

ALLEN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

BOARD POLICIES

Last Review/Approval of Board Policies
December 21, 2010
Resolution #1210-05

Revised Master Copy

ALLEN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

BOARD POLICIES

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**ALLEN COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES
BOARD POLICIES**

Approved as of December 21, 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Allen County Children Services Board (ACCSB) is appointed by the Allen County Board of Commissioners under authority of the Ohio Revised Code (5153 and 5154) to provide for the needs of abused, neglected and/or dependent children of Allen County, Ohio. Services necessary to address those needs are provided through Allen County Children Services (ACCS), the public agency governed by the Allen County Children Services Board. This document describes the policies of the Allen County Children Services Board under which Allen County Children Services is operated.

Adoption Date:	<u>9/20/05</u>	Resolution Number:	<u>0905-03</u>
Approved:	<u>7/18/06</u>	Resolution Number:	<u>0706-03</u>
Revised:	<u>9/16/08</u>	Resolution Number:	<u>0908-03</u>
Revised:	<u>12/21/10</u>	Resolution Number:	<u>1210-05</u>

REVISED MASTER COPY

Jennifer Hughes, President

Date:

Allen County Children Services Board

1. GENERAL STATEMENTS

- 1.1** All policies of the ACCSB will be fully implemented within 90 days of adoption by the Board, unless otherwise specified at the time of adoption.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

- 1.2** Implementation of Board policies, including development of written procedures for their implementation, is the responsibility of the Executive Director and management staff to whom the responsibility is delegated by the Executive Director.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

- 1.3** All ACCS programs, services, and activities will be in compliance with Federal and State rules/laws and Council on Accreditation Standards, and may exceed said requirements.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

- 1.4** The Board will monitor compliance with its policies through ongoing dialog with the Executive Director and/or by other means deemed by the Board to be appropriate, from time to time.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

- 1.5** All Board policies will be reviewed and updated at least every three years by the Board or its designated committee.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03
Revised Date 11/16/10 Resolution Number: 1210-05

- 1.6** The Board may at its discretion revise these Board Policies at any time.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

1.7

All programs and services conducted by Allen County Children Services are available to clientele on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2. MANAGEMENT

2.1 The Board shall determine policies under which the agency will be managed with regard to fiscal, personnel, public relations, and other matters, but will not be involved in the day to day operation of the Agency.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2.2 Management staff shall both model and teach appropriate interpersonal engagement skills.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2.3 Management staff shall model and teach appropriate workplace demeanor, courtesy, and behavior; work standards and ethics, professional development; “best practice” in areas for which they are responsible; and high quality performance.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2.4 Management staff shall manage agency operations effectively and efficiently, focusing agency resources and efforts on activities that are critical to the agency’s mission and vision.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2.5 The agency shall maintain an ongoing review of its services. At least once every 18 months, the agency will evaluate its services and, as part of this evaluation, the management will ensure that planned outcomes and objectives are achieved, including determining whether specific programs or services reflect current standards of best practice, and whether they will be maintained in current form, revised, or discontinued. Such review may, at the discretion of the Board, include an on-site audit by one or more nationally recognized experts.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

2.6

All employees will be asked at least every 18 months for written feedback on the appropriateness and effectiveness of agency management and their individual supervision.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3. PERSONNEL

3.1 Each position within the Agency will be defined by qualification requirements and position description.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.2 For all positions in the Agency, personnel will be hired in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.3 The Board delegates the Executive Director as the ACCSB “Appointing Authority.” Unless otherwise limited, the Executive Director hires, lays off, fires, promotes, demotes, disciplines, transfers, assigns, and manages the activities of all ACCSB employees with the exception that personnel matters concerning the agency’s directors and ombudsman that are to result in suspension, termination, demotion, lay-off, or transfers must be reviewed and approved by the Board’s Personnel Committee.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.4 At monthly Board Meetings the Executive Director shall report information detailing all agency hiring, transfers, demotions, lay-offs, terminations, disciplines and promotions.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.5 The Executive Director is, within the limits of the approved budget and Ohio law, authorized to employ the number and types of employees he/she believes to be necessary to maintain efficient and effective operations, except that he/she may only hire employees into Board approved positions.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.6

Within the limits of the approved budget and Ohio law, the Executive Director is authorized to secure intermittent, part-time, and temporary employees, individual short-term contractors, and consultants he/she believes are necessary to support and supplement ACCSB operations.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.7

The contract between ACCSB and its “bargaining unit” employees represents Board policy with respect to personnel related activities involving bargaining unit employees.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.8

The Board shall evaluate the performance of the Executive Director annually, based upon the criteria set forth in the duties prescribed by ORC 5153, and the employment contract between the Board and the Executive Director. Input from all management staff will be sought for this evaluation.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.9

Should it become necessary to replace the Executive Director, the Board will name an interim director and one of the unit directors will ordinarily be given first consideration. The Board Chair shall appoint an *ad hoc* search committee.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.10

The agency will not use volunteers for provision of services to our children and families.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.11

It is the policy of the Allen County Children Services Board to strictly adhere to the current overall Allen County Harassment Policy as promulgated by the Allen County Commissioners.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.12

It is the policy of the Allen County Children Services Board in personnel matters not to employ members of the same family in the same work unit when one member would have supervisory or direct administrative authority over another. For this policy, "Family" is defined as mother, father, brother, sister, child, step-child, step-sibling, spouse, grand parent, grand child, mother or father of current spouse, legal guardian or other person who stands in place of a parent (in loco parentis).

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

3.13

It is the policy of the Allen County Children Services Board to hire and promote personnel without regard to: Sex; Political Affiliation; Race; Color; Religion; Age of 40 or older; National Origin; or Qualified Disability.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

4. TRAINING

4.1 All staff will receive appropriate job orientation.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

4.2 The agency will provide or arrange for the training and supports needed by staff, foster parents and adoptive parents in order for them to meet the expectations of their job duties and care giving and to meet the needs of the individual children and families in their care.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

4.3 All staff, foster parents and adoptive parents will receive support, encouragement, and coaching to reinforce knowledge and skills that are acquired through training.

Adoption Date 09/20/05 Resolution Number: 0905-03

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (Revised from PUBLIC INFORMATION on 9/16/08)

5.1 The Executive Director or his/her designee will assure, that on at least an annual basis, a report on agency operations, finances and the implementation of the agency's long-term plan is provided to the public and oversight entities.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

5.2 ACCS shall provide child abuse and neglect prevention strategies targeting families who may be at risk. Strategies may include engaging the community in promoting and supporting the healthy development of children and their families.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

5.3 ACCS shall not involve persons served by the agency in our public relations or fund-raising without their signed consent.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1

All Board members, management, staff, foster parents, consultants, and others affiliated with the agency shall respect the confidentiality of ACCS clients and shall maintain the security and confidentiality of records, as required by Ohio Revised Code and/or Ohio Administrative Code.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

6.2

Persons served shall have access to review contents of the records about them or their minor children, but information about others, the name of referent, or information provided by others will be protected, as consistent with current law and/or the direction of the Attorney General, County Prosecutor or Court order. Any record reviews by a person served will be conducted at the agency in the presence of agency personnel.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

6.3

All employees shall be permitted to review and copy the contents of their personnel records, except that any pre-employment reference documents shall be protected from review by the employee. Such review and copying of records shall be done in the presence of authorized agency personnel.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

6.4

ACCSB recognizes that virtually all records held by ACCS are public records which must be released in a timely fashion to anyone, even though the records requestor may not identify themselves, unless the record fits within one of the exceptions set out in the Ohio Revised Code. Further, the records requestor may be charged only a reasonable amount for copying the requested records, not to exceed ten cents per copied page. If the records requestor asks that the documents be mailed they shall be charged only the amount of postage required for the documents to be sent via regular mail. Specific details are set forth in the document entitled "Allen County Children Services Public Records Policy".

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

Revised Date: 09/16/08 Resolution Number: 0908-03

7. FISCAL

7.1 The Executive Director shall present at appropriate times for Board approval a preliminary and a final budget.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.2 Rescinded Transfers among general line item appropriations must be approved by the ACCSB.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

Rescinded by Unanimous Board Vote on: 09/19/06

7.3 Expenditure of ACCS funds shall be for services and programs provided to children and families, and to meet the operational needs of the agency, and shall always be for a valid public purpose.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.4 ACCS shall utilize, as appropriate, available local, state, and federal funds to support services provided to children and families.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.5 All ACCS financial records shall be maintained in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and within the guidelines of the Allen County Auditor and the Auditor of State.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.6

The ACCSB delegates to the Executive Director or his/her designee, the authority to approve expenditures, within the approved budget; with the exception that purchases in excess of \$24,999 require prior approval of the ACCSB.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10
Adoption Date: 05/18/2010 Resolution Number: 0510-02

7.7

As related to agency fiscal operations, the County Auditor's Office is the official fiscal agent of ACCSB. As such, ACCSB shall follow those procedures of the County Auditor's Office which relate to the fiscal operations of ACCS.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.8

For the purpose of furthering the mission of the agency and to assist in recognition of, incentives for, education of, or efficient operation of the Board, staff, clients and community members; ACCS may provide lunches for working groups, items of clothing designed to identify the wearer as being attached to ACCS, award certificates and plaques, refreshments or other items of nominal value. Each such expenditure shall be authorized by the Executive Director and shall not exceed \$1,000 per event without prior Board approval.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

7.9

It is the policy of Allen County Children Services to formally, publicly and equitably recognize individual service, contribution and commitment to protecting children and preserving families. The following guidelines have been developed to honor staff retiring from Allen County Children Services:

In order to be eligible for agency sponsored retirement recognition, an employee must have 10 or more years of public service, with at least 5 of those years employed at Allen County Children Services. This policy applies only for those leaving with service retirement. Note: Service retirement denotes the total number of years of public employment and may include service from another public employer.

All activities will be organized with the retiree's permission and input.

Those retiring with 10 or more years of public service with at least 5 years with Allen County Children Services will receive: A gift in recognition of service (e.g. engraved watch or other memento) not to exceed \$100.00 in cost, a cake not to exceed \$75 in cost to be served at a staff pot luck meal or at a reception.

Those retiring with 20 or more years of public service with at least 10 years of service with Allen County Children Services will be honored at a public reception. The cost will not exceed \$250.00 for refreshments, invitations, decorations, etc. The retiree will also receive a gift not to exceed a cost of \$150.00

Those retiring with 30 or more years of public service with at least 15 years of service with Allen County Children Services will be honored at a public reception. The cost will not exceed \$250.00 for refreshments, invitations, decorations, etc. The retiree will also receive a gift not to exceed a cost of \$200.00. In addition, the retiree will be recognized with a proclamation from the county commissioners and/or other officials and the retirement will be acknowledged in the local media.

Adoption Date: 12/21/10 Resolution Number: 1210-05

7.10

The Allen County Children Services maintains a "Donated Funds" account that is separate from all public operational funds and no public funds are used to supplement the account. The Donated Funds account was originally a fund established by a now defunct foster parent group with the goal to provide services and goods to children that could not be paid through public funding sources. When the group disbanded, the fund balance was given to the Agency to maintain its purpose.

The Board shall establish a Donated Funds Advisory Committee to review how these funds are used. The committee will include the Executive Director who will chair the committee, the Director of Management Services, one casework supervisor, one caseworker and one foster parent and two sitting members of the ACCS Board as appointed by the ACCS Board Chair. The committee shall initially establish the criteria for the use of the Donated Funds.

Thereafter, the Advisory Committee shall meet at least annually to review the use of Donated Funds to assure that approved requests met the fund's criteria and refine the criteria as necessary.

The ACCS Board members who sit on this committee shall lead the effort to seek monetary donations to supplement the Donated Funds. All received non-public contributions shall be deposited in this account.

Adoption Date: 12/21/10 Resolution Number: 1210-05

8. SAFETY

8.1

The personal safety of all staff and the general public, both on-site and in the field, shall receive priority attention at all times.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

8.2

All staff shall be trained and supported to assess and respond appropriately to situations that pose potential dangers to them.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

8.3

The agency shall seek and utilize current medical advice in complying with applicable governmental health regulations about contagious and infectious diseases, and problems associated with immunodeficiency.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

8.4

Training shall be made available to staff, foster parents and adoptive parents regarding the use of Universal Precautions for the prevention of the spread of contagious diseases and/or blood-borne pathogens.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

8.5

The agency shall conduct fire and tornado drills on at least an annual basis.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

9. INTAKE AND INVESTIGATION

9.1

ACCS shall provide 24 hour services for the purpose of receiving and responding to all allegations of child abuse and neglect.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

9.2

If it is determined that children are in need of agency protection or are at risk of abuse, neglect, or dependency, Investigation staff shall provide/arrange for appropriate interventions, services and supports.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

9.3

ACCSB believes that all children deserve to be nurtured and protected in their own home. Only after it has been determined that the child is at imminent risk of harm and all safety planning avenues have been exhausted shall ACCS request the court to authorize the temporary removal of a child from their home.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

9.4

ACCS staff shall base all decisions regarding the risk to a child's safety and well-being on the information gathered through assessment processes, following requirements as established by the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Administrative Code.

Adoption Date: 12/20/05 Resolution Number: 1205-10

10. CASE PLANS

10.1

Case plans shall be the basis for service development and ongoing intervention with families.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

10.2

Case plans shall be thorough, complete, developed in a timely fashion, updated in a timely fashion and individualized to the needs of the child and family.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

10.3

Case plans shall address ongoing risk assessment following established protocols.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

10.4

Case plan goals and objectives shall be developed in partnership with the family and other caregivers.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

10.5

Case plans shall be used to measure the completion of casework goals throughout the life of the case.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

11. FAMILY SERVICES

11.1

ACCS shall intervene only when the caregivers request assistance or fail, by their acts or omissions, to protect their children from abuse, neglect, or dependency.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

11.2

All casework activities shall emphasize “strength-based” practices that support child safety and well-being, the stabilization of families, the exploration of reasonable efforts to avoid placement and best agency efforts toward family preservation and reunification.

Only when it has been determined that a child's removal from their home is necessary, shall the agency consider least restrictive placement alternatives consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

11.3 ACCS shall provide or arrange for appropriate services needed by children and families served by the agency so that the family may achieve their case plan goals.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12. FOSTER CARE and ADOPTION

12.1 ACCS staff shall ensure that appropriate foster homes are available for children under ACCS custody in accordance with federal and state guidelines.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.2 ACCS staff shall strive to enable children to remain in the same home (one placement) while in foster care.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.3 The special needs of the child shall be used as the determining factor in placement selection.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.4 All placements of children into foster care shall have, as part of the case plan, a specific permanency plan.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.5 ACCS staff shall pursue adoption recruitment activities to ensure the availability of sufficient adoptive placement resources for children in permanent custody, pursuant to federal and state mandates.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.6 ACCS staff shall assure that foster care providers are included as part of the service team, are treated with respect and acknowledged for the critical services they provide on a daily basis.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.7 Post adoption services shall be made available through referral or direct service, on an “as-needed” basis.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.8 ACCS shall maintain a record on all children adopted through the agency. The Ohio Administrative Code and the Ohio Revised Code shall govern the release of non-identifying information.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.9 ACCS shall release no identifying information regarding an adopted child, adoptive parent, or the child’s birth parents, without specific order from the Probate Court.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.10

ACCS shall refer adopted adults, biological parents, grandparents, and siblings who are seeking one another to Probate Court to receive information concerning the appropriate avenue to take specific to their circumstances.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.11

Agency licensed foster parents shall receive a per diem based upon the Board approved reimbursement rates.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.12

Prospective ACCS foster care or adoptive applicants shall complete the required minimum hours of pre-licensing training. Once licensed, foster parents shall attend the minimum hours of in-service training as required by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.13

ACCS shall conform with the Ohio Administrative Code regarding care, supervision, and discipline, which prohibits corporal punishment. The use of physical restraints is limited to those with applicable training.

Additionally, the agency shall provide alternative behavior management training.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.14

Children placed in the temporary custody of the agency shall be entitled to confidential communication except where prohibited by court order. However, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the communication contains information or material detrimental to the well-being of the child, the agency shall act in the child's best interests.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

12.15

Children in ACCS custody who are placed in out-of-home care shall be free to express and practice their religious or spiritual beliefs so long as doing so does not jeopardize the safety or well-being of the child. Caregivers and staff shall make reasonable accommodations to assist in this as necessary.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

13. INDEPENDENT LIVING

13.1

For all older adolescents in custody, ACCS staff shall arrange for an individualized, basic life skills training program based on each youth's individual assessment, to help prepare him/her for living as an independent adult.

Adoption Date	<u>07/18/06</u>	Resolution Number	<u>0706-03</u>
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13.2

ACCS staff shall assure basic orientation and training for foster care providers and agency staff on the self-sufficiency preparation needs, special circumstances and challenges that older adolescents must deal with to function safely and responsibly as adults.

Adoption Date	<u>07/18/06</u>	Resolution Number	<u>0706-03</u>
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14. COMPLAINTS

14.1

All external stakeholders are entitled to have their concerns or complaints heard and to have them addressed in a fair and timely manner. As such, ACCS staff shall assure that a formal procedure is in place to respond to the public's concerns. This process shall include both informal measures, such as communication with the involved staff, supervisors and unit directors and a formal written complaint process as required by the Ohio Administrative Code.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03

14.2

All external stakeholder complaints shall be expressed within 60 days of the complainant having knowledge of the event that precipitated their concern.

Adoption Date 07/18/06 Resolution Number 0706-03