

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services Section 29: Routine Health Care	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 7

POLICY OVERVIEW

It is important that children in out-of-home care get the routine health care they need. This includes mental, dental, vision, hearing, and development needs. Children should get this care on time. Every effort should be made to keep the same doctors and providers who cared for the child before they were removed. This helps keep their care steady (make sure they have continuity of care).

POLICY STATEMENT

For every child in out-of-home care, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make sure a general health exam is scheduled within 10 business days of placement. This must include Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services, called HealthWatch in Indiana.

Note: If the Governor of Indiana declares a state of disaster emergency (under IC 10-14-3-12), the DCS director, or someone the director chooses, may change or pause the rule that says how soon a foster parent must take a child to see a doctor, physical assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse after the child is placed in their home. This is allowed under IC 31-27-2-13.

The child's pediatrician, family doctor, or general practitioner will do a general exam. This exam will check the child's physical, dental, vision, hearing, and developmental health.

Note: A first general health exam is not required if the child:

1. Was placed right from a hospital or doctor's office;
2. Had a medical examination within 30 days before placement, as part of a Child Abuse/Neglect (CA/N) investigation, and is not showing signs of illness or new injuries; or
3. Moved to a new home, unless the move was because of allegations of CA/N or the child is showing signs of illness or injury.

DCS will make sure a child's first dental exam and cleaning is scheduled within six months of their last known exam and cleaning. If there are no records, the child will get a dental exam and cleaning within 90 days of placement.

Note: DCS will not be financially responsible for cosmetic procedures (like braces, Lasik eye surgery, or acne treatments) not covered by private insurance or Medicaid. A, Family Case Manager (FCM) will not offer these services.

DCS will make sure children get timely follow-up care if any physical, mental, dental, vision, or development issues are found during the first health exam or later. The following are routine health care services:

1. Physical check-ups, including immunizations, based on the schedule from the American Academy of Pediatrics and as recommended by the child's doctor;
2. Dental exams and cleanings every six months;
3. Vision exam every 12 months for children who wear glasses or contacts; and

Note: For all other children in out-of-home care, the vision check done by the child's doctor during a check-up, or at school, is enough.

4. Hearing exam every 12 months for children who use hearing aids or tubes, or as recommended by the child's doctor.

Note: For all other children in out-of-home care, the hearing check done by the child's doctor during a physical exam or at school is enough.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 10-14-3-12: Disaster emergency; emergency gubernatorial powers](#)
- [IC 31-27-2-13: Modification or suspension of medical examination requirement during declared disaster emergency](#)
- [IC 31-28-0.5: Chapter 0.5. Electronic Records](#)
- [IC 31-28-1-3: Health summary record; contents](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-19\(b\): Care of children; health](#)