

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 11: Independent Living	Effective Date: October 1, 2011
	Section 1: Independent Living Services	Version: 3

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make available Chafee Independent Living (IL) services to eligible Child in Need of Services (CHINS) and probation youth aged 16 to 21 and eligible former foster youth aged 18 to 21.

DCS will assure that all CHINS and probation youth receive IL services beginning at age 16. For youth placed in DCS licensed foster homes, relative homes, or non-licensed court approved homes, or on a Trial Home Visit (THV) a referral should be made to a Chafee IL provider. For youth placed in residential facilities, group homes, Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) foster homes, or other similar placement IL services are provided by the placement agency.

[NEW] DCS will ensure that all CHINS and probation youth age 16 and over who are placed in foster care receive a credit report each year until the youth is discharged from care. The youth will receive assistance in interpreting and resolving any inaccuracies in the report, if applicable.

Code References

[42 USC 677: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program](#)

PROCEDURE [REVISED]

The Family Case Manager (FCM) or Probation Officer will:

1. Complete and submit a referral for Chafee IL services for CHINS or probation youth aged 16 to 21 placed in county foster care homes, relative homes, or non-licensed court approved placements;

Note: All referrals for probation youth must include a [Delinquency Case Plan SF54780](#) indicating the need for IL services.

2. Complete and submit a referral for Chafee IL services for youth placed in LCPA foster homes, group homes, residential facilities, in a Transitional Living Placement (TLP), or on a THV;
 - a. At age 17 years and six (6) months if their case will be dismissed at age 18, OR
 - b. Six (6) months prior to case dismissal if the youth remains in care past age 18.
3. **[NEW]** Ensure that all youth age 16 and over in out of home placement receive a yearly credit report, and assist in correcting any inaccuracies;
4. Ensure a copy of the each Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) is obtained for the youth's case file ;Ensure that an Independent Living/Transition Plan is developed for all youth starting at age 15 years and six (6) months. See separate policy, [11.6 Independent Living/Transition Plan](#); and

5. Ensure that the youth's ACLSA and progress reports are obtained on all CHINS and probation youth aged 16 to 21 receiving IL Services through residential facilities, group homes, private agency foster homes, and Chafee IL service providers;

The Chafee IL service provider, residential facility, group home, private foster care agency, or other placement agency will:

1. Assure that all eligible CHINS and probation youth referred for services, starting at age 16, complete the ACLSA within 30 days of referral and every 12 months during service provision and provide a copy of each assessment to the referring worker;
2. Participate in the development of the Independent Living/Transition Plan with the youth including input from the referring worker and others involved in the youth's case based on the strengths and needs as determined by the ACLSA and update the plan following each assessment;
3. Participate in all invited Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings, court hearings, and case conferences held with the youth, the youth's FCM or Probation Officer, and others in the youth's life as decisions are made regarding the youth's future;
4. Provide monthly progress reports to the referring worker as determined by the agency's contract. Reports will be submitted through the DCS NYTD portal. All questions concerning NYTD web submissions should be submitted to DCSNYTD.DCS@dcs.in.gov; and
5. Ensure youth complete the Chafee assessment at the closure of services to the youth (close of wardship, Voluntary Service Agreement referral, etc.). The Chafee assessment is available online at http://www.chafee.org/pages/assess/assess_chafee.htm. Provide the completed document to the youth's FCM, Probation Officer, or the IL Specialist as appropriate.

The IL specialist will assure that all former eligible youth requesting Voluntary IL services have eligibility determined, their application signed and forwarded to the Chafee IL service provider in a timely manner. See separate policy, [11.7 Voluntary Chafee Independent Living Services](#).

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Assessment Required

All youth referred for services must complete the ACLSA at www.caseylifeskills.org. The ACLSA is the only assessment tool approved for use for youth in Indiana. Resource material may be downloaded from www.caseylifeskills.org to meet all identified needs of youth being assessed.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Delinquency Case Plan SF54780](#)
2. [Independent Living Plan](#) – Examples available at www.caseylifeskills.org

RELATED INFORMATION [REVISED]

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions I, II, and III on the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and Education and Training Voucher Program are available at <http://www.nationalfostercare.org> or www.caseylifeskills.org. These documents are very helpful in understanding the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

Voluntary IL Services

All youth aging out of foster care at 18 or older are eligible for Voluntary IL Services, including Room and Board assistance and the Education and Training Voucher Program. See separate policies, [11.2 Eligibility for Chafee Independent Living Services](#), [11.7 Voluntary Chafee Independent Living Services](#), [11.8 Chafee Room and Board Services](#), and [11.10 Education and Training Voucher Program](#).

Chafee IL News Bulletin

The [Chafee IL News Bulletin](#) is produced bi-monthly or on an as needed basis and is made available to all of the Indiana Child Welfare Information System users and Chafee IL service providers. This is an excellent tool to keep apprised of IL activities and other information necessary for those serving foster youth.

Credit Reports [REVISED]

All youth in foster care who are 16 and older should be assisted in requesting the free credit report to ensure that the youth's credit record will allow them to obtain housing and utilities when the case is dismissed. Because of identity theft, it is vital that all youth who will be aging out of foster care check out their credit rating. If there is negative information on the report, it will be extremely important to work with the youth and the credit reporting company to get the youth's record cleared prior to the case being dismissed and housing pursued. The Federal Trade Commission website at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/credit/cre34.shtm> explains how to access free credit reports. This website also provides questions and answers related to credit reports.