

**Provider Policy Manual**  
**State of Tennessee**  
**Department of Children's Services (DCS)**

**July 1, 2009**

The Core Standards described in SECTION ONE apply to every agency regardless of the population of children and youth served. SECTIONS TWO through EIGHT outline the levels of care available to children and youth through contractual relationships between the State of Tennessee's DCS and private provider agencies and serve to inform agencies of DCS policies that will help children and families achieve permanency in a timely manner. These Sections are subdivided by type of program and describe the requirements that apply to those agencies serving that specific population of children and youth. SECTION NINE contains attachments including a listing of applicable DCS policies, forms and other guides. SECTION TEN is the Glossary.

Within each level description, the reader will find a definition of the service and placement type, the admission/clinical criteria, and the service components required within the per diem. The Manual user will find hyperlinks to mandated DCS Policy. Please note that in some cases entire sections of the previous version of the manual have been removed and replaced with the DCS hyperlink. As updates are made, there will be other sections that will be treated the same way.

As stated in each private provider agency's contract, the agency is subject to monitoring and evaluation by all appropriate State entities and is bound to all requirements outlined in this manual. In addition to monitoring for compliance to specific quantitative requirements, DCS provider monitoring is concerned with contributing to an understanding of the quality of services. Monitoring is geared toward helping to gauge the degree to which effective services are consistently provided in a way that supports family engagement and, ultimately, timely permanency for children.

Situations may arise in which discrepancies or ambiguities are encountered when applying the policies contained within the Provider Policy Manual. In such situations, DCS and providers will use the following documents to govern decisions and as the final authority on policy. The documents are listed in order of precedence.

**Brian A. Settlement Agreement (Civil Action NO. 3-00-0445)**

<http://www.state.tn.us/youth/dcsguide/settlement.pdf>

**DCS Policy**

<http://www.state.tn.us/youth/dcsguide/policies.htm>

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