

Child and Family Services Reviews Update

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Completion of Round 3 Case Reviews

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) incorporates two key phases: the statewide assessment and an onsite review of child and family service outcomes and program systems. In Round 3, each state's CFSR consisted of a statewide assessment of the state's child welfare capacities and performance, and a review of a minimum of 65 cases, including foster care and in-home cases. As part of the case reviews, the review teams examined all case documentation and conducted interviews with case participants. Additionally, in Round 3, states with established case review processes that met Children's Bureau criteria were permitted, upon approval, to participate in a State Conducted Case Review process rather than a Traditional Review. All case reviews, regardless of the type of review, were conducted using the federal case review instrument, the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI). By November 15, 2018, all the 2018 states that participated in a State Conducted Case Review process completed their case reviews, thus marking the completion of case reviews for Round 3. All 50 states and the District of Columbia participated in Round 3 of the CFSR. The Puerto Rico CFSR was postponed due to the extraordinary demands on Puerto Rico as a result of the 2017 hurricane.

Update on Approved Program Improvement Plans

States are required to submit Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) when their child welfare services are determined to be out of conformity on any of seven outcomes or seven systemic factors assessed in the CFSRs. The state must submit the PIP to its Children's Bureau Regional Office for approval within 90 calendar days from the date on which the state receives written notification from the Children's Bureau that it is not operating in substantial conformity with any one of the outcomes or systemic factors. The Children's Bureau works with the state as it develops the PIP in collaboration with its partners. If the Children's Bureau does not approve the state's initial PIP submission, the Children's Bureau will provide additional information to help the state revise it. The Children's Bureau approval notice indicates the commencement date of the state's PIP.

The following states have approved PIPs:

Arizona
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Kansas
Massachusetts
Missouri
Minnesota

New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
Texas
Vermont

Request for Public Comment on the Statewide Data Indicators for CFSR

In October 2014, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published a notice in the Federal Register with the final plan to replace the statewide data indicators used to determine a state's substantial conformity. In May 2015, ACF published a notice in the Federal Register to correct some of the calculations and language used in the October 2014 notice. After the May 2015 notice, additional technical errors in the syntax and formulation of the statewide data indicators were identified. In October 2016, the Children's Bureau (CB) published CFSR Technical Bulletin #9 to inform states of the decision to limit use of the CFSR statewide data indicators and national performance to context information for Round 3 of CFSRs. Since then, CB has thoroughly reviewed, revised, tested, and obtained independent review and validation of the syntax used to perform data quality checks and calculate state performance on the statewide data indicators.

ACF, through publication of a notice in the Federal Register on November 27, 2018, has invited state child welfare agencies, partner organizations, and the public to review, test, and provide comments on the revised syntax used to perform data quality checks and calculate observed performance on the statewide data indicators before CB finalizes the revised syntax and publishes revised performance results for all states and revised national standards.

Comments must be received by February 25, 2019. See <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/11/27/2018-25835/statewide-data-indicators-for-child-and-family-services-reviews-request-for-public-comment> for more information.