

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 14: Negotiations for GAP Assistance Section 02: Negotiations for Guardianship Assistance Program	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 8

POLICY OVERVIEW

Children who qualify for the Indiana Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP), either through federal or state funding, can receive periodic payments. These payments are agreed upon by the guardian and the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS). DCS determines the appropriate amount for each child. This policy explains how DCS and guardians work together to set that amount.

POLICY STATEMENT

GAP helps guardians meet the needs of children in their care. DCS will work with families and their lawyers (if they have one) to decide on a fair periodic payment amount. Each family's situation and resources will be considered to determine a periodic payment amount that will help integrate children into families.

Note: The payment cannot be more than what the child would get in foster care. Medicaid and Non-Recurring Expenses (NRE) are not negotiated.

The assistance payment is determined by the child's Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) score. This is offered to all guardians, even if they don't show financial need. Guardians can ask for more or choose to receive no payment. If they choose no payment, they must sign an agreement, and the payment will be set at \$0.

The DCS Local Office Director or designee (someone they choose) and a DCS Central Office Attorney will represent DCS. Guardians can join the discussion with or without a lawyer. This process happens for every eligible child, even if DCS does not support the guardianship.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 29-3-1-7.5: "Incapacitated person"](#)
- [IC 29-3-8-9\(f\): Requirements, terms, and conditions included in order creating guardianship; requirements for modifying or terminating guardianship; notify and refer to department of child services; conduct of hearing IC 31-9-2-17.8\(1\)\(E\): "Child services"](#)
- [42 USC 673\(d\)\(1\): Kinship Guardianship Assistance Agreement](#)