

AFCARS Assessment Review Findings: General Requirements
State: Ohio

No.	Requirement	Findings/Notes	Rating Factor
Foster Care Population			
1	<p>For the purpose of foster care reporting, each data transmission must include all children in foster care for whom the title IV-E agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision. (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p> <p>The [foster care] population to be included in this reporting system includes all children in foster care under the responsibility of the title IV-E agency administering or supervising the administration of the title IV-B Child and Family Services State plan and the title IV-E plan; that is, all children who are required to be provided the assurances of section 422(b)(8) of the Social Security Act. (Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions).</p>	<p>Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) is the single title IV-B/E agency in Ohio. It is an umbrella agency that is a State supervised, county administered program. The ODJFS is responsible for developing and supervising the State's public assistance, workforce development, unemployment compensation, child and adult protective services, adoption, child care and child support programs. ODJFS also is the single state agency responsible for the administration of Ohio's Medicaid program. The Office of Families and Children within ODJFS provides Adoption, Foster Care, Adult Protective Services and Child Protective Services in Ohio are provided by a network of 61 public children services agencies (PCSAs). Fifty-five of these are located within county departments of job and family services, and 27 operate independently.</p> <p>Court orders for removal can include an ex-parte, emergency court order or a temporary order. A judicial determination with a judge's signature, signature stamp or electronic signature constitutes a final or bona fide court order. A signature or signature stamp is required on the court order. Magistrates may also enter orders effective without judicial approval in pre-trial proceedings related to taking a child into custody.</p> <p>The mechanism in Ohio for a non-emergency court removal is through the complaint/petition/ motion. These are all considered fact finding documents and are used to establish the alleged abuse, neglect, dependency issues warranting the child's removal from the home.</p> <p>The State modified the system and added a field for the worker to select whether the child is on a runaway status at the time the agency receives responsibility for placement and care. Once the child is found the worker can enter an end date. This enhancement rolled out on August 23, 2012.</p> <p><u>Program Code LNs 72 – 153</u> The program code selects all children who are under the placement and care responsibility of the IV-E agency during any part of the reporting period based</p>	2

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		<p>on placement type codes. Children under the agency’s responsibility for care, placement, or supervision whose only placement is a locked facility or a hospital are correctly excluded. For additional information see foster care elements #18 through #21 for situations where the child’s first placement was a hospital or locked facility and then enters a foster care placement.</p> <p>Children whose only placement during the report period is “runaway” are incorrectly excluded in the reporting population. The program code needs to be modified to check that field. See elements #18 and #21 for additional information regarding the start date of the removal episode. The test deck indicated this was not happening but the examination of the 2012A data indicated there are records of children whose only placement setting is “runaway” (element #41) and both the date of removal and date of placement are the same.</p> <p><u>Post-site Visit Findings:</u> The program code was corrected by adding a check for the indicator field that identifies the child as being on runaway status at the time the agency is given responsibility for placement and care. The date the agency receives responsibility for placement and care, and not the date the child is picked up and placed in foster care, is reported to AFCARS for the date of the first removal from home, if applicable.</p> <p>Children of minor parents: If a child/youth in foster care is a parent, and has a child who lives with them in the same foster care setting, the infant/child is not part of the AFCARS reporting population. Based on the program code it appears these infants would be included in the reporting population. The State will need to modify the program code to exclude the child of the minor parent from the foster care reporting population. If the child is moved to a different setting, then the child would be entered into the reporting population.</p>	
2	[The AFCARS foster care reporting population] includes American Indian children covered under the assurances in section 422(b)(8) of the Act on the same basis as any other child. (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	The population includes, if applicable, American Indian children covered under the assurances in section 422(b)(8) of the Act on the same basis as any other child.	4

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		Note: Ohio does not have any federally recognized tribes.	
3	For children in out-of-State/Tribal Service area placement, the title IV-E agency placing the child and making the foster care payment submits and continually updates the data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	The State correctly includes in the reporting population children who are placed out-of-State and excludes children for whom they are providing courtesy supervision for another State.	4
4	[The foster care] population includes all children supervised by or under the responsibility of another public agency with which the title IV-E agency has an agreement under title IV-E and on whose behalf the title IV-E agency makes title IV-E foster care maintenance payments. (Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions).	County courts have the capacity to contract with the counties for title IV-E for children that come under their jurisdiction and are handled through the probation department. This includes foster care and also candidates for foster care. Not all court jurisdictions have these agreements in place. ODJFS has Sub-Grant agreements currently in place with the Ohio Department of Youth Services, 32 county juvenile courts, and one district (Multi-County Juvenile Attention System). The court provides a limited amount of information on the child/youth - demographics, eligibility, and visitation information to the county and a county finance or program staff person with a dual user profile enters the data. Data does get entered into SACWIS. The State is assessing if courts will have access to system.	4
5	The reporting system includes all children who have or had been in foster care at least 24 hours. Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions	<u>Program Code</u> The logic in the extraction code creates a "days in-care" variable by taking the number of days between the removal date and the discharge date (or end of reporting period date). If it is less than one day, the record is excluded from the reporting population. This logic does not correctly identify all records of children whose removal episode is 24 hours or less; it only excludes same day removal episodes. The State needs to implement a method to identify if the child's removal episode is for 24 hours or less. Some options for consideration are: a) add a time field for the time associated with removal and a time associated with discharge; b) add time fields associated with the start and end of the placement setting; or, c) add a selection button that the worker would check if the amount of time of the removal episode is for 24 hours or less. There appears to be a field for the worker to enter the time of custody. (The program code was not modified to check the time fields to determine the length of a removal episode. The program code is still checking if the removal is less	2

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6	<p>Foster care does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the title IV-E agency. Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions</p> <p>A removal is either the physical act of a child being taken from his or her normal place of residence, by court order or a voluntary placement agreement and placed in a substitute care setting, or the removal of custody from the parent or relative guardian pursuant to a court order or voluntary placement agreement which permits the child to remain in a substitute care setting (CWPM, 1.2B.3 Question #4).</p>	<p>than one full day and only excluding those episodes.)</p> <p><u>Program Code</u> The program code checks the placement table not a legal status table. If the child's initial placement, or only placement, is "own home" then the child is not included in the reporting population.</p> <p>If a relative is given temporary custody and the Department only has protective supervision, this is correctly not considered as a record that is to be included in the foster care reporting population. However, there were cases in the sample for the case file review where it was not clear, because of time to review the case and materials available, if the agency actually had care and placement of the child. The State needs to investigate further and ensure that if they never received care and placement of the child and the child went directly to a relative (and the relative's custody) these cases are not included in the AFCARS reporting population.</p> <p><u>Post-site visit findings:</u> The program code was modified to check if the provider relationship is "father" or "mother." This was added, according to the programmer notes, to exclude records of children who were removed from a custodial parent and directly placed with a non-custodial parent.</p>	<p>4 3</p>
7	<p>Includes youth over the age of 18 if a payment is being made on behalf of the child (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3).</p> <p>A title IV-E agency that exercises the option to extend assistance to youth age 18 or older must collect and report data to AFCARS on all youth receiving a title IV-E foster care maintenance payment (ACYF-CB-PI-10-11, Issued July 9, 2010)</p>	<p>The State's age of majority (legal age of a minor) is 18.</p> <p>The State does exercise the option of claiming title IV-E funds for youth over 18 who are expected to graduate by age 19.</p> <p><u>Program Code LNs 2823 - 2861</u> The extraction code accounts for children up to the age of 19 when the child is eligible for title IV-E funds. The program code calculates an eighteenth birthday value and a nineteenth birthday value for the child. If the child is IV-E eligible (based on an eligibility indicator of "yes" found in the eligibility record) the program will report the child if the calculated age is less than or equal to the calculated nineteenth birthday date. Otherwise it will set a discharge date equal to the child's eighteenth birthday if that is reached within the reporting period.</p>	<p>4</p>
8	<p>Include all children who are in the placement, care, or supervision</p>	<p>A trial home visit is defined by ODJFS as a visit ordered by the court that cannot</p>	<p>4</p>

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	responsibility of the title IV-B/E agency that are on "trial home visits" (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3).	<p>exceed 6 months and is not reimbursable for title IV-E funds.</p> <p>The 6 month review and the 12 month permanency hearing are conducted in courts in some counties.</p> <p><u>Program Code</u> The extraction code identifies children on trial home visit from a leave type code of "TRIALHOMEVISIT."</p>	
Adoption Reporting Population			
9	<p>For the purposes of adoption reporting, data are required to be transmitted by the title IV-E agency on all adopted children who were placed by the title IV-E agency. 45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)</p> <p>The title IV-E agency must report on all children who are adopted in the State or Tribal service area during the reporting period and in whose adoption the title IV-E agency has had any involvement. ...reports on the following are mandated: (a) All children adopted who had been <u>in foster care</u> under the responsibility and care of the child welfare agency and who were subsequently adopted whether special needs or not and whether subsidies are provided or not; (Appendix B to Part 1355--Adoption Data Elements, Section II - Definitions)</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code selects the adoption population from the full AFCARS reporting population. All children who have been discharged from foster care with a discharge reason of "3" (adoption) are selected for the AFCARS adoption file.</p>	4
10	For a child adopted out-of-State, the title IV-E agency which placed the child submits the data. Similarly, the Tribal title IV-E agency which placed the child outside of the Tribal service area for adoption submits the data.45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3) I - Definitions).	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code reports only on children who the State had placement and care responsibility, whether the adoption placement was in-State or out-of-State.</p>	4
11	<p>For the purposes of adoption reporting, data are required to be transmitted by the title IV-E agency ... on all adopted children for whom the agency is providing adoption assistance (either ongoing or for nonrecurring expenses), care or services directly or by contract or agreement with other private or public agencies. 45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)</p> <p>The title IV-E agency must report on all children who are adopted in the State or Tribal service area during the reporting period and in whose adoption the title IV-E agency has had any involvement.</p>	<p>The State does enter into adoption assistance agreements with families adopting a special needs child that was placed by a private adoption agency and who was never in foster care.</p> <p><u>Program Code</u> The program code is only selecting records of children adopted from the State's foster care system.</p> <p>The program code was modified after the May, 2012 submission to include</p>	3

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	<p>...reports on the following are mandated:</p> <p>(b) All special needs children who were adopted in the State or Tribal service area, whether or not they were in the public foster care system prior to their adoption and for whom non-recurring expenses were reimbursed; and</p> <p>(c) All children adopted for whom an adoption assistance payment or service is being provided based on arrangements made by or through the title IV-E agency. (Appendix B to Part 1355--Adoption Data Elements, Section I.</p>	<p>private agency adoptions. The record is identified by a private agency code on the child's adoption subsidy record.</p>	
Technical Requirements			
12	<p>The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)):</p> <p><u>For foster care information</u>, the child-specific data to be transmitted must reflect the data in the information system when the data are extracted. (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(2)).</p> <p>Report the status of all children in foster care as of the last day of the reporting period.</p> <p>Also, provide data for all children who were discharged from foster care at any time during the reporting period, or in the previous reporting period, if not previously reported. (Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts Section A.1.b(5)).</p> <p><u>For Regular Files:</u> The file should not include information or dates that occur after the end of a regular report period.</p> <p>The data must be reflective of the child's circumstances for the report period being submitted. (AFCARS Technical Bulletin #6, Data Extraction)</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> A single record is created for each child reflective of their data in the database as of the last day of the report period.</p>	4
13	<p>The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)):</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> Not all of the elements included logic to check for the information related to the report period being extracted. These were corrected during the post-site visit</p>	3

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	<p><u>For foster care information</u>, the child-specific data to be transmitted must reflect the data in the information system when the data are extracted. (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(2)).</p> <p>Report the status of all children in foster care as of the last day of the reporting period. <u>For Subsequent Files:</u> How does the title IV-E agency extract subsequent files?</p> <p>The data must be reflective of the child's circumstances for the report period being submitted. Example: The title IV-E agency is extracting the 2011B report period on June 8, 2012 for submission to the Children's Bureau. Data in the 2011B file must reflect the child's circumstances as of September 30, 2011. If a diagnosis has changed or a case plan goal since September 30, 2011, the new information is not to be included in the 2011B file.</p> <p>Does the information system store all historical information, or is information overwritten with the most recent event? (Example: Are diagnosed conditions overwritten or deleted when they change?) AFCARS Technical Bulletin #6, Data Extraction</p>	<p>phase. The data will be evaluated to ensure no "future" information is reported for an element and the program code re-evaluated to ensure all elements are compared against the report period being extracted.</p>	
14	<p>The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period. 45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1): <u>Adoption data</u> are to be reported during the reporting period in which the adoption is legalized or, at the title IV-E agency's option, in the following reporting period if the adoption is legalized within the last 60 days of the reporting period. For a semi-annual period in which no adoptions have been legalized, the title IV-E agency must report such an occurrence.45 CFR 1355.40(b)(3)</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The adoptive population is pulled from the overall foster care population that was selected based on having a removal date prior or equal to the end of the current report period and a discharge date, if present, equal to or greater than the report period's begin date.</p>	4
15	<p>The title IV-E agency extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge (foster care element #57) or the date of latest removal (foster care element #21), if the child has not been discharged.</p> <p>ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995 and Technical Bulletin #6,</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The selection logic does not select the AFCARS population based on transaction dates.</p> <p>While there has not been an issue of "dropped records," the State should use</p>	4

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	AFCARS Data Extraction	the transaction date when extracting its data file. This element was rated a 4 but will be further evaluated to ensure there are no issues.	
16	<p>A summary file of the semi-annual data transmission must be submitted and will be used to verify the completeness of the title IV-E agency's detailed submission for the reporting period. 45 CFR 1355.40(b)(4)</p> <p>The values for these data elements are generated by processing all records in the semi-annual detailed data transmission and computing the summary values for Elements 1 and 3-22. Element 2 is the semi-annual report period ending date. In calculating the age range for the child, the last day of the reporting period is to be used. Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts Sections A.2 and B.2</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code creates the summary data correctly.</p>	4
17	<p>[Files] must be submitted in electronic form as described in appendix C to Part 1355 and in record layouts as delineated in appendix D to Part 1355 45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)</p> <p>Records must be written using ASCII standard character format. Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code formats the data correctly for processing.</p>	4
18	<p>[Files] must be submitted in electronic form as described in appendix C to Part 1355 and in record layouts as delineated in appendix D to Part 1355 45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1) (2) All elements must be comprised of integer (numeric) value(s). Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code creates records using the specified values for AFCARS elements and in the form required for processing.</p>	4
19	<p>[Files] must be submitted in electronic form as described in appendix C to Part 1355 and in record layouts as delineated in appendix D to Part 1355 (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1))</p> <p>All records must be a fixed length. The Foster Care Detailed Data Elements Record is 150 characters long and the Adoption Detailed Data Elements Record is 72 characters long. The Foster Care Summary Data Elements Record and the Adoption Summary Data Elements Record are each 172 characters long. Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format</p>	<p><u>Program Code</u> The program code creates the expected fixed length records required for processing.</p>	4
NR	[Files] must be submitted in electronic form as described in appendix C to Part 1355 and in record layouts as delineated in appendix D to Part 1355.	Information is on file with the Children's Bureau.	

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	<p>(45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1))</p> <p>All title IV-E agencies must inform the Department, in writing, of the method of transfer they intend to use. Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format</p>		
20	<p>The title IV-E agency must use correct file name for transmission.</p> <p>Technical Bulletin #2, File Format</p>	There are no problems with Ohio's files being misnamed.	4
Data Quality			
21	<p>General Data Quality</p> <p>For data to be considered "quality" it must be accurate, complete, timely, and consistent in definition and usage across the entire IV-E agency and State/Tribal service area. The quality of the AFCARS data is assessed by the agency on a regular and continuous basis in order to sustain a high level of quality data. The agency incorporates AFCARS data into its quality assurance/continuous quality improvement plan. The agency involves staff from every level of the organization, and other stakeholders from outside of the agency.</p>	<p>The State has reports that it runs and uses to assess the accuracy of the data.</p> <p>As previously noted, the administrative value in AFCARS of "unable to determine" has a specific definition. The State should use more clear terminology for the values in the information system. For this element, consider replacing "unable to determine" with Safe Haven.</p> <p>There are several areas noted in the element findings where the accuracy of the data need to improve. The agency needs to address how it will improve and maintain the accuracy of the AFCARS data.</p>	3
22	<p>Data Conversion</p> <p>The information system has the capability of recording historical information, as applicable. This primarily applies to closed cases, if the agency did not convert all cases (open and closed), that re-open after conversion, and these cases must be entered into the system.</p> <p>The title IV-E agency transfers historical information on open cases. Specifically, it includes information on: date of first removal, total number of removals, and whether the child's mother was married at the time of the child's birth. If the case was open at the time of conversion, information on the number of placement settings is included.</p>	There were no significant issues found with the converted AFCARS data. Overall data accuracy is address above in item #21.	4