



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 7: In-Home Services

Section 04: Assessing Parental Interaction and Involvement

Effective Date: December 1, 2023

Version: 5

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POLICY OVERVIEW

In order to determine if the parent (including non-custodial parent), guardian, or custodian is accomplishing the goals and objectives outlined in the current Case Plan/Prevention Plan, Informal Adjustment/Prevention Plan (IA), Child in Need of Services (CHINS) case, or court orders, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) assesses the interactions of the parent, guardian, or custodian with the child during monthly face-to-face contact. These observations help DCS determine if the skills and techniques the parent, guardian, or custodian has learned through in-home services are appropriate to meet the needs of the family and ensure the safety and well-being of the child.

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PROCEDURE

DCS will encourage and support the maximum interaction and involvement appropriate between the parent, guardian, or custodian (including non-custodial and incarcerated parents) and the child, given the need for child safety and well-being, unless otherwise ordered by the court.

Note: Incarcerated parents should receive services and treatment while incarcerated, including visitation with the child, unless visitation is not in the best interest of the child. The Incarcerated Parent Letter- Assessment and Incarcerated Parent Information have been developed for use as tools for contact with incarcerated parents for gathering information.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Convene a Child and Family Team (CFT) Meeting or Case Plan Conference for the development of the Case Plan/Prevention Plan or IA and to connect the family with the appropriate services and resources. DCS will document any services and/or treatment available to the incarcerated parent in the Case Plan/Prevention Plan (see policies 5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings, 5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan, and 5.09 Informal Adjustment/Prevention Plan [IA]);

Note: Reconvene the CFT if the Case Plan/Prevention Plan needs to be changed, based on new information or circumstances, or if the parent, guardian, or custodian does not comply with the services outlined in the Case Plan/Prevention Plan or IA.

2. Monitor and document the family's progress and compliance toward goals of the Case Plan/Prevention Plan or IA;

3. Engage and establish a partnership with members of the CFT to obtain feedback regarding the skills and techniques learned from services they have observed the parent, guardian, or custodian implementing with the child;
4. Complete on-going In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessments and Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs (CANS) Assessments throughout the life of the case (see policies 5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths [CANS] Assessment and 7.11 In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment);
5. Evaluate and/or update the Safety Plan (see Definitions) and/or Plan of Safe Care during each CFT Meeting or Case Plan Conference and as needed throughout the life of the case;
6. Regularly report the family's progress, including successes and any violation of the Dispositional Order, to the court (see policies 5.09 Informal Adjustment [IA], 6.08 Three Month Progress Report, and 7.03 Minimum Contact); and
7. Encourage and empower the parent, guardian, or custodian and members of the CFT to ensure safety, well-being, and stability for the child throughout the life of the case.

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Guide and assist the FCM, through regular case staffing (see Definitions); and
2. Ensure any deviation from best practice is documented in the case management system.

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RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Case Staffing

Case staffing is a systematic and frequent review of all case information with safety and risk, stability, permanency, and well-being as driving forces for case activities.

Safety Plan

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

Forms and Tools

- Case Plan/Prevention Plan (SF 2956)- Available in the case management system
- [Incarcerated Parent Letter- Assessment](#)
- [Incarcerated Parent Information \(SF 56539\)](#)
- In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment- Available in the case management system

Related Policies

- [5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings](#)
- [5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan](#)
- [5.09 Informal Adjustment/Prevention Plan \(IA\)](#)
- [5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths \(CANS\) Assessment](#)
- [6.08 Three Month Progress Report](#)
- [7.03 Minimum Contact](#)
- [7.11 In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment](#)

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LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-34-15-4: Form; contents](#)

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 7.04

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.

N/A

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