

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 4: Assessment</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1, 2008
	<b>Section 12: Courtesy Interviews</b>	<b>Version:</b> 2

<b>STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE</b>
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It is the policy of the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) that the DCS local office with jurisdiction over an assessment will conduct the required interviews.

However, it may be appropriate for an alternate DCS local office to conduct a courtesy interview due to issues such as but not limited to, excessive travel distances and conflicts of interest.

The decision regarding the appropriateness of a courtesy interview will be made at the Supervisor (or higher) level. In general, courtesy interviews that are being requested due to excessive travel times will not be granted unless the assessing Family Case Manager (FCM) would have to travel more than one (1) hour (one way) from his or her DCS local office or home.

DCS will conduct courtesy interviews for child welfare agencies in other states when personnel from that state would experience excessive travel to conduct the interview.

As with standard interviews, in conducting a courtesy interview DCS will make every effort to use audio and/or video equipment to record the interview.

Code References

N/A

<b>PROCEDURE</b>
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The assessing FCM in the DCS local office that has jurisdiction over the assessment will:

1. Contact his or her Supervisor if he or she believes a courtesy interview is appropriate; and
2. Explain why a courtesy interview is the most efficient and effective method for conducting the interview.

If he or she agrees, the Supervisor in the DCS local office that has jurisdiction over the assessment will:

1. Contact a Supervisor at the DCS local office (or at the out of state agency) where the courtesy interview will take place;
2. Discuss the specific circumstances that make a courtesy interview desirable;
3. If it is mutually agreed that a courtesy interview is appropriate, relay the details of the assessment, including the allegations and information that is pertinent to the safety of the FCM who will conduct the courtesy interview; and
4. Discuss and agree upon a completion date for the interview(s) to be conducted and for the documentation to be mailed.

The Supervisor in the DCS local office that is conducting the courtesy interview will:

1. Assign the interview to an FCM;
2. Assure that the interview is completed by the agreed upon deadline; and
3. Assure that all notes and any audio and/or video recordings from the interview are mailed to the requesting Supervisor within the agreed upon deadline.

The FCM conducting the courtesy interview(s) will:

1. Explain to the person(s) being interviewed that the interview is part of an assessment being conducted by \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ (county/state);
2. Follow all policies and procedures outlined in all applicable interviewing policies. See policies, [4.11 Interviewing the Alleged Perpetrator](#), [4.9 Interviewing Children](#) and [4.10 Interviewing the Parent, Guardian, or Custodian](#) for additional information; and
3. Type any hand-written notes to assure legibility before delivering all interview documentation (including any audio and/or video recordings) to his or her Supervisor.

## FORMS AND TOOLS

N/A

## RELATED INFORMATION

### **Logistics Example**

The alleged child victim lives in County A and is transported more than an hour to a hospital in County B for medical care. County A has jurisdiction over the assessment but may ask County B to conduct a courtesy interview at the hospital to prevent extensive travel.

### **Courtesy Assessments of Home Conditions**

Courtesy assessments of home conditions should be handled on a case-by-case basis. In general, best practice is for the assigned FCM in the DCS local office that has jurisdiction over the assessment to conduct the home conditions assessment so that he or she has first-hand knowledge about the conditions of the home. This is especially important if the FCM must later make recommendations regarding placement. See policy, [4.13 Assessing Home Conditions](#) for more information.

### **Homeless Unaccompanied Minor in a Shelter**

The alleged child victim's permanent residence with his or her parents is in County A, but a report is made by a homeless shelter in County B (more than an hour away from County A); County B will conduct a courtesy interview of the child at the shelter. The DCS local office in County A will be responsible for completing the assessment and arriving at a finding.