafe or if a better home is found.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) must make sure children live in safe, stable homes with caregivers who can meet their needs. DCS will try to limit how often a child changes placement and will act quickly if something affects the child's safety or well-being.

Note: If a child is in an out-of-home placement with a sibling, DCS will consider if separating the child from their sibling is in their best interest before changing placement.

DCS will recommend a placement change to the court if:

1. There is a substantiation of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) in a resource home by the resource parent or any household member that has not been waived;

Note: DCS will move the child right away if they are not safe in the current placement.

2. An appropriate placement becomes available where the child can live with siblings, unless that's not best for one or more of the children;
3. An appropriate relative or kinship caregiver is identified and living with them is in the child's best interest;
4. The current placement has asked for the child to be moved;

Note: The resource parent must give DCS at least 14-days notice if they are no longer able or willing to take care of the child. This is important to give the child a smooth transition. DCS will try to work with the resource parent before changing the placement.

5. Disruption of a Trial Home Visit (THV);
6. A pre-adoptive home has been found and is in the best interest of the child;
7. The child needs a more or less restrictive placement; or

Note: Reuniting a child with the parent, guardian, or custodian is not a placement disruption, nor is a planned move out of residential treatment into less restrictive care.

8. The residential treatment facility where the child is receiving treatment is in the process of license revocation or contract termination.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-34-3-4.7: Notice to the child's school](#)
- [IC 31-34-4: Chapter 4. Temporary Placement of Child Taken Into Custody](#)
- [IC 31-34-4-8: Change in temporary out-of-home placement; consideration of separation of siblings](#)
- [IC 31-34-18-4: Recommendation on care, treatment, rehabilitation, or placement](#)
- [IC 31-34-19-7: Placement of child; relative; evaluation; background checks](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1: Dispositional decrees; conditions or placement of child in home or facility outside Indiana; written findings and conclusions](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1.5: Placement in household with certain individuals prohibited; criminal history checks; exceptions; considerations](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-7.5: Placement prohibited in residence of individual who has committed certain acts or offenses; criminal history check; contents of permanency plans](#)
- [IC 31-34-23-3: Notice and hearing requirements; change in out of home placement; temporary order for emergency change of placement](#)
- [IC 31-34-23-5: Placement of a child with a previous placement](#)
- [IC 31-34-23-6: Notice and hearing requirements; change in out-of-home placement](#)