

**Illinois State Board of Education
Division of Funding and Disbursement Services**

**Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

For comprehensive guidance please see the USDE Non-Regulatory Guidance document:
Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/edhhsfostercarenonregulatorguide.pdf>

1. WHO IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A POINT OF CONTACT (POC) AND DEVELOP A FOSTER CARE TRANSPORTATION POLICY/PROCEDURE?

The Local Educational Agency (LEA) is required to designate a POC and develop a foster care transportation policy/procedure. This document shall identify procedures governing how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded in order to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest.

2. HOW OFTEN IS THE LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY (LEA) REQUIRED TO UPDATE THE POINT OF CONTACT (POC)?

Annually, prior to the start of their school year. Or as frequent as the information changes.

3. WHAT IS THE SPECIFIC SYSTEM TO ENTER THE LEA'S POINT OF CONTACT (POC)?

The Foster Transportation Plan system in IWAS

4. DOES THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD NEED TO APPROVE THE PLAN?

Plans do not have to be approved by a local school board unless this is required by the district.

5. DOES THE POC HAVE TO BE LOCATED AT EACH SCHOOL WHERE FOSTER CHILDREN ARE ENROLLED?

The POC is designated at the LEA level and not each school building where the foster child is enrolled.

6. DO SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVES NEED TO IDENTIFY AND REGISTER A CONTACT PERSON?

No. The "Non-Regulatory Guidance: Ensuring Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care" states that the LEA should designate a POC at the LEA level. A special education cooperative does not need to identify and register a contact person.

7. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE STUDENT WHEN PLACED IN FOSTER CARE?

The school of origin (SOO) is responsible for transportation.

8. WHAT ARE THE LOW COST OPTIONS FOR FOSTER CARE TRANSPORTATION?

The following low cost/no cost options should be considered when developing the Transportation Procedure for a student in foster care:

- A pre-existing transportation route;
- A new transportation route;
- Route-to-route hand-offs;
- District-to-district boundary hand-offs;
- Eligibility of the child for transportation through other services such as:
 - Special education students (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); or
 - Homeless students (McKinney-Vento Act).
- Alternatives not directly provided by the School District / Charter School such as:
 - Contracted services: taxis, student transport companies;
 - Public transportation such as city buses, rails, etc. ; and
 - Carpools; or
 - School/District staff.

**NOTE: A school bus driver permit is REQUIRED for these options!
IMPORTANT: All drivers transporting students (other than parents or legal guardians transporting their own students) in First Division vehicles MUST possess a valid school bus driver permit per Section 6-104(d) of Vehicle Code. THIS INCLUDES TAXI CAB DRIVERS**

- Options explored by the CWA worker outside of those provided by the school district, such as reimbursing the foster parents for transportation costs, or including transport in contracts with licensed child placing agencies or group homes.

REMEMBER: A multifunction school activity bus (MFSAB) can NEVER be used to transport home-to-school or school-to-home [625 ILCS5/1-148.3a-5]

9. WHAT ARE THE FUNDING OPTION FOR FOSTER TRANSPORTATION?

Funding Options:

- Title IV-E (however, consider that all children in foster care may not be eligible, tribal foster children may be eligible, and the State CWA is responsible for the non-federal portion);
- Title I (but funds reserved for comparable services for homeless children & youth may not be used for transportation);
- IDEA funds If the student has an Individual Educational Program (IEP) that includes provisions for specialized transportation, transportation must be provided by the school district responsible for the student's Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Based on Illinois' special education regulations, any alternative special education placement, whether public or private, assumes specialized transportation is part of the IEP and must be provided for the student to receive FAPE.
- State special education transportation funds, if the student has an IEP.
- Local funds.