



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 11: Older Youth Services

Section 27: Permanency for Older Youth in Collaborative Care (CC)

Effective Date: September 1, 2023

Version: 4

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POLICY OVERVIEW

Building the capacity of existing relationships to offer more empathetic and insightful emotional support may provide important resources for youth as they continue to deal with the emotions and questions raised by experiences prior to and during placement and as they leave out-of-home placement. When Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement (APPLA) is identified as appropriate, efforts will be made to enhance and develop existing relationships the youth have with adults they trust or with whom trust may be strengthened.

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PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is committed to ensuring permanency for youth in Collaborative Care (CC). In extraordinary cases, the legal permanency options of Reunification, Adoption, Legal Guardianship, and Permanent Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative may not meet a particular youth's permanency needs. When such cases have been identified, alternative types of APPLA may be considered, which include, but are not limited to:

1. Relational permanency;
2. Adult adoption; or
3. Re-connecting with biological family members.

Note: APPLA is only an option for youth 16 years of age and older. DCS must document why every other Permanency Plan option is not in the best interest of the child and document continuous diligent efforts to locate adult relatives/kin of the youth (see policies 5.03 Engaging the Family and 5.23 Diligent Search for Relatives/Kin and Case Participants).

The Older Youth Case Manager (OYCM) will:

1. Assess the youth's permanency status by engaging the youth in conversations regarding the youth's perspective on involving supportive adults and the youth's interest in pursuing those connections;
2. Utilize the Kinship Connection Diagram as a tool to aid the youth in identifying possible supportive adults or connections;
3. Engage the Child and Family Team (CFT) in conversations regarding the youth's permanency status and ensure the CFT supports and approves of the Permanency Plan;

4. Ensure the youth is able to identify at least one (1) supportive adult who the youth believes will be a lifelong connection. If the youth is unable to identify a supportive adult or connection, complete a referral for the Youth Connections Program;
5. Document all diligent efforts made to locate adult relatives/kin in the case management system; and
6. Provide documentation at each periodic case review hearing regarding the reasons every other permanency plan option is not in the youth's best interest.

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RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Legal Permanency

Permanency, as defined by Child Welfare Systems, is a safe, stable, secure home and family. There are five (5) federal Permanency Goals, which are recognized in a court of law:

1. Reunification,
2. Adoption,
3. Guardianship,
4. Fit & Willing Relative, and
5. APPLA (only for youth 16 years of age and older).

Note: APPLA is only an option for youth 16 years of age and older. DCS must document why every other permanency plan option is not in the best interest of the child, as well as, document continuous diligent efforts made to locate adult relatives of the youth.

Relational Permanency

Relational permanency is a concept that defines familial relationships beyond biological connections, including familial ties formed during care and after exiting out-of-home placement.

Forms and Tools

- [Kinship Connection Diagram](#)

Related Policies

- [5.03 Engaging the Family](#)
- [5.23 Diligent Search for Relatives/Kin and Case Participants](#)

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LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-28-5.8-7: Periodic reviews by court; notice; participation; orders](#)
- [IC 31-34-21-7.5: Placement prohibited in residence of individual who committed certain acts or offenses; criminal history check; contents of permanency plans](#)

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 11.27

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

Another Planned Permanency Living Arrangement (APPLA)

APPLA is a federal permanency option that is to be used sparingly, in very limited situations, when attempts to achieve other permanency options have not been successful. APPLA may only be identified as a Permanency Plan for a youth 16 years of age or older, and it must be supported and approved by the Child and Family Team (CFT). When a youth 16 years of age or older has a Permanency Plan of APPLA, documentation is required at each periodic case review hearing. The documentation should reflect intensive, ongoing, and current diligent efforts to return the child home or secure placement with a fit and willing relative (including adult siblings), a legal guardian, or an adoptive parent, including efforts that use search technology (e.g., social media) to find relatives for the youth. The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) must document compelling reasons why it continues to be in the best interest of the youth to have APPLA as a Permanency Plan and why the alternative Permanency Plans of Reunification, Adoption, Legal Guardianship, or Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative are not in the best interest of the youth.

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