



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY

Chapter 12: Foster Family Home Licensing

Section 24: Staff as Foster Parents

Effective Date: September 1, 2023

Version: 4

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POLICY OVERVIEW

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) has established requirements for its employees and employees of a Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) who are foster parents to ensure there is no conflict of interest between employment responsibilities and foster parent responsibilities.

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PROCEDURE

The agency (DCS or the LCPA) should discuss the following DCS requirements with their employee who is licensed as a foster parent to ensure there is separation of duties. This includes but is not limited to accessing or attempting to access information for which the employee has no authorization, using case specific information in the employee's professional role, and/or engaging in activities related to foster parenting duties (e.g., attending Child and Family Team [CFT] Meetings) during scheduled work time.

Note: An employee may request to use leave time or adjust their work schedule to attend activities related to foster parenting duties (see policy HR-2-11 Work Hours and Schedules).

DCS prohibits:

1. Employees of DCS or an LCPA who are licensed foster parents from being licensed through or having placements monitored by the agency or DCS local county office in which they are employed;

Note: The DCS or LCPA employee may not accept placement of a child from the agency or DCS local county office in which they are employed unless prior approval is obtained by the Regional Manager (RM) or designee. DCS or the LCPA must be notified prior to the placement of a child.

2. A DCS region or LCPA from providing pre-service or in-service training to an applicant or licensee who is employed by a local office in that region or that LCPA;

Note: If the applicant or licensee is a DCS employee, the applicant should receive pre-service or in-service training from a DCS region outside of the applicant's region of employment. If the applicant is an LCPA employee, the applicant should be licensed by DCS or another LCPA.

3. Employees of DCS or an LCPA from obtaining placement of any child with whom they have had a direct professional role unless the case is staffed with and approved by the Deputy Director of Field Operations or designee prior to placement; and
4. A DCS employee who is a licensed foster parent from having any professional responsibilities related to the employee's own license and the child's case file.

The licensing worker will:

1. Notify their supervisor when a foster parent or individual applying to be a foster parent is an employee of DCS or an LCPA; and
2. Ensure licensed foster parents are aware that if they become employed by a DCS local office or LCPA, they must immediately transfer their license to a DCS local office other than the office in which they are employed or to another LCPA (see policy 12.27 Transferring a Foster Family Home Application or License).

The licensing worker supervisor will:

1. Determine if the foster parent or applicant is employed by a DCS local office or an LCPA; and
2. Ensure no conflict of interest exists, if it is determined the foster parent or applicant is employed by a DCS local office or an LCPA, by requesting the licensing worker to begin transferring an employee's existing license or application to a different office or an LCPA, whichever is chosen by the foster parent or applicant.

Upon completion of the licensing worker supervisor's responsibilities, the licensing worker will:

1. Contact the foster parent or applicant to discuss getting licensed in another county, or transferring their license to another county or LCPA;
2. Discuss with the foster parent or applicant which DCS local office or LCPA is most appropriate to hold the license to ensure there are no conflicts of interest;
3. Request the transfer to the LCPA or DCS local office where the foster parent chooses to maintain their license (if applicable);
4. Begin the transfer process of the license or application in the case management system (see policy 12.27 Transferring a Foster Family Home Application or License).

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RELEVANT INFORMATION

Definitions

Licensing Worker

The licensing worker refers to the DCS Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) or the Licensed Child Placing Agency (LCPA) worker.

Forms and Tools

N/A

Related Policies

- [HR-2-11 Work Hours and Schedules](#)
- [12.27 Transferring a Foster Family Home Application or License](#)

LEGAL REFERENCES

N/A

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PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 12.24

Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.

N/A

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