

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL</b>	
	<b>Chapter 8:</b> Out-of-Home Services	<b>Effective Date:</b> June 1, 2008
	<b>Section 38:</b> Placement Changes	<b>Version:</b> 1

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>OLD POLICY: 403.46</b>
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may recommend to the court a change in placement, if there are allegations of child abuse/neglect (CA/N) and the alleged perpetrator is the resource parent or another person living in the home/facility.

DCS will recommend to the court a change in placement, if any one of the following exists:

1. Any substantiated abuse or neglect in a foster home by the resource parent or any household member;
2. The child can be placed with his/her siblings;

**Exception:** Unless it is not in the best interest of one or more of the children.

3. An appropriate relative caregiver is identified and it is in the best interest of the child; or
4. The child needs to be moved to a more or less restrictive placement.

**Note:** All placement changes that result in a change in the per diem rate must be approved by the court.

The resource parent and the child, if age appropriate will be notified at least 14 days prior to a proposed change in placement.

The resource parent must provide DCS with at least 14 days notice if the caregiver is no longer able and/or willing to care for the child.

DCS will remove the child immediately if the safety of that child cannot be assured in the current placement. See separate policy, [4.28 Involuntary Removals](#).

Code Reference  
N/A

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

1. Engage the CFT and:
  - a. Assess all available alternatives for support of the child's current placement, if placement is being disrupted.
  - b. Identify of a new placement type and/or resource. See separate policy, [8.1 Selecting a Placement Option](#)
  - c. Develop a transition plan with assistance from the CFT, to the fullest extent possible given time constraints.

- d. Notify the child in advance and discuss the new placement with the child to the extent that he/she is able to understand given age and developmental level. See separate policy, [8.8 Preparing the Child for Placement](#).
2. Note the reason for the placement disruption in the case notes, if the current placement cannot be supported and maintained.
  3. Recommend the court approve a placement change of the child and place with a different resource parent if the new placement is more or less restrictive than the current placement or will result in a different per-diem rate.
  4. Notify all relevant parties of the planned change in placement, as soon as possible give time constraints.
  5. Remove the child and assist in his or her transition to the new placement. See separate policy, [8.9 Placing the Child in Out-of-Home Care](#).
  6. Request the assistance of law enforcement (LEA) if the resource parent acts to prevent removal. See separate policy, [4.28 Involuntary Removals](#).

<b>PRACTICE GUIDANCE</b>
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N/A

<b>FORMS AND TOOLS</b>
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N/A

<b>RELATED INFORMATION</b>
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**Placement Disruptions**

A placement disruption occurs any time a child is moved from one out-of-home placement to another. Examples include but are not limited to moving from an emergency shelter to a resource (foster/relative) home or from one resource home to another. Reuniting a child with his/her parent/guardian/custodian is not a placement disruption nor is a planned transition out of a residential facility and into less restrictive care.

**Impact of Placement Disruptions**

Disruption in a child's placement must be considered carefully, because it has the potential to jeopardize the child's capacity to trust the environment, including the adults around the child. Disruption can have serious negative consequences for the child's sense of security and self-worth. A placement change may be another loss, rejection, and possible trauma for a child, and may affect the child's ability to form positive attachments in the future. Thus, the best interest of the child must be the number one priority when considering a change in placement.

**Request to Move One, But Not All Siblings**

A resource (foster/relative) parent may request removal of one sibling rather than the removal of all the children, i.e. "we will continue to care for the baby, but would like DCS to remove the seven-year old." In such cases, the FCM and the child and family team should carefully determine if the placement change would be in the best interest of one or more of the children. If the placement change is not in the best interest of one or more of the children, the FCM may review the current services the resource (foster/relative) family is receiving and make changes that increase the resource (foster/relative) parent's ability to care for the child in question.

Alternately, after reviewing the situation, the team may decide that it is in the best interest for the entire sibling group to be moved.

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