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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY | |
| | Chapter 8: Out-of-Home Services | Effective Date: June 1, 2012 |
| | Section 46: Resource Parent Complaint Resolution Process | Version: 1 |

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| STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE |
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The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) recognizes the rights of each resource parent. Resource parents should receive respect and support, and should be recognized as a partner in all interactions with DCS.

In the event of a disagreement with the Family Case Manager (FCM) or Regional Foster Care Specialist (RFCS) that cannot be resolved, resource parents can utilize a complaint resolution process.

The resource parent must begin the complaint resolution process by discussing the concerns with the FCM or RFCS. If a resource parent continues to have concerns after the discussion, the resource parent should contact the FCM or RCFS's immediate Supervisor. It is recommended that the resource parent should make contact with the Supervisor within five (5) calendar days of the discussion with the FCM or RCFS.

If the resource parent is not satisfied with the response of the FCM or RCFS's Supervisor, the resource parent should contact the DCS Local Office Director (LOD) or designee. The resource parent should make contact within five (5) calendar days of the response from the Supervisor. If after following these steps issues still remain unresolved, a written review may be requested with the local office's Regional Manager (RM). All requests for a review by the RM must be in writing, should detail the concerns and detail the decisions made by the local office staff. The decision by the RM shall be final.

Note: Court orders and rulings will take precedence over any attempt to resolve the complaint.

Concerns regarding licensing, per diems and adoptions have a separate process and are not subject to this policy.

Code References

N/A

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| PROCEDURE |
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The FCM/RCFS will:

1. Provide all notifications to the resource parent in a timely manner;
2. Discuss any concerns of the resource parent as they arise; and
3. Inform the immediate Supervisor of discussion that occurred and subsequently document the conversation in the case management system.

The Supervisor will:

1. Discuss upon request of the resource parent, either by telephone or in person, their concern;
2. Determine if the original decision was made in the best interest of the child and recognizing the rights of each resource parent;
3. Notify the resource parent in writing via e-mail or written correspondence and notify the FCM within five (5) business days of the decision; and
4. Notify the LOD of discussion held with resource parent, the decision that was reached and subsequently document the conversation in the case management system.

Note: If the original decision is changed or modified, the Supervisor should notify the FCM with instructions for further action.

The LOD or designee will:

1. Discuss upon request of the resource parent, either by telephone or in person, their concern and the decision reached by the Supervisor;
2. Determine if the decision was made in the best interest of the child and recognizing the rights of each resource parent; and
3. Notify the resource parent, FCM/RCFS, and Supervisor within five (5) business days of the decision.
 - a. The notification to the resource parent shall be in writing via e-mail or written correspondence, and
 - b. If the original decision is changed or modified, the LOD should notify the Supervisor with instructions for further action by the FCM/RCFS.

The RM will:

1. Review the written request;
2. Clarify information with the appropriate parties involved, if necessary;
3. Determine if the decision was made in the best interest of the child and recognizing the rights of each resource parent;
4. Notify the LOD of the final decision made with instructions for further action; and
5. Notify the resource parent in writing via e-mail or written correspondence of the final decision made.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Complaint Resolution Process is designed to give resource parents some recourse when there is disagreement with decisions that are made. DCS and resource parents, working together, can build and support a safe environment in which information will be shared and valued.

DCS staff should seek and consider input from resource parents before making final decisions concerning the care and well-being of children who are in their care. The FCM/RCFS should encourage resource parents to provide input during Child and Family Team (CFT) Meeting, Case Plan Conferences, and during routine face-to-face, telephonic or e-mail communications with the FCM/RCFS to address any possible concerns.

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A

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