

Case File Summary Report
State: Maine

The purpose of the case file review is to ensure that information that is submitted to AFCARS accurately reflects what is in the hard-copy case records. This process generally does not identify new problems, but usually confirms the findings of the test case scenarios and the review of the State's AFCARS system documentation. The case file review involved all members of the State and Federal teams, technical and program.

This summary report provides information on the number of cases selected in the sample, the number of cases reviewed, and any relevant general information regarding the analysis of the results. The matrix that follows provides information on the number of records that had matching information and the number of records that had information that did not match what was submitted to AFCARS. The chart below provides information on how many cases were in the sample and how many were reviewed on-site.

Foster Care

Number of Cases in Sample	68
Number of Cases Reviewed (There were 16 cases of youth over 18 that were not receiving title IV-E)	47
Number of Cases in Analysis	47

Adoption

Number of Cases in Sample	30
Number of Cases Reviewed	26
Number of Cases in Initial Analysis	24

Foster Care Summary

The sample contained sixteen records of youth that were 18 prior to the report period or turned 18 during the report period and title IV-E funds (foster care element #59) as a source of financial support did not apply.

There were a significant number of errors for the elements related to whether the child has been diagnosed with a disability. In the majority of the cases, the child had been in care for several years, but the response in AFCARS was "not yet determined." According to the AFCARS definition, this means that these youth/children had not been seen by medical personnel. However, the reviewers did find medical evaluations and conditions that should be mapped to AFCARS.

There were several errors related to information on a removal episode (foster care elements #18 – 21). In general, reviewers found that the child had more removal episodes than what were reported in AFCARS. The majority of the cases were reported as having one removal, and the reviewer found that there were two removals. In one case, the reviewer found four removals. Also, there were errors with the actual date of removal. In many cases, the reviewers found that the actual date of removal was earlier than the one reported in AFCARS. For children with only one removal, this applied to both the date of first-ever removal from home and the current

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removal date. The errors found in the removal data elements appear to be linked to incomplete data conversion.

There were a significant number of errors related to elements #26 – 40, “circumstances associated with removal.” In general, the AFCARS data indicated that conditions did not apply, when in fact the reviewer found that it was a circumstance associated with the child’s removal.

The most recent case plan goal (foster care element #43) had a high proportion of errors. In all but one of the errors, the record was reported to AFCARS as either “not yet established” or blank. All of the children had been in care for more than two years. However, in all instances the reviewers did find a case plan goal.

There was an inconsistency between the elements related to a child’s placement setting and those pertaining to the foster parent information. The AFCARS data indicated the child was in a foster home, but the foster parent information (elements #49 – 55) was reported as blank. The reviewers found that the child was actually in a group home.

Adoption Summary

Overall, the quality of the data reported for the adoption file appears good. There were several elements with one or two error cases, which in most cases was due to data being missing from AFCARS but found in the case file.

There was, however, one significant finding regarding an inconsistency of the state indicating a child was receiving a monthly subsidy but not having been determined to be of special needs. There were seventeen error cases for the element “has the agency determined special needs.” In all cases, the AFCARS data indicated “no.” Yet, the response to element #35, “is the child receiving a monthly subsidy,” was “yes,” and there was a dollar amount reported for element #36. In all of the cases the reviewers did find that the agency had determined special needs.

Another finding is that there often is more than one type of relationship between the child and the individuals adopting him/her. The relationship with the highest underreporting is “foster parent.”