

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 5:</b> General Case Management	<b>Effective Date:</b> September 1, 2021
	<b>Section 12:</b> Closing a CHINS Case	<b>Version:</b> 7

**POLICY OVERVIEW**

The most desirable place for children to grow up is with their own family when the family is able to provide a safe and stable home environment. Therefore, as a family makes progress toward reaching their permanency goals and involvement with the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) is no longer necessary, it is essential to plan for safe, sustainable case closure.

**PROCEDURE**

The determination to close a case should be discussed jointly between DCS, the Child and Family Team (CFT), and the family.

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Thoroughly review the Case Plan/Prevention Plan, family progress, child safety, all assessment and case information;
2. Complete and review the results of a current In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment or the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Reunification Assessment less than 30 days prior to the anticipated date of case closure. See policies 7.11 In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessments and 8.44 Out-of-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment for additional information;

**Note:** These assessments should be completed for the biological family only if Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) has not been finalized.

3. Obtain recommendations from family, the child (if age and developmentally appropriate), service providers, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) and other child and/or family supports;
4. Discuss the appropriateness of case closure with the FCM Supervisor and the DCS staff attorney;
5. Facilitate a CFT Meeting to determine the appropriateness of case closure and develop an aftercare plan. See policy 5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings for additional information;
6. Use the Inventory of Personal Items to identify personal items the child has accumulated during placement in out-of-home care and ensure those items are returned to the child and/or permanent caregiver;
7. Ensure any applicable benefits (e.g., Medicaid, Social Security Income [SSI]) have been transferred to the caregiver;
8. Ensure the permanent caregiver (or child, if being emancipated) is provided with necessary documentation (see policy 8.41 Transitioning from Out-of-Home Care), including, but not limited to:
  - a. A copy of the child’s Medical Passport,

- b. A copy of the child's birth certificate (if available),
- c. Child's insurance records,
- d. Child's individual medical records, and
- e. Child's driver's license or state identification card, if applicable.

**Note:** A youth 16 years of age and older at the time of case closure must be provided all documents listed on the Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood, including the Foster Care Verification. See policy 11.06 Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood for more information.

- 9. Seek supervisory approval prior to discontinuing any services for the child and/or family;
- 10. Conduct a final visit with the child and family to provide closure to the FCM's relationship with the family, reinforce the family's ability and responsibility to keep the child safe, remind them of available aftercare resources, and discuss plans to handle new situations as they arise;
- 11. Continue monitoring the case and meeting minimum contact requirements until the CHINS case is dismissed or closed by the court;

**Note:** The court may specify in the court order who must receive notification of case closure and may send a copy of the order to the persons specified.

- 12. Submit a referral to the Education Services Team to complete the School Notification and Best Interest Determination form; and
- 13. Review and, if necessary, update the child's placement, Case Plan/Prevention Plan, Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), court hearings, income, and resources in the case management system prior to case closure. See policy 5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs Assessment (CANS) for additional information.

The FCM Supervisor will:

- 1. Consult with the FCM regarding discontinuation of services, case closure, and the aftercare plan;
- 2. Support the FCM in providing closure between the child and/or family and DCS;
- 3. Confirm the court order that returns legal custody of the child to the parent has been received, if applicable;
- 4. Review and confirm case documentation and referrals are complete prior to case closure; and
- 5. Close the case in the case management system.

The DCS Staff Attorney will:

- 1. Discuss case closure with the FCM and/or FCM Supervisor when appropriate;
- 2. Provide legal advice regarding appropriateness of determination to request case closure;
- 3. Advise the FCM on any documentation that may be needed to move the court for case closure; and
- 4. File any necessary motions for case closure or move for case closure with the court.

## LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-34-21-7.6: Documents provided to individual leaving foster care](#)
- [42 USC 675 \(5\)\(I\) Definitions](#)

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### Definitions

#### Aftercare Plan

An Aftercare Plan is a plan which recognizes that services may continue to be needed to further support the family during the transition to case closure.

#### Risk Reassessment

The Risk Reassessment is an assessment tool used by the FCM throughout the life of the case to determine the presence of risk factors that indicate the likelihood of future child maltreatment. The Risk Reassessment also assists FCMs in evaluating whether risk levels have increased, decreased, or remained the same since the completion of the initial Risk Assessment.

### Forms and Tools

- Case Plan/Prevention Plan (SF 2956) - Available in the case management system
- Closing an Involvement Type- Casebook Help site
- Closing/Ending Removal Episode- Casebook Help site
- Family Functional Assessment (FFA) Field Guide – [Available on the Indiana Practice Model SharePoint](#)
- [Foster Care Verification \(SF 56571\)](#)
- In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment- Available in case management system
- [Inventory of Personal Items \(SF 54315\)](#)
- [Medical Passport \(DCS Pamphlet 036\)](#)
- Out-of-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment -available from forms section of the case management system
- Plan of Safe Care (SF 56565)- Available in the case management system
- Safety Plan (SF 53243)- Available in the case management system
- [School Notification and Best Interest Determination \(SF 47412\)](#)
- [Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood \(SF 55166\)](#)

### Related Policies

- [5.07 Child and Family Team Meetings](#)
- [5.19 Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths \(CANS\) Assessment](#)
- [7.11 In-Home Risk and Safety Reassessments](#)
- [8.41 Transitioning from Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [8.44 Out-of-Home Risk and Safety Reassessment](#)
- [11.06 Transition Plan for Successful Adulthood](#)