Foster Youth Placement Process: From DCFS to Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

1. Referral and Removal by DCFS

The process begins when the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) receives a report of abuse, neglect, or dependency. Upon investigation, if DCFS determines that a child is unsafe in their current environment, the agency may petition the court and take protective custody.

- DCFS assigns a Child Protection Specialist to assess the situation.
- If a child is removed from the home due to neglect or safety concerns, relative and fictive kin are the first placement options explored.

2. Placement and Medical Screening

Once removed from a home, the youth undergoes a placement process which includes:

- Health and safety screenings, including a medical exam.
- Completion of required documentation, temporary medical card is provided and initial placement paperwork begins.
- DCFS works to identify appropriate short-term or long-term placement options, prioritizing kinship care when possible.

3. Referral to Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

If the youth is not in relative or fictive kin placement, DCFS refers the youth to a contracted private agency like Hoyleton Youth & Family Services.

Hoyleton receives the referral packet and begins transition work with the investigator to meet the child and assess the immediate needs (daycare or school registration, counseling, etc) and makes referrals for services.

4. Placement and Support by Hoyleton

Once Hoyleton brings youth into care:

- A Hoyleton caseworker is assigned and begins regular contact with the youth, selected foster family and biological parents.

- The assigned case worker works with youth and family to stabilize the home they were placed in..
- Caseworkers coordinate care planning, school enrollment, medical follow-ups, and any necessary mental health or trauma services.
- Visits with biological family or siblings are scheduled according to the court-approved plan.

Hoyleton's trauma-informed model ensures that youth receive individualized care to promote emotional, behavioral, and developmental stability.

5. Ongoing Collaboration and Permanency Work

Hoyleton partners with DCFS to support progress toward the youth's permanency goal, which may include:

- Reunification with the birth family (when conditions permit),
- Guardianship with a relative or long-term caregiver, or
- Adoption, if parental rights are terminated.

Hoyleton maintains ongoing documentation, court participation, and service coordination to ensure the youth's safety, growth, and permanency stability.