	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 8: Out-Of-Home Care	**Effective Date:** January 1, 2013
	Section 49: Funeral and Burial Services for a Child In Out-of-Home Care	**Version:** 2

POLICY [REVISED]

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will ensure the death of a child is handled within acceptable standards (See Related Information) when the child is adjudicated a Child In Need Of Services (CHINS) and is placed in out-of-home care. This includes any death that is sudden or unexpected, and those deaths due to a medical condition.

If Child Abuse or Neglect (CA/N) is suspected to be the cause of death, a report should be immediately made to the Child Abuse Hotline and to the Local Law Enforcement Agency (LEA).

[REVISED] DCS will notify the court in writing of the child's death as soon as reasonably possible or within one (1) working day following the death or the following business day following a weekend or holiday.

[REVISED] DCS will notify the biological parents and siblings (if appropriate) and if possible coordinate this notification with LEA and the Coroner the day of the child's death or as soon as reasonably possible, regardless of whether the death occurs on a week day or weekend. These notifications should occur in person. If the biological parents live in another county or state, DCS will request immediate assistance from the specific county or state to make face to face contact with the child's parents. To the extent possible, the family should not be contacted by telephone.

> **Note**: If Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) has been ordered, contact is not required. However, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the surviving siblings and family, the biological parents and or extended family can be notified of the child's death when TPR has been ordered. This notification should occur in person unless unforeseen circumstances prohibit this from happening.

DCS will work with the biological family regarding funeral and/or burial/cremation arrangements and expenses. If the biological family is willing and able to assume responsibility for the burial, they should be encouraged to do so. DCS will explore resources such as insurance policies and Medicaid to assist with fees associated with funeral, burial or cremation prior to offering any financial assistance.

> **[NEW] Note:** Children receiving Disabled (D), Blind (B), or Refugee (R) Medicaid are eligible for Medicaid funeral and burial benefits. If a child is eligible for Medicaid benefits, DCS will contribute $2,150.00 toward funeral and burial costs. DCS may provide financial assistance in the amount of $4,000.00 for children who are not eligible for Medicaid benefits. FCMs can contact the Medicaid Eligibility Unit (MEU) for Medicaid eligibility questions. See Practice Guidance for further information on Medicaid funeral and burial services.

If the biological family is unable to assume responsibility, DCS will contact local funeral homes and cemeteries to provide a basic service and burial. DCS will consider the wishes of the biological family in making arrangements for the child's burial.

DCS and the family will obtain estimates of the following services and determine what is in the best interest of the child's family, siblings, and/or foster parents:

1. General same day visitation with standard funeral including all fees, burial costs (including cemetery costs) with basic casket and vault selections;
2. Same day visitation with standard funeral to be followed by direct cremation after service with burial of ashes at a later date;
3. Same day visitation (visitation & funeral) with standard funeral to be followed by direct cremation with remains returned to closest biological family member;
4. Direct cremation with memorial service at a later date with interment (burial) of remains; and
5. Direct cremation with memorial service at a later date with remains returned to the closest biological family member.

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE

DCS will:

1. Make a report of CA/N to the Child Abuse Hotline and LEA if CA/N is suspected;
2. **[REVISED]** Notify the court in writing of the child's death as soon as reasonably possible or within one (1) working day following the death or the following business day following a weekend or holiday;
3. **[REVISED]** Notify the biological parents and siblings of the child's death in person on the day of the child's death or as soon as reasonably possible;

   Note: If TPR has been ordered, contact is not required. However, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the surviving siblings and family, the biological parents and or extended family can be notified of the child's death when TPR has been ordered. This notification should occur in person unless unforeseen circumstances prohibit this from happening.

4. **[NEW]** Contact the MEU to verify if child is enrolled in Medicaid D, B or R and eligible for funeral and burial benefits;
5. Assist the family in making funeral, burial or cremation arrangements for the child;
6. Explore community resources available to assist the family with funeral and burial expenses;
7. Consult with the Regional Finance Manager (RFM) regarding financial assistance;
8. Ensure surviving siblings including children under the care and supervision of DCS are able to participate in funeral services as appropriate; and
9. Assist the family in locating community resources to deal with grief or other issues identified by the family.

If the biological parents are deceased, DCS should proceed with making funeral and burial arrangements on behalf of the child and consider the wishes of extended family members and or foster parents if possible.

To request DCS financial assistance that exceeds the allotted amount:

1. The FCM will complete the Appeal for Additional Funding SF 54870 form detailing the need for assistance and submit to the Supervisor for approval or denial;
2. The Supervisor will review and approve or deny the appeal for additional funding. The Supervisor will immediately notify the FCM if the request is denied. If the Supervisor approves the appeal for additional funding, it will be submitted to the Local Office Director (LOD) for approval or denial.
3. The LOD will approve or deny the appeal of additional funding. If the LOD approves the appeal for additional funding, the written request will be sent to the Regional Manager (RM) and if approved the RM will send a copy to the RFM.
4. The RM will notify the LOD of the final determination via written correspondence.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

[REVISED] Medicaid Funeral and Burial Coverage

If a child is eligible, Medicaid benefits will cover $600.00 toward funeral director expenses and $400.00 toward burial and/or cremation expenses. The maximum contribution that can be applied toward a Medicaid funeral is $1,750.00 and burial is $400.00. Medicaid will not cover the cost of a headstone. Additional funding may be available through RM appeal.

Funeral Director Expenses can include but are not limited to:

1. Reasonable expenses connected with preparation of the body, including cremation;
2. Purchase of necessary clothing;
3. Funeral services;
4. Transportation of the body; and
5. Professional services of the Funeral Director.

Cemetery & Burial Expenses can include but are not limited to:

1. Purchase of a burial plot;
2. Opening and closing the grave;
3. Purchase of a cemetery vault;
4. Purchase of a casket and flat concrete marker (in absence of a headstone) when required by the cemetery authorities;
5. The cost of renting a lowering device; and
6. Tent and artificial grass, if required by the cemetery authorities.

Possible Additional Assistance

DCS should assist the family in locating possible community resources or donations for the deceased child and family. Community resources that can be contacted for possible assistance are, but not limited to:

1. Trustee's Office;
2. Community foundations;
3. Community clubs;
4. Churches;
5. Salvation Army; and
6. Goodwill.

[REVISED] DCS Financial Assistance

DCS may provide financial assistance to a family. All costs that exceed the allotted amount will require RM approval. FCMs should refrain from advising the family of funding amounts without

prior approval from the RM. All approved vendors will need to complete Vendor Information SF 53788 in order to receive payment. See Procedure for additional information.

FORMS AND TOOLS

Appeal for Additional Funding SF 54870
Vendor Information SF 53788

RELATED INFORMATION

Acceptable Standards
DCS defines acceptable standards as a basic funeral and burial or cremation services where surviving siblings, relatives, foster parents, DCS staff, service providers, school personnel, and any other pertinent individuals in the child's life are given the opportunity to pay their respects and grieve the child's death. DCS will make efforts to partner with the deceased child's family (if appropriate), to provide the deceased child any combination of the following services: a visitation/viewing, funeral/memorial services, burial or cremation services (including a headstone) that fall within the parameters of requested services by the child's family and have been agreed upon by the funeral home and cemetery of choice.

Surviving Siblings
DCS should make efforts to notify the surviving siblings of the deceased child. These notifications should, if at all possible, occur in person. Efforts should be made to allow surviving siblings including children under the care and supervision of DCS to participate in funeral services for the deceased child. This includes but is not limited to transportation, referrals for grief counseling, and ongoing support for surviving siblings that are under the care and supervision of DCS.

[NEW] Support Services for DCS employees
In the event that any DCS employee should need support services due to a child death, contact should be made with the Permanency and Practice Support Deputy Director for guidance.