

**State of Oklahoma
Primary Review
Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility**

**Report of Findings for
April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012**

Introduction

During the week of February 4, 2013, the Children's Bureau (CB) of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a primary review of the State's title IV-E foster care program. The review was conducted in collaboration with the State of Oklahoma Child Welfare Services (CWS) and was completed by a review team comprised of representatives from CWS, CB Central (CO) and Regional Offices (RO), cross-State peer reviewers, and ACF Regional Grants Management Office. The review was conducted at the CWS training center located in Norman, Oklahoma.

The purposes of the title IV-E foster care eligibility review were: (1) to determine whether the Oklahoma CWS title IV-E foster care program was in compliance with the eligibility requirements as outlined in 45 CFR §1356.71 and §472 of the Social Security Act (the Act); and (2) to validate the basis of the State's financial claims to ensure that appropriate payments were made on behalf of eligible children.

Scope of the Review

The primary review encompassed a sample of the State's foster care cases that received a title IV-E maintenance payment for a period during the six-month period under review (PUR) of April 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012. A computerized statistical sample of 100 cases (80 cases plus 20 oversample cases) was drawn from State data submitted to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) for the above period. Eighty (80) cases were reviewed, which included seventy one (71) from the initial sample. Nine (9) oversample cases were reviewed when nine (9) sample cases were excluded from the original sample drawn because no title IV-E maintenance payments were made for the child for a period during the PUR. The State provided documentation to support excluding each of the nine cases from the review sample and replacing it with a case from the oversample.

In accordance with Federal provisions at 45 CFR §1356.71, the State was reviewed according to the requirements of title IV-E of the Act and Federal regulations regarding:

- Judicial determinations regarding reasonable efforts and contrary to the welfare as set forth in §472(a)(2)(A) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.21(b)(1) and (2) and (c), respectively;
- Voluntary placement agreements as set forth in §472(a)(2)(A) and (d)-(g) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.22;
- Responsibility for placement and care vested with State agency as stipulated in §472(a)(2)(B) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.71(d)(1)(iii);

- Eligibility for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) under the State title IV-A plan in effect July 16, 1996 as required by §472(a)(3) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.71(d)(1)(v);
- Placement in a licensed foster family home or child care institution as defined in §472 (b) and (c) of the Act and 45 CFR §1355.20(a); and
- Safety requirements for the child’s foster care placement as required at 45 CFR §1356.30.

Case file information of each child in the selected sample was reviewed to verify title IV-E eligibility. The foster care provider’s file information also was examined to ensure the foster family home or child care institution where the child resided during the PUR was licensed or approved and that safety requirements were appropriately documented. Payments made on behalf of each child were reviewed to verify that the expenditures were allowable under title IV-E and to identify underpayments that were eligible for additional claiming. A sample case was assigned an error rating if the child was not eligible on the date of activity in the PUR for which title IV-E maintenance was claimed. A sample case was cited as non-error with an ineligible payment when the child was not eligible on the activity date outside the PUR or the child was eligible in the PUR on the service date of an unallowable activity and title IV-E maintenance was claimed for the unallowable activity. In addition, underpayments were identified for a sample case when allowable title IV-E maintenance costs were not claimed by the State for an eligible child during the two year filing period specified in 45 CFR §95.7.

The CB and the State agreed that, subsequent to the onsite review, the State would have one week to submit additional documentation for a case that during the onsite review was identified as being in an undetermined status, or having an ineligible payment. Oklahoma submitted supplemental materials for one sample case. Our review of those materials determined that to be a non-error case.

Compliance Finding

The review team determined that 78 of the 80 cases met eligibility requirements (i.e., were deemed non-error cases) for the PUR. Two (2) cases were identified as in error for either part or all of the review period for the reasons that are identified below in the Case Record Summary section of the report. In addition, one (1) non-error case was ineligible for title IV-E funding for a period of claiming. Accordingly, title IV-E funds claimed for the ineligible maintenance payments and associated administrative costs for the error cases and the non-error case are subject to disallowance.

Based on these review findings, CB has determined that the Oklahoma CWS title IV-E foster care program is found to be in substantial compliance with Federal eligibility requirements for the PUR. Substantial compliance in a primary review is achieved when four or fewer cases are in error. The next review of Oklahoma’s title IV-E eligibility program will be a primary review, conducted within three years from the date of this review.

Case Record Summary

The following charts record the error cases, the one non-error case with an ineligible payment, the one case with an underpayment, reasons for the improper payments, improper payment amounts, and Federal provisions for which the State did not meet the compliance mandates.

Error Cases

Sample Number	Improper Payment Reason & Ineligibility Period	Improper Payments
OK 80	IV-E maintenance claimed for foster care while the child was on a trial home visit. [§472(b) and (c) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.71(d)(1)(iv)] Ineligible: Reported Disallowance Period: 05/25/2012 – 05/31/2012	\$54.42 Maintenance
OK OS-6	IV-E maintenance claimed for foster care while the child was on a trial home visit. [§472(b) and (c) of the Act and 45 CFR §1356.71(d)(1)(iv)] Ineligible: Reported Disallowance Period: 08/25/2012 – 08/31/2012	\$85.18 Maintenance

<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>\$ 139.60</u>
<u>Administrative</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$ 139.60</u>

Non-error Case with Ineligible Payments

Sample Number	Improper Payment Reason & Ineligibility Period	Improper Payments
OK 47	IV-E maintenance claimed twice with different foster care rate for the same foster care provider. [§475(4) of the Act; 45 CFR §1356.60(a)(1)(i)] Ineligible: Reported Disallowance Period: 09/09/2011 – 09/30/2011	\$173.87 Maintenance

<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>\$ 173.87</u>
<u>Administrative</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$ 173.87</u>

Underpayment Case

Sample Number	Underpayment Reason & Eligibility Period	Payment
OK 2	Oklahoma could have claimed IV-E maintenance as the judicial determination for the reasonable efforts to finalize permanency was obtained timely for an eligible child. [§471(a)(15)(B)(ii) and (C) of the Act; 45 CFR §1356.21(b)(2) & (d)] Eligible period: 09/0/12012 – 12/18/2012	\$929.18 Maintenance

<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>\$ 929.18</u>
<u>Administrative</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
<u>Total:</u>	<u>\$ 929.18</u>

Recommendations for Further Improvement

The findings of this review indicate the State could further develop and implement procedures to improve program performance in the areas listed below. Steps the State takes now to improve quality will support positive outcomes for future reviews. We have provided a discussion regarding the nature of the area needing improvement, the specific title IV-E requirement to which it relates and the corrective action the State should undertake.

Issue #1 – Unallowable Program Costs:

Systems were not in place to prevent title IV-E payments when children move to placements unallowable under the title IV-E maintenance payment program. For example, title IV-E maintenance was claimed for foster care costs in two (2) error cases (OK 80, OK OS-6) while the child was on a trial home visit. Additionally, in the case (OK 47) with an ineligible payment, IV-E maintenance was claimed twice with a different foster care rate for the same foster care provider.

Title IV-E Requirement:

Consistent with the Federal provision at 45 CFR §1356.60(a)(i), title IV-E foster care maintenance assistance payments may be claimed only for the cost of providing certain expenditures covered within the Federal definition of foster care maintenance at §475(4) of the Act. The State must document that foster care maintenance payment claimed for title IV-E reimbursement are for allowable expenditures in accordance with the statutory definition and reflect non-duplicative costs of daily maintenance.

Additionally, title IV-E foster care maintenance payments are available only for AFDC eligible children who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care. By definition, foster care is provided by someone other than a parent. A child living at home in the parent's care is not eligible to have title IV-E foster care maintenance payments made on her or his behalf, per §472(a) of the Act.

Recommendations to address case errors:

The KIDS (Children's Information and Data System) is the automation system which monitors the criteria for title IV-E eligibility for children in foster care and which tracks payments to foster care providers. Edits are not in place to adjust title IV-E claims when payments are claimed when a child is moved to an ineligible placement. Nor are edits in place in the automated system to prevent duplicate title IV-E payments to the same providers when children are moved from one placement level to another. Processes must be developed and implemented to provide for timely adjustment of Federal funds when claimed in error. Adjustment to Federal funds should be made during the quarter that the erroneous claim was made. The State may continue to pursue recoupment of ineligible State funds from the foster care provider, but adjustment of the title IV-E funds should not be delayed based on whether or not the payee has made restitution.

The two (2) error cases involved payments continuing to a provider after the child had left the foster home or child care facility. The following recommendations could prevent these kinds of ineligible payments.

- A quality assurance process in place so timely child placement data entry can be monitored. For example, KIDS could generate a placement report to be used by supervisors in order to monitor child placement entry during regularly scheduled worker and supervisor conferences. If case workers do not enter placement changes timely and accurately, the system cannot recognize that the child is no longer title IV-E eligible when the child returns home.
- All agency staff, especially the field staff (caseworkers and supervisors) must understand the title IV-E eligibility requirements and improve documentation and up-to-date information in KIDS to support title IV-E eligibility.
- Oklahoma has 38 Federally recognized tribes and title IV-E agreements with each. It is important CWS continue efforts to train the Tribal child welfare agencies on the title IV-E eligibility requirements and documentation necessary to support title IV-E eligibility.

As noted in the 2006 review and this review, Oklahoma cannot easily produce a complete payment history for the sample cases. The finance system does not have an efficient interface with KIDS which results in the following:

- For the 2013 review, the corrected payment history was not received until the week of the review;
- Timely prior period adjustments are not consistently made by the system; and
- Specific service dates had to be manually entered into the payment history and could not automatically populate.

Oklahoma should be able to produce a complete payment history with all required information from the KIDS automation system.

Issue #2 - Court Determinations:

Title IV-E eligibility requirements include protections for children and families as an important aspect of eligibility criteria. The title IV-E protections related to judicial determinations were developed to ensure that children are placed in foster care as a last resort and that children are provided timely permanency outcomes. We encourage Oklahoma to enhance court orders to reflect judicial determinations that are specific to the circumstances and events of each child's case as part of their continuous quality improvement process for the title IV-E eligibility program. For title IV-E eligibility, the basis of the court's finding need not be included in the court order. However, including in the court order the facts upon which the "contrary to the welfare" and "reasonable efforts" determinations are based significantly improves the quality of the court order and provides a historical accounting of the child's situation leading to judicial decisions. As such, each court order should include child-specific determinations starting with the emergency order for removal, and continuing into orders for permanency hearings, reunification and adoption. We applaud the courts for past initiatives to improve judicial determinations and timeliness in the court orders. Based on this review, we encourage a continued focus on strategies to make all court orders meaningful and specific to the unique circumstances of the children and families involved as continued efforts in this area would be beneficial.

Contrary to the welfare:

The 2003 Oklahoma title IV-E eligibility review report recommended that court orders more closely reflect Federal requirements regarding the judicial determination for the "contrary to the welfare," "reasonable efforts to prevent removal," and "reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan." The implementation of uniform court orders as a result of the Kelsey Smith-Briggs Act (2006) provided some improvement in the quality of court orders. In 2013, the uniform court orders reviewed included the check box format to indicate that judicial determinations were made. There was also space on many orders to add specifics supporting those determinations; however, child specific information pertaining to the removal was rarely included.

During the 2013 review, we also noted that judicial determinations could have been more specific to each case circumstance, especially in relation to "contrary to the welfare" determinations. For example, it was unclear what circumstances led to the judicial determination that continuation in the home with the specified relative would be contrary to the child's welfare. The majority of the orders did not include description of the "contrary to the welfare" determination or identification of the specified relative the child was removed from other than the blanket statement of, "Pursuant to 10A O.S. § 1-4-201(A) the continuation of the child(ren)'s home (or with caretaker), is contrary to the child(ren)'s health, safety, or welfare." Reviewers noted a concern that in one county the space to enter case specific information related to the "contrary to the welfare" determination had been removed since 2009.

Oklahoma clearly has some exemplary orders on which to model continued statewide improvement efforts. Four (4) Comanche County Emergency Removal orders were noted during the 2013 review as having case specific descriptions to support the

“contrary to the welfare” determinations (OK 13, OK 30, OK 37 and OK 66). For example, in one case (OK 66), the emergency removal order included “The continuation of the child(ren) in the home was contrary to the health, safety or welfare of the child(ren) because:...” followed by a specific written description of the circumstances in the home that led to the removal.

Reasonable efforts to prevent removal and finalize permanency plans:

Many court orders were unclear regarding the basis for determining that reasonable efforts were not needed to prevent the child’s removal from the home. In the majority of the court orders, the “reasonable efforts” judicial determinations included a check box choice allowing the judge to indicate if “reasonable efforts” were or were not made. In some cases, services and safety plans had been documented by the agency prior to the removal, but the court determinations continued to state that reasonable efforts were not needed due to the emergency situation. However, one case in McIntosh County (OK 16) had case and child specific determinations which are worth noting as a model for other jurisdictions. The removal order in OK 16 specified the children’s names and the emergency situation that required an immediate removal.

Generally, the reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan were not specific to the child’s circumstances in the court orders or case workers reports to the court. The check box format of the uniform orders was used in the sample cases that efforts were made to finalize the permanency plan, but no other information was provided to clarify what efforts were made.

Including relevant and consistent details about the applicability of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) would improve the quality of the judicial determinations by identifying specific circumstances of each child’s case. It was noted during the review that the majority of ICWA applicable court orders made determinations of reasonable efforts, instead of the higher standard required by ICWA of active efforts for provision of services to the family to prevent removal and finalizing permanency through reunification of an Indian child with parents or Indian custodian after removal. Other child specific information missing in ICWA cases included placement preferences, expert witnesses, good cause determinations, and active, early participation and consultation (or lack of) with the child’s Tribe in case planning decisions. For example, in OK 44 the children were noted to be “Indian Children” with documentation of their enrollment numbers with a Tribe and the determination that ICWA applied. As the court case progressed, the court dropped the active efforts, did not include placement preferences, and proceeded to terminate parental rights with the determination that ICWA did not apply. Additional attention and training for the courts with respect to ICWA and related court requirements would be beneficial in order to ensure: 1) that orders are specific to a family’s circumstances, and 2) permanency is not delayed or court decisions appealed due to the lack of a specificity of judicial determinations.

In 2012, the Oklahoma Court Improvement Program (CIP) included relevant ICWA training to the courts. These ICWA presentations were provided by the Cherokee Nation’s Attorney General’s Office in five regional workshops and a panel discussion of experts presented at the 2012 Annual Sovereignty Symposium. Oklahoma has begun to

lay a solid foundation to build upon. We look forward to the continued efforts of the Oklahoma CIP to provide ICWA information and training to the courts.

Affidavits and Reports to the District Attorney (DA):

Field staff (caseworkers and supervisors) could benefit from a better understanding of title IV-E eligibility requirements in order to improve documentation to support title IV-E eligibility. An affidavit is not always required, but one is often completed by CWS staff during emergency removals in order to support an application for emergency removal that is filed by the district attorney. The report to the DA is required by Oklahoma statute and includes a written report of the child abuse or neglect investigation conducted by CWS. When the investigation is completed, the report to the DA is submitted to the appropriate district attorney to provide information for the petition for the deprived child proceeding that must be filed within seven judicial days from the day the child is taken into custody.

Many affidavits and reports to the DA reviewed in sample cases did not have information and case circumstances to support “contrary to the welfare” and “reasonable efforts to prevent removal” determinations. The agency’s *Report to the DA* form is structured to require entry of each contact made with the victim, parents and collaterals, but it does not necessarily indicate when the child was physically removed and placed in a foster care setting or provide a clear timeline of events occurring during the removal. The lack of that information can present challenges in providing the court with sufficient case specific information to make informed legal decisions.

Removal documentation could be improved to guide caseworkers to include information related to income, resources or deprivation of parental support. This would provide the needed documentation for the eligibility determination and ultimately result in time saved for the field.

We also did not see case specific documentation in affidavits or reports to the DA to assess the applicability of ICWA. The report to the DA has a section to mark “YES” or “NO” if ICWA applies which was used; however, there was rarely supporting documentation to describe how this information was obtained.

Overall the following were missing from the affidavits and reports to the DA consistently:

- The date the child was physically removed and placed in a foster care setting;
- Identity and relation of the specified relative from whom the child was removed;
- Facts to support a contrary to the welfare determination for the children in the home;
- Detailed case history of the family, disposition of last investigation and a brief summary of the findings;
- Efforts made by the agency to prevent removal or facts in support of why such efforts were not required;
- Attempts to identify, locate and/or place with relatives;
- Income and resources of the family;
- Identity and location of absent parents; and
- Facts and details regarding the applicability of ICWA.

Including the information listed above in affidavits and reports to the DA would provide necessary case specifics and enhance opportunities for court orders to either directly reference the facts recorded in the affidavit or include the relevant facts from the affidavit.

Title IV-E Requirement:

A removal pursuant to a court order must be the result of a judicial determination of “contrary to the welfare” and “reasonable efforts” as specified in §472(a)(2)(A) of the Act. A judicial determination must be made on a case-by-case basis and explicitly stated in the court orders. A judicial determination that relies solely on references to State statutes in an attempt to substantiate the requisite judicial finding or implies that the judicial finding is not explicit is not sufficient for IV-E eligibility. The court orders must definitively articulate the judge’s child-specific ruling pertaining to “contrary to the welfare” and “reasonable efforts” determinations. While the exact terms are not required, the courts findings should provide documentation that the judge reviewed the particular facts and circumstances of the specific child. For example, the findings may reference “the facts in a court report, related psycho-social report, or sustained petition.” [See the preamble to the final Rule, 65 FR 4020, 4056 (January 25, 2000)].

Recommended quality improvement:

It is recommended that CWS collaborate with the State CIP to improve the quality of the court orders. The State should ensure that all court orders are child-specific and explicit. Through the CIP, the State can educate the judiciary and other court officials about drafting court orders that adequately reflect the specific case circumstances which support judicial determinations.

Additionally, it is recommended that considerations be given to improve the affidavits and reports to the DA to provide the courts with sufficient information on which to base required title IV-E judicial determinations and make determinations regarding ICWA applicability.

Tribal and State Title IV-E Agreements:

It was noted during the review that there is no quality assurance system in place to ensure that placement information received from Tribes is processed accurately and timely in order to make certain that Tribal foster home placements are current, accurate, and receiving the correct foster care maintenance rate payment. It is our understanding that when Tribes initiate or change placement, they submit Forms 57 and/or 57A to the eligibility unit. Once these are submitted, no information is submitted back to the Tribe informing them that the placement was processed and what the maintenance rate will be for the family. A feedback loop to the Tribes either monthly or quarterly would provide an effective mechanism for ensuring accurate claiming, increase understanding of the IV-E eligibility processes for Tribes, and further improve Tribal and State collaborations.

Strengths

The following positive practices and processes of the CWS title IV-E foster care eligibility program were observed during the review.

Eligibility Determinations

Since 2003, the title IV-E foster care eligibility reviews in Oklahoma have reflected the work of a well trained, knowledgeable, and tenured eligibility unit. The utilization of a specialized, designated eligibility unit of custody specialists to complete the title IV-E eligibility determination process is an asset for CWS. The eligibility unit is housed throughout Oklahoma in various county offices with child welfare workers and supervisors. The co-location of staff provides easy access for learning opportunities through formal and informal training.

The path to eligibility was documented in each case reviewed. There are established procedures for custody specialists to obtain and retain the information required for eligibility determinations. For example, the eligibility unit has access to the Information Management System (IMS) screens that provide verification of income and resources such as earned wages, child support, family support services, and Social Security benefits. The history of income, deprivation, employment, family supports, IMS screen shots, email correspondence, and the “Eligibility Determination” forms, also known as the CWS-KIDS 4 form, adequately support the eligibility determinations. The eligibility unit has a clear understanding of title IV-E foster care eligibility requirements related to the AFDC requirements of financial need, deprivation, and living with and removal from a specified relative. As evidenced by the cases reviewed, eligibility staff are verifying and clearly documenting the persons in the home at the time of removal, including identification of the principal wage earner.

During the 2013 review, we noted that documentation efforts for families with “zero (0) income” had improved since the 2003 eligibility review. For example, the records reviewed included email correspondence between the eligibility specialist and the caseworker to inquire about income. The e-mails prompted the caseworkers to ask families about family support and sources of income. This process has helped improve documentation for financial need.

An additional strength noted in the eligibility determinations includes the use of the automated title IV-E eligibility process. The automation module ensures CWS is conducting the AFDC two-step process to determine the income and resources using the Oklahoma 1996 title IV-A state plan. The automated process determines the 185% of the standard need, and 100% standard of need, based on logic in assessing the household size, dependent care expenses, step-parent income, and assets check.

Foster Care Placement Safety Requirements of Provider:

Foster Family Homes:

The 2003 and 2006 foster care title IV-E eligibility reviews noted the significant use of kinship placements. Oklahoma continues to prioritize location and use of kinship care placements. The Oklahoma CWS searches for maternal and paternal relatives as indicated by the use of the Affidavit of Custody form that is completed by the parent after removal. This form provides information on absent parents, possible placement options, and family connections of both maternal and paternal relatives.

Since 2003 and evidenced in this review, Oklahoma continues to carefully monitor the approval process for foster family homes before title IV-E maintenance payments are made. The approval process includes 27 hours of pre-service training, home assessments, FBI finger print based criminal background checks, criminal background check through the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), and child welfare abuse/neglect background checks. During this eligibility review, there were no payments made to foster or kinship family placements before the approval process was complete for full licensure.

The RO would also like to note that the 2010 Oklahoma title IV-E foster care eligibility review report included concerns that CWS was not sharing child welfare background information with the Tribes for the purpose of approving foster and adoptive homes. Oklahoma has since addressed this concern with legislation passed effective November 1, 2012, providing a process for Tribes to access child welfare abuse and neglect background checks on prospective foster families in order to appropriately screen and assess families to ensure the safety requirements within the federal regulations and State's standards.

Facilities:

Documentation and support provided for the 2013 eligibility review related to safety checks for child care facility staff led the review team to a number of assessments of the Oklahoma licensing program. Based on the sample cases reviewed, it appears the Oklahoma Department of Child Care Residential and Agency Licensing Program diligently monitors the group homes, shelters and residential facilities. Preparation for the review and response to questions during the review demonstrated a collaborative working relationship between the CWS and the licensing program. Comprehensive documentation of the safety checks provided for the review illustrated that the State is consistently conducting safety checks on institutional facility staff before they are hired. Currently, before a facility staff is hired, safety checks include: criminal background checks through the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), a review of the Oklahoma State Court Network (OSCN) records, child welfare abuse/neglect background checks, sex offender restricted registry background check, and child care registry background checks.

The staff with the Licensing Records Office (LRO) is responsible for conducting monitoring visits to each facility three times a year to include a review of staff safety

requirements. Once a year, licensing staff review personnel files, including all safety and background checks on every facility staff member employed by the facility. The other two reviews conducted during the year include review of background checks on newly hired staff. This monitoring process ensures that the policy and safety provisions are followed resulting in safer placements for children.

Identified Practice of Underpayment

As noted in the strengths section, Oklahoma has a strong focus on placing children with relatives when safe and appropriate. Oklahoma CWS chooses to start IV-E maintenance claims at the time the relative foster home is fully approved, and does not go back to the beginning of the month that all eligibility requirements are met. This practice was also noted in the 2006 Oklahoma title IV-E foster care eligibility review report. In this review, reviewers noted eligible periods from as few as two days and up to two months that title IV-E could have been claimed for eligible children, but the State elected not to do so. Because States may claim from the beginning of the month in which the foster home became fully licensed when an eligible child has resided in that placement for that entire period, we encourage the agency to reconsider the current practice of not claiming the maximum amount of payment for an eligible child. [§472(b) and (c) of the Act and 45 CFR §1355.20(a) and §1356.71(d)(1)(iv)]

Disallowances

A payment disallowance is assessed whenever a title IV-E eligibility criterion is not met and title IV-E funds are paid, or a title IV-E payment is made for an unallowable activity or cost. The payment disallowance includes all unallowable title IV-E foster care maintenance payments and related administrative cost of the error cases and non-error cases. In the two (2) error cases determined not eligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments during the PUR and the one (1) non error case, the State is ineligible to receive Federal Financial Participation (FFP) under the title IV-E foster care maintenance program. Also, the State is ineligible for title IV-E foster care administrative costs related to these cases. The total disallowance as a result of this review is \$313.47. Since the amount of disallowed funds was previously included in Federal payments made to the State, CWS must repay these funds by including a prior period decreasing adjustment on the quarterly report of expenditures Form CB-496, "Title IV-E Programs Quarterly Financial Report" Section A, line 1, Columns (C) and (D). Form CB-496 must be submitted within 30 days of the date of this letter in order to avoid the assessment of interest.

Next Steps

The CB staff will continue to monitor the issues identified through the Title IV-B and IV-E State Plans, the Court Improvement Project and the State's Pinnacle Plan. Oklahoma has the opportunity at the agency level to incorporate continuous quality improvement goals for the title IV-E foster care eligibility process through Pinnacle Plan, Pinnacle Point Five (5): "To know if the work is of good quality, be transparent about the outcomes, and hold all staff (front-line, management, and program) and providers accountable." We look forward to the continued partnership with Oklahoma. The CO and RO remain available to provide technical assistance as requested by the State.