

## 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.