

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 11: Independent Living	Effective Date: July 1, 2012
	Section 1: Independent Living Services	Version: 4

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, 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.

[REVISED] DCS will ensure that all CHINS and probation youth age 16 and over who are in out-of-home placements receive a credit report from each of the three Credit Reporting Agencies each year until the youth is discharged from care. Chafee IL service providers are required to provide this service as part of their service standards. FCMs or Probation Officers will obtain the report if the youth is not participating in IL services. The youth will receive assistance in interpreting and resolving any inaccuracies in the reports, if applicable.

Code References

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

PROCEDURE

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. **[REVISED]** Ensure that all youth age 16 and over in out of home placement receive yearly credit reports from all three major credit reporting agencies, and assist in correcting any inaccuracies. See Practice Guidance;

4. 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](#);
5. Ensure a copy of the each Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) is obtained for the youth's case file; and
6. 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. Ensure 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;
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; and
6. **[REVISED]** Ensure that all youth age 16 and over in out-of-home placement receive yearly credit reports from all three major credit reporting agencies, and assist in correcting any inaccuracies.

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.

[REVISED] Credit Reports

A credit report is a record of a person's credit activities. It lists any credit card accounts or loans the person has, the balances, and how regularly payments are made, as well as, identifying information. Most children and youth do not have credit reports. If a credit report does exist for

a person younger than age 18, it may be due to error, fraud, or identity theft. To protect the identity and future credit worthiness of the youth, there is a need to take action and correct the information.

The three main Credit Reporting Agencies are: Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion. Each agency has procedures on how to access credit reports for minors and how to address disputes in the report.

[NEW] Experian, Equifax, TransUnion

To request a copy of the personal credit report:

1. Send proof of a court ordered document for each person who needs a credit report indicating that the youth is in out-of-home care and documentation for the agency to act in the capacity of the court order;
2. Send proof that the youth is a minor (i.e. copy of birth certificate) and include the youth's identification information, such as full name, current address, social security number, date of birth and addresses where the youth has lived within the past two (2) years; and
3. Complete and submit the [Annual Credit Report Request Form](#).

To dispute inaccurate information in the report:

1. Send proof of a court ordered document for each person who needs a credit report indicating that the youth is in out-of-home care and documentation for the agency to act in the capacity of the court order;
2. Send proof that the youth is a minor (i.e. copy of birth certificate) and include the youth's identification information, such as full name, current address, social security number, date of birth and addresses where the youth has lived within the past two (2) years; and
3. Indicate what accounts do not belong to the youth, and indicate the youth is a minor child.

The address for Experian is:

Experian National Consumer Assistance Center
P.O. Box 9701
Allen, Texas 75013

The address for Equifax is:

Equifax Credit Information Services, Inc
P.O. Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374

The address for TransUnion is:

Annual Credit Report Request Service
P.O. Box 105281
Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Delinquency Case Plan SF54780](#)
2. [Independent Living Plan](#) – Examples available at www.caseylifeskills.org
3. **[NEW]** [Annual Credit Report Request Form](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

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.