

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services	Effective Date: January 1, 2009
	Section 38: Placement Changes	Version: 2

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may recommend to the court a change in placement, if there are allegations of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) and the alleged perpetrator is the resource parent or another person living in the home or facility.

DCS will recommend to the court a change in placement, if any one (1) of the following exists:

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

Exception: Unless it is not in the best interest of one (1) 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.

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

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Engage the Child and Family Team (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, and
 - d. Notify the child in advance and discuss the new placement with the child to the extent that he or 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 Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS) 'Contacts' 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;
4. Notify all relevant parties of the planned change in placement, as soon as possible given 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 if the resource parent acts to prevent removal. See separate policy, [4.28 Involuntary Removals](#); and
7. **NEW** Record the change in ICWIS on the Placement screen, including the relationship of the child and new resource family.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

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 relative resource home or from one resource home to another. Reuniting a child with his or her parent, guardian, or 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, 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 parent may request removal of one (1) 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 CFT should carefully determine if the placement change would be in the best interest of one (1) or more of the children. If the placement change is not in the best interest of one (1) or more of the children, the FCM may review the current services the

resource family is receiving and make changes that increase the resource 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.

[NEW] Eligible Placements

DCS will claim federal (Title IV-E Foster Care, Title IV-A Emergency Assistance, Title IV-E Waiver) reimbursement on behalf of eligible children who are placed in DCS licensed placements. Eligible placement settings include but are not limited to relative homes, resource family homes, child-caring institutions, emergency shelters, group homes, and private secure care. Ineligible placement settings include those outside the scope of foster care, such as but not limited to detention centers, correctional facilities, hospitals, and boot camps.

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