

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 8:</b> Out-of-Home Services	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1 , 2018
	<b>Section 11:</b> Parental Interaction and Involvement	<b>Version:</b> 4

<b>STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE</b>
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will encourage and support the maximum appropriate amount of [interaction](#) and [involvement](#) between each parent, guardian, or custodian and the child unless otherwise ordered by the court. Child safety and well-being will be the first consideration in determining the appropriate interaction and involvement between the child and the parent, guardian, or custodian.

**Note:** Visitation is only one (1) component of parental interaction. See [Related Information](#) and separate policies, [8.12 Developing the Visitation Plan](#) and [8.13 Implementing the Visitation Plan](#) for further guidance.

DCS will utilize regular contact with the parent, guardian, or custodian to track and make necessary adjustments to the current [Case Plan \(SF2956\)](#). The family’s progress, including successes and any violation of the Dispositional Order, will be regularly reported to the court. See separate policy, [6.8 Three Month Progress Report](#) for further guidance.

**Note:** DCS will update the [Case Plan \(SF2956\)](#) and engage the Child and Family Team (CFT) anytime there is a significant change (e.g., identified needs, parent’s failure to participate in services, and changes in household composition). See separate policies, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#) and [5.8 Developing the Case Plan](#) for further guidance.

Code References  
N/A

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Convene and facilitate a CFT Meeting within 30 calendar days of removal or decision to begin concurrent planning by creating a second Permanency Plan (see separate policy, [5.15 Concurrent Planning](#));

**Note:** If a CFT Meeting is not convened, a Case Conference must be held. See separate policy, [5.8 Developing the Case Plan](#).

2. Discuss and plan for parental [interaction](#) and [involvement](#) with the child, development of the case plan, and referral of appropriate services during the CFT meeting (see separate policy, [5.3 Engaging the Family](#) and [Practice Guidance](#) for additional information);
3. Ensure the child; parent, guardian, or custodian; resource parent(s); and other CFT members understand the maximum allowable parent, guardian, or custodian [interaction](#) and [involvement](#) with the child;

4. Review the [Safety Plan \(SF53243\)](#) and make any necessary revisions to ensure the child's safety;
5. Develop a [Visitation Plan](#) and document the plan in the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK);
6. Reassess the parent, guardian, or custodian's appropriate level of [interaction](#) and [involvement](#) with the child based upon the effects on the child;
7. Report the family's progress, including successes and any violation of the Dispositional Order, to the court (see separate policy, [6.8 Three Month Progress Report](#));
8. Reconvene the CFT, if the [Visitation Plan](#) needs to be changed based upon the reassessment (see separate policy, [5.7 Child and Family Team Meetings](#)); and
9. Document any changes to the [Visitation Plan](#) in MaGIK.

## **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

### **What is Interaction?**

Visitation often comes to mind when **interaction** between the parent, guardian, or custodian and the child is discussed. However, visitation is only one (1) component of interaction. Interaction occurs in many forms (e.g., phone calls; emails; letters; or an exchange of meaningful items like drawings, photographs, and gifts). These other forms of interaction take on increased significance if face-to-face contact is not regular or consistent.

### **What is Involvement?**

The effect of a parent, guardian, or custodian's **involvement** in his or her child's life is very critical to the well-being of a child during an out-of-home placement. Examples of involvement include making important decisions about:

1. Health care;
2. Education;
3. Extracurricular activities;
4. Hair length and styles;
5. Attendance at medical appointments;
6. School case conferences; and
7. Participation in CFT Meetings.

A parent, guardian, or custodian who is not allowed any interaction with his or her child may still be involved through one (1) or more of the examples given above.

### **Incarcerated Parents**

DCS providers, including fatherhood program providers, may enter Indiana Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities to provide services and meet with parents; provided that, in each case, the incarcerated parent has signed a release of information allowing DCS to share the information collected by such providers with DOC.

## **FORMS AND TOOLS**

1. [Visitation Plan](#) – Available in MaGIK
2. [Case Plan \(SF2956\)](#) – Available in MaGIK
3. [Safety Plan \(SF53243\)](#)

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

N/A

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