

Topic 1: Family-Centered Services Eligibility

Link to [Procedure](#)

Under the "Better Results for Kids" child welfare redesign, the Department has changed the population of children and families that are eligible to receive family-centered services in order to focus services on the most vulnerable children.

General Criteria

For all family-centered child welfare services, a child must:

- ◆ Be under 18 years of age,
- ◆ Be living in Iowa, and
- ◆ Meet the need criteria for receiving the specific service.

NOTE: When a court has ordered the Department to provide a family with family-centered services, the family is considered eligible, regardless of any other determination of need. The Department may ask the court to reconsider the court order or file an appeal of the court's ruling, but will provide and pay for services as directed, unless the court's ruling is modified.

Safety Plan Services

A case may be eligible for family-centered safety plan services when:

- ◆ There is an open child abuse or CINA assessment, and
- ◆ The worker and supervisor have determined that:
 - A child is conditionally safe, and
 - The family is in need of services to move them from "conditionally safe" status to "safe" status, and
 - Without the services, the removal of the child from the home or current placement would be necessary.

For purposes of safety plan services, a “case” is defined to include:

- ◆ The child or children on whom the Department has initiated a child protective or CINA assessment; and
- ◆ Any whole, half, or step siblings of that child or children who reside in the same household; and
- ◆ The parents, stepparents, adoptive parents, or caretakers of the alleged abuse victims.

Family Safety, Risk, and Permanency Services

A case may be eligible for family-centered family safety, risk, and permanency services when:

- ◆ One or more children in the case is:
 - A founded victim of child abuse or neglect under six years of age, regardless of whether the child’s assessed risk level is low, moderate, or high; or
 - A founded victim of child abuse or neglect six years of age or older whose assessed risk level is moderate or high; or
 - Adjudicated as children in need of assistance (CINA) by a juvenile court; or
 - Placed in out-of-home care under the placement care and responsibility of the Department.

AND

- ◆ That child or children is in need of services to:
 - Maintain the child’s placement within the child’s own family, or maintain their placement within the home of a relative or other suitable person; or
 - Reunify the child with the birth family or another relative following the child’s placement with a relative or in a foster family, shelter care, group care, or other placement setting; or
 - Move toward an alternative permanent family connection, such as an adoptive placement or guardianship arrangement.

For family safety, risk, and permanency services, a “case” is defined to include all of the following:

- ◆ Any child who:
 - Is a victim of abuse and meets the Department’s criteria for opening ongoing child welfare services, or
 - Is subject to a court order based on child in need of assistance (CINA) proceedings, or
 - Is in placement under the care and supervision of the Department.
- ◆ Any whole, half, or step siblings of that child who reside in the same household at the time of the Department service referral or moves into the household during the service period.
- ◆ The parents, stepparents, adoptive parents, or caretakers (relatives or significant others of the parents) of that child.

NOTE: Not all family members involved in a child’s services need to be living in the same residence.

The Department may choose not to purchase family safety, risk, and permanency services even when the family meets the eligibility criteria. Examples of such case situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ The child’s family has resources and connections to community services or supports that are assessed to be sufficient to assure child safety or permanency, and the family has demonstrated, or can quickly obtain, the capacity to access services and supports on their own.
- ◆ The child abuse victim is age 17 or older, does not want services, and juvenile court will not assume jurisdiction.
- ◆ The child is already involved with juvenile court because of delinquent behavior and juvenile court services is meeting the child’s and family’s needs.
- ◆ The child was a victim of child abuse but the perpetrator does not have access to the child because:
 - The perpetrator has been criminally charged and is incarcerated;
 - The abuse happened several years ago and the perpetrator is no longer in the area; or
 - The perpetrator does not live in the child’s home (a noncustodial parent, babysitter, child care center staff, etc.).

- ◆ The child has been placed in an adoptive placement, the child has adjusted well to the placement, the adoption is awaiting finalization; and the adoptive family can access services and supports to meet their needs through their own efforts, without provision of any purchased services.
- ◆ The child and family's needs for monitoring, services, and supports can be met directly by the assigned Department worker.

Supportive Components

Supportive components (drug testing, family team meeting facilitation, legal services, and service area-specific services) may be provided when:

- ◆ The Department has initiated a child protective assessment in response to receipt of a report of child maltreatment concerning the child or another child within the same family, or
- ◆ The Department has assumed care and supervision of a child placed in out-of-home care, or
- ◆ The Department has opened a child welfare service case on the child or family following a child abuse assessment or juvenile court action, or
- ◆ A child in need of assistance petition has been filed on behalf of the child and the court has set a date for the prehearing conference or adjudication hearing.