

Policies Effective October 1, 2025

16.01 Funding for Children in Out-of-Home Care

- Language updated to reinforce best practices when a child is removed from their home, including:
 - Take children's clothing and personal belongings when removed from the home to support a smoother transition.

Exception: If a child is removed from a property found to be unsafe, clothing and personal property will not be removed.

- Funding may be available to cover costs of property and services not included in foster care or kinship per diem.
- All items removed or acquired for the child are the property of the child and/or DCS and must follow the child throughout the life of the case.
- Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited.
- Children's belongings must be documented using the required form.

Policies Effective July 1, 2025

HEA 1099 Safe haven infant and foster youth changes the safe haven infant age from 30 days old to 60 days old.

- Policy 4.49 [Safe Haven Infants](#)

HEA 1441 Bank Accounts for Foster and Emancipated Youths: When a qualified foster youth requests to open a checking or savings account, DCS will acknowledge that the foster youth is qualified. DCS has developed [Foster Youth Acknowledgement Statement \(SF 57827\)](#).

- Policy 11.01 [Older Youth Services](#)

HEA 1605 Juvenile law matters:

Section 6 which adds that the state shall ensure timely placement of children in foster care into permanent homes.

- Chapter 1 [Legal Base](#)

Section 8 allows service providers, including LCPAs, involved in a child's CHINS proceedings to attend CHINS or TPR proceedings (new code - IC 31-32-2-3.5).

- Policy 6.04 [Providing Notice of Hearings](#)

Section 17 identifies when reunification services will cease, including dates and timelines (new code - IC 31-34-20-1.6).

- Policy 5.10 [Family Services](#)
- Policy 5.15 [Concurrent Planning/Second Permanency Plan - Overview](#)
- Policy 6.08 [Progress Report](#)
- Policy 6.09 [Periodic Case Review Hearing](#)
- Policy 6.10 [Permanency Plan](#)

Section 19 states DCS shall provide criminal history check results to the court for reunification.

- Policy 13.14 [Background Checks for Reunification](#)

Section 20 revised language regarding a child's permanency plan goal when removed from the home for at least 12 months out of the most recent 22 months.

- Policy 5.15 [Concurrent Planning/Second Permanency Plan - Overview](#)
- Policy 6.09 [Periodic Case Review Hearing](#)
- Policy 6.10 [Permanency Plan](#)
- Policy 6.11 [Permanency Hearing](#)

Section 21 allows if adoption is the child's only approved permanency plan, DCS may include the child's first name and picture on the website to facilitate a potential adoptive placement (if the child is not already in a pre-adoptive home).

- Policy 10.07 [Adoptive Family Recruitment Services](#)

Section 22 states that the court shall hold an initial hearing within 30 days of filing a TPR petition.

- Policy 6.13 [Voluntary Termination of Parental Rights \(TPR\)](#)

Sections 24 & 25 adds that GALs, CASAs, or intervenors in CHINS proceedings may file an involuntary TPR under certain circumstances.

- Policy 6.12 [Involuntary Termination of Parental Rights \(TPR\)](#)

Policies Effective May 1, 2025

2.06 Sharing Confidential Information (REVISED)

- Changes requested by Central Office Background Check Unit (COBCU).
- Revisions include a clarification of attorney process for review of records prior to release, and update to the process of out-of-state requests.

HR-3-5 Supplemental Employment (REVISED)

- Information added to policy states: *“DCS staff may serve in an emergency medical services (EMS) capacity (e.g., emergency medical technicians [EMT]), but staff must immediately disclose to their supervisor any conflicts that have arisen out of a responder call and be permanently removed from any cases where a conflict has arisen.”*

HR-3-10 Prohibited Volunteer Activity (REVISED)

- Information added to policy states: *“DCS staff may serve in an emergency medical services (EMS) capacity (e.g., emergency medical technicians [EMT]), but staff must immediately disclose to their supervisor any conflicts that have arisen out of a responder call and be permanently removed from any cases where a conflict has arisen.”*

Policies Effective April 16, 2025

8.04 Emergency Shelter Care & Urgent Residential Treatment (REVISED)

- Senate Enrolled Act (SEA 498) - effective upon passage
 - Removes the time period of “20 days” and replaces with “maximum stay”.
 - Amends definition of emergency shelter.

13.01 Conducting Background Checks for Licensed Residential Facilities and Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA) (REVISED)

- SEA 498 - effective upon passage
 - Clarifies that a criminal history check is only required for contractors or individuals who are working in a child caring institution or group home and are likely to have unsupervised contact with the children in the child caring institution or group home.
 - “Working in” is interpreted as working inside the facility or on the premises on a consistent basis.

16.04 Individual Child Placement Referral (ICPR) (REVISED)

- SEA 498 - effective upon passage
 - Removes the time period of “20 days” and replaces with “maximum stay”.
 - Amends definition of emergency shelter.

Policies Effective April 1, 2025

4.19 Safety Planning (REVISED)

- Changes made as part of the Safety Planning PIP Workgroup to provide guidance on safety maintenance
- Language changes made to be consistent across policy

5.21 Safety Planning (REVISED)

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- Language changes made to be consistent across policy

5.22 Missing and Runaway Children (REVISED)

- Requested by DCS Focused Needs team: Due to an Rapid Improvement Event (RIE)
- Included information from Sept. 2024 Admin Letter (DCS-24-5)
- Changes align with federal reporting rules on missing and runaway children

8.14 Social Networking and Internet Usage (REVISED)

- Title changed
- State form (SF 55670) updated and included

8.16 Resource Parent's Role (REVISED)

- Requested by DCS Focused Needs team: Due to RIE
- Included information from Sept. 2024 Admin Letter (DCS-24-5)
- Added missing/runaway child reporting procedures

12.16 Foster Family Home Relicensure (REVISED)

- Procedure updated to reflect the current field practice
- Timeframes updated to align with Foster Family/Adoptive Home Prep Assessment

13.01 Conducting Background Checks for Licensed Residential Facilities and LCPAs (REVISED)

- Requested by the Residential Licensing Unit (RLU) and LCPA Licensing Team
- Title changed
- Updated to reflect current practice
- Language refined for consistency with Indiana Code (IC).

Policies Effective February 1, 2025

8.22 School Notifications and Legal Settlements (Revised)

- Information added to Practice Guidance to the Procedure.
- DCS Education Services reviewed and provided changes.

HR-3-10 Prohibited Volunteer Activities (NEW)

- Legal request
- Created to address potential conflicts of interest concerns

Summary of Policies Effective January 1, 2025

3.02 Creating and Evaluating a Child Abuse and Neglect (CA/N) Intake Report (Revised)

- Included DCS-24-2 Admin Letter information on mandatory PEDS referral reason: “any skin injury on a child under 12 months of age.”
- PEDS Practice Guidance added

3.05 Supervisory Review of Child Abuse or Neglect (CA/N) Intake Report (Revised)

- Included DCS-24-2 Admin Letter information on mandatory PEDS referral reason: “any skin injury on a child under 12 months of age.”
- PEDS Practice Guidance added

4.03 Conducting the Assessment – Overview (Revised)

- Included DCS-24-2 Admin Letter information on mandatory PEDS referral reason: “any skin injury on a child under 12 months of age.”
- PEDS Practice Guidance added

4.16 Medical Examinations, Psychological Testing, Drug Screens, and Substance Use Evaluations (Revised)

- Included information from DCS-24-2 Admin Letter on mandatory PEDS referral reason: “any skin injury on a child under 12 months of age.”
- PEDS Practice Guidance added

4.31 Child Fatality and Near Fatality Assessments (Revised)

- Clarified that DCS or LEA will request a drug/alcohol screen from the parent, guardian, or custodian if impaired immediately before or at the time of the child’s death.

5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment (Revised)

- Requested by the Executive Team
- Changes clarify that resource parents can request a reassessment for inaccuracies.
- Changes were reviewed by lived experts (Foster Parent Advisory Board & Indiana Youth Advisory Board).

8.31 Testing and Treatment for HIV, STIs, and Other Communicable Diseases (Revised)

- Title changed
- Changes were made with workgroup members from Legal, Field, and OYS.
- Now includes Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) language.

10.25 Adoption Summary (Revised)

- Requested by Adoption workgroup.
- Provides guidance on filling out the Adoption Summary (SF 57482).

11.29 Transition to Successful Adulthood Services (TSA) (NEW)- Effective 10/1/24

- Requested by Older Youth Initiatives team
- Addresses New Transition to Successful Adulthood Services (TSA)
- Developed with OYS & OYCM staff and Indiana Youth Advisory Board.

HR-3-5 Supplemental Employment (Revised)

- Requested by Legal team

- Addresses staff pursuing LCSW, LMHC, and LMFT.
- New Clinical Hours Licensure Agreement required.