

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 4: Assessment	Effective Date: July 1, 2007
	Section 20: Good Faith Efforts	Version: 1

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will make good faith efforts to:

1. Meet all assessment deadlines; and
2. Complete all required assessment components.

When it is not possible or practical to complete a component and/or meet a deadline due to extenuating circumstances, DCS will document the extenuating circumstances.

Code References

N/A

PROCEDURE [NEW]

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Make a reasonable number of attempts and employ creative problem-solving techniques in an effort to complete each assessment component and to do so within the required time frame;
2. When extenuating circumstances prevent completion of a component within the deadline or altogether, document the circumstances in the assessment file;
3. Seek supervisory input whenever a deadline cannot be met and/or a component cannot be completed; and
4. Document the reasoning if, with supervisory approval, the decision is made to reach a finding based on the available evidence and close the assessment without completion of one (1) or more required components.

The Supervisor will:

1. Review the documentation and discuss the circumstances with the FCM to make a final determination about whether good faith efforts have been made;
2. Assist the FCM with creative problem-solving techniques if it is determined that good faith efforts have not been made and additional efforts should be made to complete a particular assessment component; and
3. Advise the FCM to recommend a finding based on the available evidence if the Supervisor determines that good faith efforts have been made and the incomplete assessment will be closed.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

Good Faith Efforts to Locate

Upon arriving at the last known address for a child who is the subject of a Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) report, the FCM learns that the family has fled. The FCM consults local phone directories and information, school records, Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) records, utility company records, and public assistance records in search of additional information that may help identify the family's new location. The records search yields no new information. The FCM returns to the last known address and inquires with several neighbors, who report that the family moved "out west" and left no forwarding address. The FCM leaves contact information with the neighbors and asks them to call him or her should the family reappear. At no point should the FCM reveal that he or she works for DCS (or Child Protective Services (CPS), child welfare, etc.) as this would violate the confidentiality rights of the family. The FCM can state that he or she works for the State of Indiana. The FCM documents all efforts to locate and discusses with his or her Supervisor, who determines that good faith efforts have been made and the assessment will be closed.