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June 22, 2010

To: Regional Managers
Directors, Local Offices, Department of Child Services

From: James W. Payne, Director
Douglas Weinberg, Chief Financial Officer
Angela Green, Deputy Director Practice Support
David Judkins, Deputy Director Field Operations
Department of Child Services

Subject: Transportation Assistance
DCS-10-07

This administrative letter outlines a change to the 'Transportation Related Expenses' portion of administrative letter [DCS 09-12 Payments for a Family's Basic Needs](#) which was released on June 29, 2009. These changes are effective on July 1, 2010.

Transportation assistance that is provided by the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) should be considered only after other options for obtaining transportation have been explored. DCS will utilize the Child and Family Team (CFT) process to identify various methods of transportation the family could utilize (i.e. informal supports, public transportation, Medicaid-cabs, etc.).

DCS may provide up to \$50 per month to cover the cost of parental travel. The method of payment (gas card, bus tickets, etc.) is at the discretion of the DCS local office.

DCS will not pay for car repairs or driver's license reinstatement fees.



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In order to monitor the integrity of the continued use of DCS transportation assistance to families, DCS local offices should utilize the following procedures:

1. Every disbursement of DCS transportation assistance should be documented, including the recipient of the assistance, the date assistance was given, the type and quantity of assistance, the service or event for which the assistance was given, and what efforts were made to engage informal or other supports to provide transportation;
2. The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:
 - a. Document in the Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS) 'Contacts' discussions about transportation assistance, including the exploration of informal supports, (these may be copied and pasted from the CFTM Notes) with the contact labeled "Transportation Assistance",
 - b. Include in the Contact the exact reason for why the service is needed,
 - c. Seek authorization for transportation assistance funds from management, as designated by local office procedures, and
 - d. If authorization is granted, complete a Child Welfare Services Referral Form and submit it to the Regional Finance Manager.
3. The DCS Fiscal Department will document in KidTrak (and in any other manner outlined in local office procedures) the date, amount, and type of assistance provided;
4. Each DCS local office will designate a secure location for the storage of bus passes or tickets, gas vouchers, gas cards, etc. Only designated staff will be permitted access to this secure location; and
5. DCS transportation assistance should not be given to a family in bulk. Assistance should be disbursed incrementally and reevaluated based on the availability of other supports and the family's appropriate use of the resource. DCS local offices should have a mechanism in place to validate the family's participation in the service or event for which the assistance was deemed necessary prior to subsequent disbursements to the family.

If you have any questions regarding the information presented in this administrative letter, please address them to the DCS policy mailbox at DCS.Policy@dcs.in.gov.

Sincerely,

James W. Payne, Director
Department of Child Services



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