

**State of Alaska**  
**Office of Children's Services (OCS)**  
**Title IV-E Program Improvement Plan [PIP]**

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ACF Regional Office: Region X

Date of Title IV-E Review: September 2006 [Primary Review]

Date of Title IV-E PIP Submission: March 20, 2007

Area Needing Improvement	Goals	Action Steps	Method of Measuring Improvement	Estimated Date of Achievement	Actual Date of Achievement	Staff/Unit Responsible	Quarterly Progress Report /Comments (Delays/Barriers/Comments) Percentage Complete
<p>I. "Reasonable efforts to prevent placement" and "reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency determinations" were not as meaningful and case specific as they should be.</p>	<p>A. Increase the number of reasonable efforts findings that are "meaningful" and "case specific".</p>	<p>1) The Department of Law (DOL) has revised model court orders which will be completed, signed and distributed at the hearing. The court orders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Order for Continuance and for Temporary Custody (<i>Attachment A</i>)</li> <li>• Temporary Custody Order (<i>Attachment B</i>)</li> <li>• Findings</li> </ul>	<p>In June 2007, approximately 50% of the orders in Anchorage will be completed on the revised form. In October there will be an increase in use of the forms in Anchorage and verification that the forms are being used in other regions. The Department of Law will monitor to ensure that Assistant Attorney</p>	<p>January 2008</p>		<p>Carla Raymond</p>	<p>Comment: The Court Improvement Project (CIP) held a meeting on March 2, 2007 with CIP Judges to introduce and review the revised forms.</p> <p>Comment: Based upon a meeting with Region X on March 12, 2007, DOL will revise the court orders and redistribute to the Anchorage Region for a pilot period of less than 2-months.</p>

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		<p>and Order Following Permanency Order (<i>Attachment C</i>)</p> <p>These Court orders are being piloted in the Anchorage Region. Following an approximate two-month pilot period, these forms may be revised and will be distributed for statewide implementation.</p>	<p>General's (AAG) are using the revised orders. OCS will contact the Department of Law on a quarterly basis to determine the approximate use of the forms.</p>				
			<p>Anchorage Eligibility Technician (ET) staff beginning April 1, 2007, will develop spreadsheet that tracks 1) whether or not the order is on the revised form 2) if order was signed on the</p>	January 2008		Eligibility Staff / Kristie Swanson	

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			and Southeastern Regions will implement tracking 45 days after statewide implementation of the revised court orders. Court Order Tracking Log is labeled <i>Attachment D.</i>				
		2) The Judicial Education Coordinator with the Court Improvement Project will provide information to the Courts on the court order formats.	Copy of informational memo.	August 2007		Suzanne DiPietro	
		3) OCS will revise the "Report for Permanency Hearing" template in ORCA to include a prompt for SW's to include specific information on which reasonable efforts were made	ORCA competition date.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	

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		<p>to finalize the permanency plan. <i>Attachment E.</i></p> <p>4) OCS will send a Program Instruction to SWs regarding completion of Section II on the Report for Permanency Hearing to include information specific to efforts to finalize the permanency plan. This PI shall remain in effect until item 3 above is complete.</p>	<p>The Department of Law will monitor to ensure AAG's are receiving the revised permanency report format. OCS will contact the Department of Law on a quarterly basis to determine the approximate use of the form.</p>	July 2007		Gudrun Bergvall / Tammy Sandoval	
II. "Reasonable efforts to finalize the permanent plan" findings were not consistently made in a timely manner. In addition to the two cases determined in error,	A. Decrease percentage of cases where findings are not entered within the statutorily mandated time frames.	1) Department of Law will notify AAG's statewide to schedule permanency hearings within 11 months to better ensure compliance with the 12 month requirement.	The Department of Law will monitor to ensure that AAG's are scheduling permanency hearings within 11 months. OCS will contact the Department of Law on a quarterly basis	January 2008		Carla Raymond / Kristie Sawnsen / Gudrun Bergvall	

additional cases were incorrectly removed from title IV-E for periods of time in which this requirement was met.			to determine if scheduling is occurring.				
		2) The Judicial Education Coordinator with the Court Improvement Project will add to the agenda for an upcoming CIP meeting, the following:	Copy of agenda.	September 2007		Suzanne DiPietro	
		2a) A recommendation requesting letters be send out to the judges addressing the need to schedule permanency hearings within 11 months.	Copy of letters.	November 2007		Suzanne DiPietro	
		3) Create ORCA functionality to notify OCS Social Workers within 30 days prior to the hearing in order to ensure that the permanency reports are submitted 10	Documentation of incident and progress reports from ORCA Programming Staff.	November 2007 (2.5 release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	

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		days prior to the court date.					
	B. OCS will change the Title IV-E eligibility status whenever reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan is not met within a statutory mandated time frame.	4) ET staff will conduct a redetermination within 60 days after reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan are not met according to the statutorily mandated time frame and adjusted the claim back to the date of ineligibility.	Quality assurance review will occur based on a random sample from the ORCA Report 123 (Annual Reasonable Efforts).	April 2008		Lisa McClure / Rick Hamby	
		4a) OCS will develop business rules and requested an ORCA design session for development of an automated message notifying ET's and SW's of annual reasonable expiration. (2.5 Release)	Completion of the ORCA notification.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	
		4b) Implement ORCA Report 123	Completion of the ORCA	November 2007 (2.5		ORCA Manager /	

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		(Annual Reasonable Efforts Overdue) that was previously designed to track expired annual reasonable efforts.	report.	Release)		Kristie Swanson	
		5) OCS will provide the Department of Law (Diane Olsen) a list of clients that Annual Reasonable efforts have expired.	Documentation that quarterly report was sent.	May 2008		Kristie Swanson	
	C. ET staff will use one system (ORCA) to document Title IV-E Eligibility Determinations.	6) Required modifications to ORCA are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the comment space on determination and redetermination screens to allow an unlimited amount of text and allow a full print of the</li> </ul>	Completion of ORCA modifications and full implementation of the eligibility staff.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	
			Implementation will be measured by random sampling of determination and redeterminations 45 days after ORCA modifications	May 2008		Lisa McClure Rick Hamby	

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		<p>text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To allow the eligibility questions on the determination and redeterminations to be printed simultaneously.</li> </ul>	are in place to ensure that all aspects of initial determinations and redeterminations are conducted in ORCA.				
<p>III. AFDC-relatedness was not consistently determined using the correct eligibility month and the correct home. The Rosales Court Decision was incorrectly applied to children who entered care prior to the state plan Rosales effective date</p>	<p>A. To cease using Rosales in Title IV-E eligibility determinations for State of Alaska custody children.</p>	<p>1) OCS implemented a policy change, effective March 1, 2006, after the DRA was signed into law. The policy instructed Eligibility Technicians to review all cases where eligibility was based on the Rosales Court Decision and determine if the child would be eligible without using the Rosales</p>	<p>OCS will conduct quality assurance reviews for 100% of all Rosales cases beginning March 16, 2007 as the redeterminations are completed to ensure that the Title IV-E Eligibility was determined correctly and all ineligible periods were removed. This</p>	<p>July 2007</p>		<p>Rick Hamby / Lisa McClure / Kristie Swanson / Gudrun Bergvall</p>	

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(7/1/03). The Rosales decision was also incorrectly applied to children who did not meet the AFDC criteria in the month court action was initiated.		Decision. If the child would not be eligible without using the Rosales Decision, the child's eligibility status was changed to ineligible.	will be documented on QA tracking sheet and provided to Region X. <i>Attachment F.</i>				
IV. Some cases are being determined Title IV-E eligible when children are placed with providers who do not meet the full licensing requirements and/or criminal check requirements.	A. Eliminate Title IV-E claiming for children who are placed in not fully licensed homes.	1) Implement use of Reference Guide for Licensing Terminology to ensure licenses consistently reflect the correct status and ET staff can document the correct eligibility status. <i>Attachment G.</i>	Completion of Reference Guide	March 2007	March 30, 2007	Gudrun Bergvall	
		2) Provide training to licensing staff and to ensure consistent statewide use of licensing related fields in ORCA.	Training agendas and training attendance rosters.	July 2007		Licensing Supervisors	

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		3) Develop a licensing quality assurance review instrument that includes criminal background checks.	Completing of review instrument.	June 2007		Sue Frisby Deb Downs	
		3a) Develop guidelines for licensing quality assurance reviews	Completion of guidelines	June 2007		Gudrun Bergvall	
		3b) Conduct licensing quality assurance reviews.	Quarterly monitoring that reviews have been completed.	May 2008		Licensing Supervisors / Steve Krall	
		3c) If a review found that finds a home not fully licensed (including criminal background checks) Central Office will be notified in order to verify that Title IV-E funds are not being claimed.	Verification that Central Office was notified of the QA review and that an appropriate redetermination was conducted.	May 2008		Rick Hamby / Gudrun Bergvall / Kristie Swanson	
		4) ET staff will conduct a timely (no more than 45 days) redetermination upon ORCA	QA review will occur on a monthly basis per Region based on a random sample	May 2008		Rick Hamby / Lisa McClure	

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		notification of a placement change or upon notification of a license status change that results in a change in eligibility status.	of Title IV-E eligible cases to determine the accuracy and timeliness of redeterminations related to licensing and/or placement changes.				
		4a) ORCA's automated messages regarding license status changes will be modified to include Person ID and Case Number in order to assist ET's to redetermine eligibility in a timely manner.	Completion of ORCA modification.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	
		5) Implement ORCA Reports 115 (ET Caseload) and 116 (Aging Redeterminations) to assist ET's to manage their workload to meet federal claiming requirements.	Completion of ORCA report.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	

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<p>V. State makes extensive and lengthy use of emergency licenses instead of moving quickly to have providers meet requirements for full licensure.</p>	<p>A. Shorten the period of time it takes providers to move from emergency licensure to fully licensed.</p>	<p>1) Conduct an initial analysis of homes that are not fully licensed to determine reasons why the process is lengthy. Based on the results of the analysis, recommendations will be developed to address reasons why homes are not fully licensed.</p>	<p>Develop a list of not fully licensed homes by geographical location and track when application was submitted, what is missing and how long it takes.</p>	<p>May 2007</p>		<p>Steve Krall / David Strouth</p>	
		<p>1a) Implement recommendations. This will be clarified upon completion of the analysis.</p>	<p>ORCA Reports</p>	<p>January 2008</p>		<p>Steve Krall / David Strouth</p>	
		<p>2) Conduct a biannual analysis of homes that are not fully licensed and determine reasons for delay and monitor progress towards being licensed.</p>	<p>Maintain a list of not fully licenses homes by geographical location and track when application was submitted, what is missing and how long it takes.</p>	<p>November 2007</p>		<p>Licensing Staff</p>	

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		2a) Develop ORCA report on all aspects of licensing status.	Completion of ORCA reports.	November 2007 (2.5 Release)		ORCA Manager / Kristie Swanson	
VI. The monitoring of facilities which include the employee criminal records lacks consistent procedures, documentation and follow up to ensure safety requirements are met for staff.	A. To ensure there are statewide procedures in place to monitor that all employees of residential facilities meet federal and state safety requirements.	1) OCS and Division of Public Health (DPH) shall co-develop a tracking tool for facilities to document that employee fingerprints meet licensing requirements including tracking timelines per the new licensing regulations effective 2/9/07. <i>Attachment H.</i>	Completion of form.	March 2007	March 31, 2007	OCS / DPH	<p>Comment: The residential care licensing responsibilities were moved from OCS to the Division of Public Health (DPH) on March 16, 2006.</p> <p>Effective February 9, 2007, the Background Check Unit (BCU), began to review barrier crimes and conditions to individuals working, residing or volunteering at a facility and verify that the criminal histories meet the standards. This new unit provides consistent review of histories and provides 'real-time' monitoring of individuals associated with facilities.</p>
		1a) OCS will implement the above tracking document by adding the requirement to the FY08 Continuation Grant Application.	OCS will review the tracking sheet for compliance during the Residential Facility Annual Site Reviews.	May 2008		OCS Program Coordinator	
		1b) OCS will conduct a random	OCS will submit quarterly	May 2008		OCS Program	

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		review of personnel files during the Residential Facility annual site review to verify that employee criminal background checks are documented. If the criminal background checks documentation cannot be verified, OCS will notify DPH who will take appropriate action.	updates to Region X regarding reviews.			Coordinator	
		2) DPH will review all employee criminal background checks or provisional or final background check authorizations issued by the Background Check Unit as part of their facility annual site reviews. If a facility does not meet standards, the licensing worker may a) develop a corrective action	Utilization of DPH's Personnel Worksheet during the annual site reviews	May 2008		DPH Review Team	

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		<p>plan as situation warrants; and/or b) enter the violation into ORCA and c) notify OCS Program Officer if appropriate. The Program Officer will notify ET staff to change eligibility status of all children placed in the facility if needed.</p>					
		<p>3) OCS and DPH will co-develop and implement the use of a Reference Guide for Facility Licensing Terminology to be utilized by DPH licensing and OCS ET staff to document the correct eligibility status for children in placed in residential facilities.</p>	<p>Completion of Guide</p>	<p>June 2007</p>		<p>Gudrun Bergvall / Jerri VanSandt</p>	