



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 10: Guardianship and Adoption

Section 07: Adoptive Family Recruitment Services

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

Version: 6

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POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) offers adoptive family recruitment services for children in out-of-home care when:

1. The court has ordered a permanency plan for which adoption is the only intended permanent or long-term care and custody arrangement and the child is not already in a pre-adoptive home;
2. The court authorizes a petition to file termination of parental rights (TPR); or
3. A TPR petition is filed.

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PROCEDURE

Through the Indiana Adoption Program (IAP), DCS will provide the following recruitment services:

1. Publish non-identifying information about the child on the internet including:
 - a. Age,
 - b. Gender,
 - c. Summary of the child's educational, medical and social background (including known disabilities),
 - d. The reason the child was removed from the home,
 - e. Whether a person has expressed an interest in adopting the child,
 - f. The name, address, and phone number for the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) or DCS representative to contact for more information,
 - g. Whether TPR has been authorized or filed, and whether TPR has occurred, and

Note: This non-identifying information may not identify the name of any of the following:

1. The child,
2. The child's biological or adoptive parents,
3. A sibling of the child, or
4. A caregiver of the child

Exception: For a "hard to place" child (see Definitions), their first name and picture may be published on the IAP: Indiana's Waiting Children webpage.

2. Identify and plan for adoption recruitment activities that feature the child;

3. Prepare qualified prospective adoptive families for children who have a permanency goal of adoption; and
4. Facilitate interviews of prospective adoptive families to determine the best potential family for the child.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will complete the following when adoption recruitment services are needed:

1. Involve the child (based on age and development) in discussions about recruitment services (Consult the Adoption Consultant for assistance in engaging the child and identifying next steps in the adoption recruitment process);

Note: Assess whether adoption preparation services are needed to support the child's adoption plan goal (see policy 10.02 Assessing the Child's Readiness for Adoption and refer to the Indiana Adoption Program Recruitment booklet).

2. Initiate adoptive recruitment services by:
 - a. Completing the Child Registration and Recruitment Plan form in KidTraks,
 - b. Uploading the completed Child Registration and Recruitment Plan in KidTraks (see Adoption Recruitment Referral Instructions), and
 - c. Completing an "Indiana Adoption Program" adoption recruitment referral in KidTraks.

Note: Recruitment services may differ for a child with a pending TPR compared to those legally free for adoption (see Definitions). For details, contact the Adoption Consultant and refer to Practice Guidance.

3. Notify the child's caregiver of the initiation of recruitment services and discuss the process;
4. Notify the Adoption Consultant of any prospective adoptive families that may be a potential match for the child;

Note: Prospective adoptive parents do not need a foster parent license to be matched with a child for whose parental rights have been terminated, and all appeals have been exhausted.

5. Invite the Adoption Consultant to participate in a Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting and/or Case Plan conference when a permanency plan goal of adoption is being considered (see policies 5.07 Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings and 5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan);
6. Notify the Adoption Consultant of any changes to the permanency goal;
7. Collaborate with the Adoption Consultant to:
 - a. Review home studies and verify the families' appropriateness to adopt,
 - b. Select prospective adoptive families to participate in the interview process (see the Adoptive Family Match Family Interview Tool), and
 - c. Coordinate and co-facilitate the family interviews.

Note: Inclusion of the child in the interview process should be considered. Collaborate with the Adoption Consultant to notify the selected prospective adoptive family to develop the adoptive placement transition plan (see policy 10.09 Adoption Transition Plan and Pre-Placement Visits).

8. Notify the Adoption Consultant if there is a disruption in a prospective adoptive placement so that recruitment efforts may resume.

The FCM Supervisor will:

1. Review case details in regular case staffing and guide the FCM to ensure all steps are completed;
2. Join in the interview team (if requested);
3. Review and submit the Confidentiality Agreement for Adoption Interviews and Recommendations form to the Local Office Direct (LOD); and
4. Discuss the interview team's decision with the LOD and provide the Confidentiality Agreement for Adoption Interviews and Recommendations form and supporting documentation to the LOD signature.

The LOD will:

1. Review the Confidentiality Agreement for Adoption Interviews and Recommendations form and supporting documentation; and
2. Make a determination regarding the interview team's recommendation or request additional information within five (5) days of receipt of the recommendation.

The Adoption Consultant will:

1. Verify that all items required for recruitment have been uploaded into KidTraks;
2. Approve the KidTraks referral for Adoption Recruitment;
3. Verify the 10.B Tool: Child Social Summary is completed and a professional photograph is available;
4. Verify that the child's information is posted on the IAP: Indiana's Waiting Children webpage, if applicable;

Note: For a hard to place child (see Definitions), the posted information may include the child's first name and picture.

5. Maintain monthly contact with the FCM to ensure the child is available to participate in recruitment efforts, discuss any updates, and ensure the 10.B Tool: Child Social Summary and photographs are updated as necessary (see policy 10.11 Child Social Summary);
6. Collaborate with the FCM to:
 - a. Review home studies and verify the families' appropriateness to adopt,
 - b. Select prospective adoptive families to participate in the interview process (see the Adoption Family Match Interview Tool), and
 - c. Coordinate and co-facilitate the family interviews.
7. Facilitate discussion with the interview team regarding the strengths and concerns for each family as they relate to the child;
8. Notify each family's assigned Adoption Consultant regarding the adoption placement decision and share feedback of the interviews;

Note: The assigned Adoption Consultant will communicate the adoption placement interview feedback to their assigned family.

9. Collaborate with the FCM to develop the adoptive placement transition plan; and
10. Meet with the FCM to discuss any adoptive placement disruption and plan for future placement needs.

RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Case Staffing

Case staffing is a systematic and frequent review of all case information with safety and risk, stability, permanency, and well-being as driving forces for case activities.

Hard to Place Child

“Hard to place child” or “hard to place children”, for the purposes of IC 31-19, means a child who is or children who are disadvantaged due to:

1. The child’s:
 - a. Ethnic background,
 - b. Race,
 - c. Color,
 - d. Physical, mental, or medical disability, or
 - e. Age
2. The child or children are members of a sibling group that should be placed in the same home.

Legally Free

Parental rights have been terminated, and all appeal rights have been exhausted. The child is legally free to be adopted.

Pending Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)

The child has a case plan goal of adoption but the legal proceedings to terminate parental rights has not been initiated, has not been completed, or the court order terminating the parental rights is under appeal by a higher court.

Forms and Tools

- [10.B Tool: Child Social Summary](#)
- [Adoption Consultant map](#)
- [Adoption Recruitment Referral Instructions](#)
- [Adoptive Family Match Interview Tool](#)
- [Child Registration and Adoption Recruitment Plan \(SF 11840\)](#)
- [Confidentiality Agreement for Adoption Interviews and Recommendation \(SF 50718\)](#)
- [Indiana Adoption Program Recruitment booklet](#)
- [Internet photolisting](#)

Related Policies

- [5.07 Child and Family Team \(CFT\) Meetings](#)
- [5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan](#)
- [10.02 Assessing the Child’s Readiness for Adoption](#)
- [10.09 Adoption Transition Plan and Pre-Placement Visits](#)
- [10.11 Child Social Summary](#)

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-51: “Hard to place child” or “hard to place children”](#)
- [IC 31-19: Family Law: Adoption](#)
- [IC 31-19-27: Chapter 27. Program for Adoption of Hard to Place Children](#)
- [IC 31-4-21-7.3:](#)
- [42 USC 675\(1\)\(E\): Definitions](#)

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 10.07

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

N/A

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