

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 2: Administration of Child Welfare Section 15: Releasing Hospitalized Victims of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N)	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 3

POLICY OVERVIEW

When a child is in the hospital and may be a victim of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N), the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) must follow legal steps before releasing the child to anyone.

POLICY STATEMENT

DCS must approve the release of a child from the hospital when:

1. The child is the subject of a CA/N assessment;
2. The child is the patient in a hospital; and
3. The hospital either was the reporter or has been notified of the CA/N assessment.

Note: DCS will make sure a release is given to the hospital for screen-out reports.

To release a child to their parent, guardian, or custodian; resource parent; or court-approved placement, DCS must provide the hospital with:

1. A written release; or
2. A copy of a court order.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-33-11-1: Conditions for release of child under investigation for abuse or neglect; expenses of extended hospital stay](#)
- [45 CFR 164.512\(b\)\(1\)\(ii\): Uses and disclosures for which an authorization or opportunity to agree or object is not required](#)