



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 12: Foster Family

Effective Date: March 1, 2021

Section 32: Physical Environment Requirements

Version: 3

POLICY OVERVIEW

Foster care provides a temporary, safe, nurturing, and stable environment for children who can no longer remain in their own homes due to the risk of abuse and/or neglect. Minimum requirements for the physical environment of a foster family home ensure the child is in an environment that will meet the child's health, safety, and well-being needs.

PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will ensure that all foster family homes meet the minimum requirements for the physical environment as required by law IAC 2-1.5-8 through IAC 2-1.5-12. DCS requires foster parents to report to DCS or the supervising licensed child placing agency (LCPA) any change within the foster family home impacting the health, safety, or general well-being of the child.

The Family Case Manager (FCM), Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS), and/or the LCPA worker will:

1. Conduct a visit to the home of the foster family;
2. Engage the family to gather information, and complete the Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist;
3. Ensure all bedrooms and bathrooms meet the requirements for foster family homes as outlined in 465 IAC 2-1.5-9;
4. Complete the Residential Pool Requirements/Body of Water Safety Plan and/or the Foster Parent Safety Agreement Regarding Firearms and Other Weapons, if applicable;
5. Obtain copies of required documents;
6. Discuss safe sleep expectations;
7. Notify the foster parent of the availability to enroll in foster care liability insurance by contacting dcsinsurance@dcs.in.gov;
8. Create a Plan of Correction, Safety Plan, Waiver, or Variance as appropriate for any licensing requirement not met; and
9. Upload all documents and forms into the case management system.

The FCM Supervisor will ensure best practice and offer guidance and assistance as necessary in supporting the FCM in completing required steps.

Foster parents are required to report to DCS or the supervising LCPA any changes within the foster family home that may impact the health, safety or general well-being of the child including, but not limited to the following:

1. The physical location or mailing address of the foster family home, the telephone

number of the foster parents, or both;

2. The physical condition of the foster family home or the use of bedrooms in the foster family home as it relates to the child, or both; and
3. Any new household member.
4. Disclosure of all business conducted on the premises of a foster family home.

Note: Commercial activities that adversely affect the welfare of children are prohibited.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [465 IAC 2-1.5 Licensing of Foster Family Homes for Children](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-8: Physical facilities of the foster family home; general](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-9: Physical facilities of the foster family home; bedrooms and bathrooms](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-10: Physical facilities of the foster family home; safety; general](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-11: Physical facilities of the foster family home; safety; fire and safety hazards](#)
- [465 IAC 2-1.5-12: Physical facilities of the foster family home; safety; cleanliness and sanitation](#)

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Safety Plan

A safety plan is a voluntary, non-legally binding written agreement with the family, which identifies interventions to address safety of the child and specifies family support and/or community services that will be utilized.

Forms and Tools

- [Foster Parent Safety Agreement Regarding Firearms and Other Weapons \(SF 56320\)](#)
- [Residential Pool Requirements/Body of Water Safety Plan \(SF 54609\)](#)
- [Resource Family Home Physical Environment Checklist \(SF 53186\)](#)
- [Riley Hospital Safe Sleep Information](#)

Related Policies

N/A