

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 4: Assessment (Investigation)	Effective Date: July 1, 2007
	Section 8: Entry into Home or Facility	Version: 1

POLICY	OLD POLICY: 205.44
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- The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may make in-person contact with a child in his/her home or any other place where the child may be.
- **[NEW]** DCS is required to seek permission to enter a **home** for the purpose of conducting interviews and/or assessing the home's condition. Permission to enter must be given by an **adult** living in the home. Children under the age of 18 years cannot give permission to enter the home. *Exception: DCS may only enter without permission when accompanied by Law Enforcement Authority (LEA).*
- **[NEW]** If one adult who lives in a home gives permission to enter, and a second adult who lives in the home verbally objects, DCS will not enter the home and will instead seek a court order.
- **[NEW]** DCS reserves the right to revoke a foster home license if denied access to a foster home.
- **[NEW]** DCS is required to check in, present DCS issued identification, request permission from an Administrator (e.g. - Director/and or Program Coordinator, Principal, etc.)and/or follow all written protocols when entering **schools, child care centers, residential facilities, medical facilities or correctional facilities** for the purpose of conducting interviews.
- DCS may request an order from the Juvenile Court if admission to a **home or facility** is denied. If an order from the Court is granted, DCS will gain entry by accompanying LEA when LEA executes the order.
- DCS will not enter a home if there is suspicion that it contains a meth lab (see [Indiana Drug Endangered Children Response Protocol](#)).
- **[NEW]** **Permission to enter** a home or facility will **not constitute consent to interview** a child. DCS will seek permission to interview a child in accordance with the policies, [Consent to Interview Child](#) and [Exigent Circumstances](#).
- **[NEW]** DCS will immediately contact LEA and request emergency assistance if a child is believed to be home alone **and** it is believed the child's safety and well-being is in danger.

Code References

- [IC 31-33-8-7 Scope of Investigation; order for access to home, school or other place](#)

PROCEDURE

Note: Prior to entering a home or facility for the purposes of conducting an interview with a **child**, the FCM will follow procedures contained in separate policies, [Consent to Interview Child](#) and [Exigent Circumstances](#).

Prior to entering a home or facility the FCM will:

1. Ask to speak to an adult in the house (or facility personnel);

2. Introduce himself/herself and show official DCS identification;
3. Explain the purpose of the visit without revealing any confidential information about the CA/N assessment (investigation);
4. Seek permission to enter if a home (follow visitor check-in procedures if a facility).
5. Document permission given to enter home or facility and by whom.

Upon entering a **home** the FCM will:

1. Exit the home immediately and without alarming the persons inside if at any time he/she suspects the home may contain a meth lab. See [Indiana Drug Endangered Child Response Protocol](#).
2. Discontinue the assessment (investigation) if at any point the FCM becomes concerned for his/her safety (e.g. - persons in the home become hostile or threatening or there are other dangerous conditions in the home). Seek Supervisory input to make alternate arrangements to complete the necessary interview(s) and/or home conditions assessment.

If access to a home or facility is denied, the FCM will:

1. Request an order from the Juvenile Court to gain admission to the home/facility; and
2. If Court Order is granted, return to the home/facility with LEA, who will execute the Court Order and gain admission.
3. Notify the entity responsible for licensing the home (local DSC office or LCPA) if denied entry to a licensed foster home.
4. Document that the request was denied and who denied the request.

RELATED INFORMATION

Home

For the purpose of this policy, "home" means home, foster home, relative home or licensed child care home.

Facility

For the purpose of this policy, "facility" means a facility or institution, including, but not limited to, a school, child care center, registered childcare ministry, group home, inpatient (residential) treatment center, hospital, juvenile detention center and Indiana Department of Corrections facility.

FORMS AND TOOLS

- N/A