

**The Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System
Final Rule
Frequently Asked Questions**

What is CCWIS?

A Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) is a case management information system that state and tribal title IV-E agencies may develop to support their child welfare program needs. If a title IV-E agency elects to build a CCWIS, the federal government will provide a more favorable reimbursement than is provided for non-CCWIS systems as long as the system meets federal requirements and is designed to support social workers' needs to organize and record quality case information about the children and families receiving child welfare services.

Why are the SACWIS/TACWIS regulations being replaced?

We published the original Statewide or Tribal Automated Child Welfare Information System (S/TACWIS) regulations in 1993. Those regulations defined S/TACWIS as a large function based application that all social workers would use to track and manage their child welfare caseloads. In the intervening years, child welfare practice and technology have changed considerably. The CCWIS final rule will provide title IV-E agencies the opportunity to take advantage of modern technology offerings that will enable them to share data between multiple systems rather than building large "one-size-fits-all" S/TACWIS applications. This flexibility will allow title IV-E agencies to tailor their information technology needs to align more closely to their unique program requirements.

What are the key differences between S/TACWIS and CCWIS?

Title IV-E agencies will now have flexibility to design and implement a child welfare information system that meets their unique state and tribal needs. In addition, there are fewer federal requirements. The CCWIS final rule only has 14 requirements, whereas the S/TACWIS regulations included 51 mandatory federal requirements.

Is my title IV-E agency required to have a CCWIS?

No, CCWIS is optional. Title IV-E agencies that decide to build a CCWIS will receive a more favorable cost allocation than is provided for non-CCWIS systems if the system meets the final rule's requirements.

What happens to an existing S/TACWIS now that the CCWIS final rule has been published?

The CCWIS final rule provides a 24-month transition period for a title IV-E agency to inform us whether the agency will:

1. transition the S/TACWIS to a CCWIS; or
2. become a non-CCWIS.

The title IV-E agency does not need to finish the transition within the 24 months to be a CCWIS. A new CCWIS may be built at any time.

What do I need to do to make my S/TACWIS compliant system a CCWIS compliant system?

You need to develop and submit, with an Advance Planning Document or Notice of Intent, your general plan for transitioning your S/TACWIS to a CCWIS during the 24-month transition period. The plan must include a description of how the system will meet CCWIS requirements and a list of automated functions included in the CCWIS. For each new automated function, you must indicate whether it meets a CCWIS requirement from §§ 1355.52 or 1355.54, if it is duplicated or not, and whether it meets CCWIS design requirements.

Although each S/TACWIS is different, a S/TACWIS compliant system may require as few as four enhancements to meet CCWIS requirements:

1. a bi-directional data exchange with courts;
2. a bi-directional data exchange with education systems;
3. a bi-directional data exchange with the Medicaid Management Information System; and
4. a data quality plan.

How does CCWIS cost allocation compare to S/TACWIS cost allocation?

The CCWIS final rule does not change the cost allocation methodology that was available to design, build and operate a S/TACWIS application. In short, title IV-E agencies may continue to claim CCWIS-related system costs without regard to the title IV-E eligibility of foster care children served through a CCWIS, as they were able to do for a S/TACWIS.

Should my title IV-E agency have a CCWIS?

Every situation is unique. A title IV-E agency should evaluate its specific business practices, needs, and other relevant circumstances to determine if a CCWIS is appropriate. A title IV-E agency may contact the Children’s Bureau for additional guidance and technical assistance based on the agency’s unique circumstances.