



Eric J. Holcomb, Governor  
Eric Miller, Director

*"Children will live in safe, healthy and supportive families and communities."*

*If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline at (800) 800-5556.*

Date: August 1, 2024

To: All DCS Child Welfare Staff

From: Rhonda Allen, Deputy Director of Field Operations

Subject: Unable to Locate Child to Assess Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N)  
DCS-24-4

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) completes a diligent search for case participants to gather information about the child and family to conduct a thorough assessment.

**Beginning August 1, 2024, DCS will take additional steps when an alleged child victim of a DCS assessment cannot be located and evidence indicates that the child is at imminent risk of harm.**

### **Immediate Action**

The DCS Family Case Manager (FCM) must contact the law enforcement agency (LEA) in the jurisdiction where the child is alleged to reside and request immediate assistance from LEA to locate the child and verify the child's safety.

### **If the Child Cannot be Located**

If all attempts to locate the child fail, the FCM will staff with the FCM Supervisor to determine the next course of action to ensure the safety of the child. All actions must be documented in the case management system.

### **The following policies will be updated to reflect these changes:**

- 4.03 Assessment Overview
- 4.09 Interviewing Children
- 4.18 Establishing Initial Child Safety
- 4.22 Making an Assessment Finding
- 4.29 Joint Assessments with Law Enforcement Agency (LEA)
- 4.38 Assessment Initiation
- 5.23 Diligent Search for Relatives/Kin and Case Participants

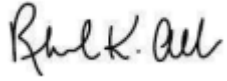
Please send any questions to your local management team.



***About Indiana DCS:** The Indiana Department of Child Services leads the state's response to allegations of child abuse and neglect and facilitates child support payments. We consider the needs and values of all we serve in our efforts to protect children while keeping families together whenever possible.*

APPROVED

Date: 7/31/2024



Rhonda Allen  
Deputy Director of Field Operations,  
Indiana Department of Child Services

