

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services Section 04: Emergency Shelter Care & Urgent Residential Treatment	
	Effective Date: July 1, 2026	Version: 10

POLICY OVERVIEW

It is important for the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) to try all placement options before recommending Emergency Shelter Care (ESC) or urgent residential treatment. ESC and urgent residential treatment are **only** used for a short time and when in the child's best interest.

POLICY STATEMENT

If a child must be removed from their parent, guardian, or custodian to protect their safety, DCS will first attempt to find a family-like setting that fits the child's needs (see policies [4.28](#) and [8.01](#)).

Emergency Shelter Care (ESC)

ESC is an emergency short-term placement used to meet a child's basic needs. A child should not stay in ESC longer than the maximum stay (60 consecutive days) without DCS approval.

Urgent Residential Treatment

Urgent residential treatment is used to meet a child's mental health and behavioral needs.

Residential treatment facilities include:

1. Child Caring Institutions (CCIs);
2. Private Secure Facilities (PSFs) with or without Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility [PRTF] certification; and
3. Group Homes (GHs).

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2.1-42: Child Caring Institution](#)
- [IC 31-9-2.1-115: Group Home](#)
- [IC 31-9-2.1-198: "Emergency Shelter"](#)
- [IC 31-27: ARTICLE 27. CHILD SERVICES: REGULATIONS OF RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE](#)
- [IC 31-27-3-10: Waiver of maximum stay for child](#)
- [IC 31-34-20-1: Entry of dispositional decree; placement in home or facility outside Indiana; findings and conclusions](#)
- [IC 31-37-20-3: Formal hearing on continued jurisdiction; periodic jurisdiction review; referral to permanency roundtable](#)
- [IC 31-40-1-2: Obligation of parent, guardian, or department for costs of services or return of child](#)
- [465 IAC 2-11-22: Private Secure Facility](#)
- [42 USC 672: Foster care maintenance payments program](#)