

Educational Stability for Students in Out-of-Home Care

Dispute Resolution Process

What is a dispute?

A dispute or complaint is an allegation of wrongdoing or a challenge to a decision made by a local education agency (LEA) or its employees. The dispute is submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) that includes the essential facts and a request for assistance or a review of a decision by the DPI or an LEA. Any individual or agency can submit a dispute to DPI for support or resolution.

An agency or individual has the right to file a complaint against a Best Interest Determination (BID) decision or effective transportation plans to the School of Origin (including cost sharing) for students placed in out-of-home care. The following details the necessary information for a dispute to be reviewed by DPI.



Start with the State Point of Contact

DPI recommends utilizing technical assistance and support from our state Foster Care Educational Stability Point of Contact to work towards resolution without a dispute or complaint. If these resources do not lead to a resolution, please continue to move forward in the dispute resolution process.



Writing out the Dispute Request

If you need to continue forward with a dispute you will need to send your dispute in writing through either an email to ols@dpi.wi.gov or a letter addressed to DPI at 201 West Washington Avenue, Madison WI 53703. Your dispute request needs to include details on why the dispute is being claimed, any details on facts, and the requested assistance or review needed.



Disputes that will not be Reviewed

DPI can dismiss a dispute or complaint if the request:

- Does not meet necessary timelines (for example, a BID dispute could not be resolved if the student no longer attends school because they have graduated),
- Is outside of DPI's control (for example, DPI would not be able to resolve a dispute on a placement in out-of-home care determination made by a Child Welfare Agency), or
- Is not clear and adequate in needing a dispute resolution, or if there is not enough information in the request.



Acknowledging the Request

DPI's Office of Legal Services will complete the DPI dispute resolution process. The Office of Legal Services will start by responding in writing to inform you they received your request. The initial response may provide further details if needed.



Desk Review and a Decision

The DPI will utilize one of the procedures in our administrative code ([PI 1.04](#)) to address the dispute. Most disputes will be resolved through desk review of the evidence, procedures, and process completed where a decision on the dispute will be shared.

If you or a student, family, LEA, or Child Welfare Agency you represent is needing support please reach out to Foster Care Educational Stability Point of Contact Kim Jenkins at Kimberly.Jenkins@dpi.wi.gov or 608-266-5180
If you need to submit a dispute review request, please reach out to DPI Office of Legal Services at ols@dpi.wi.gov