

While you are in the care of DCFS, your placement should be respected and supported whenever appropriate. You may contact your DCFS case manager or request help at your DCFS Administrative Case Review if you believe:

- You or your child/children require additional or different services or assistance
- You need a different placement
- Your rights as described above have been ignored

If you do not agree with a decision made or action taken by DCFS pertaining to services, you may:

- Appeal within 10 days from receiving notice and you may be able to stop the Department from acting on its decision until such time that your case has proceeded through the Service Appeal Process.
- Request a service appeal in writing within 45 days from receiving notice of the decision or action intended to be taken by DCFS.

Make your written request for a service appeal to:

Administrative Hearings Unit
Department of Children and
Family Services
406 E. Monroe St., Station 15
Springfield, IL 62701
217/782-6655

If you are unable to submit a written request, contact your case manager for assistance in preparing your written request. You should include your name, address, phone number and statement indicating your wish to appeal and what you are appealing, what you would like done to resolve the problem, and any other information you feel DCFS should consider when reviewing its decision.

DCFS has an office that assists any person seeking information about any of its services or functions, including the Service Appeal Process. If you have any questions or need information about DCFS, contact the DCFS Advocacy Office for Children and Families. It has a toll-free number that allows you to call without charge to you. The toll-free number is 800/232-3798.

You may also contact your court-appointed Guardian ad Litem for help, or get legal information or help from the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago (Cook County only) at 800/824-4050.

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Important Information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Teens



If you are in the custody or guardianship of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), are a minor (male or female), and are pregnant or have a child and are the caretaker of that child, this brochure contains some important information about your rights.

You have the following rights:

- To be placed in a stable and safe place to live with your child unless a separate placement is necessary for safety or treatment reasons
- To continue your education and obtain a high school diploma even though you are pregnant or a parent
- To receive necessary transportation for you to attend school
- To receive necessary day care for your child/children
- To receive the necessary transportation to and from day care while you attend school

- To receive appropriate services necessary to help you achieve in school
- To receive information and services to prevent pregnancy or make decisions about pregnancy and parenting
- To receive any necessary ongoing prenatal, medical or dental care wherever you live
- To actively participate in the care and support of your child/children by having appropriate regular visits when you do not have physical custody of them
- To receive appropriate services such as counseling to help you with any problems you may have
- To have necessary assistance in learning to be a better parent or how to live on your own
- To receive financial assistance and a medical card through DCFS and the help needed in using the monies provided
- To be free of discrimination based on your status as being pregnant or a parent
- To continue to receive appropriate services as long as you are a DCFS ward which may continue until age 21 if necessary
- To leave a mental health facility after staff of that facility state that you no longer need mental health hospitalization

You do NOT have to:

- Live in a shelter (although it may be necessary for you to stay in a shelter for a very short time)
- Leave your child with relatives while you are in DCFS care
- Leave school solely because you are pregnant or caring for your child
- Stay out of school to watch your child
- Stay in a mental health facility when you no longer need mental health hospitalization
- Give up your baby in order to obtain a stable place to live
- Be placed or stay in a mental health facility just because your caseworker has no place for you to stay
- Stop receiving services when you turn 19 years old if it is still appropriate and necessary for you to remain a DCFS ward

