



MAINE

NYTD Review Final Report

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ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) at section 477 of the Social Security Act, provides states with flexible funding to carry out programs that assist youth in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency.¹ This law required the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to develop a data collection system to track Independent Living (IL) services states provide to youth and develop outcome measures to assess states' performance in operating IL programs. The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) was implemented by [regulation](#) in 2008. Consistent with the regulation, states engage in two data collection activities for NYTD. First, states collect information on youth and the IL services they receive that are paid for or provided by the state agency that administers the Chafee Program. Second, states collect outcomes information on youth in foster care at age 17 whom the state will follow over time to collect additional outcome information at ages 19 and 21. The collected information will allow ACF to track which IL services states provide and assess the collective outcomes of youth. NYTD also provides a new source of data to assist in determining the effectiveness of IL programs nationwide. In addition, because a common identifier must be used for youth reported to both NYTD and the [Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System \(AFCARS\)](#), this enables ACF to analyze the information related to a youth's foster care experiences reported to AFCARS along with their services and/or outcome information reported to NYTD.

1.2 Overview of the NYTD Review

To ensure that data are available to be used for the purposes outlined above, it is important to periodically assess the accuracy of the child welfare data submitted by states. The primary way the Children's Bureau monitors NYTD data quality is through our semiannual review of state NYTD data files. The NYTD regulation lists compliance standards to assess whether state data meets minimal standards for timeliness and quality (45 CFR 1356.85). For this reason, the Children's Bureau also specified in the regulation at 45 CFR 1356.85(d)(2) that the agency may use other monitoring tools or assessment procedures to determine whether a state is meeting all NYTD requirements.

The purpose of the NYTD Review is to evaluate comprehensively the Chafee agency's policies and practices related to collecting and reporting timely, reliable, and accurate data on youth in transition. To do so, the state's NYTD data collection processes are assessed against the NYTD requirements in the [federal regulation](#), policy issuances, and the [NYTD technical bulletins](#) by:

¹ Public Law 106–169 established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). Public Law 115–123, enacted on February 9, 2018, renamed the program the John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood.

- Validating and verifying that the state’s child welfare information system can collect, manage and report required data on youth in transition, including confirming that states operating a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) that receive federal financial participation (FFP) are collecting and managing NYTD data consistent with federal requirements;
- Evaluating the state’s survey methodology, including validating the instruments used to collect outcomes data and reviewing the state’s approach to locating and engaging youth in the survey; and
- Assessing the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and completeness of data.

The NYTD Review has three distinct phases: pre-onsite, onsite, and post-onsite. In the **pre-onsite phase**, the state and federal team conducts a series of pre-onsite planning calls together while the state prepares and submits documentation describing how it has implemented NYTD requirements. The **onsite phase** includes demonstrations of key aspects of the states’ data collection system and a review of a sample of case records. We also conduct stakeholder interviews during the review with youth, caseworkers and service providers. Through this process, we learn more about the state’s capacity to collect accurate data consistent with the definitions of the data elements specified in the NYTD regulation and to document the state’s readiness to use NYTD data for program management and evaluation. Following the onsite review, we prepare a report to document our findings, list suggested resources and supports if technical assistance needs are identified, and explain the actions the state should take to improve the quality and accuracy of data collection for NYTD as part of the **post-onsite phase**.

Figure 1. Overview of the NYTD Review Phases

Pre-onsite phase	Onsite phase	Post-onsite phase
Planning conference calls System and survey documentation Test cases Case record review sample Requirements Workbook <i>Duration:</i> 16 weeks	Entrance and exit conference System demonstration Case record review Stakeholder interviews CQI discussion <i>Duration:</i> 4 days	Debrief conference call Final report Improvement plan <i>Duration:</i> 16 weeks, plus up to 3 years to complete improvement plan

1.3 Requirements Subject to Review and Rating Factors

There are two major areas assessed during the review: the **general requirements** for NYTD data collection and reporting and the 58 NYTD **data elements**. The general requirements include the populations to be reported to NYTD, the technical requirements for constructing a data file and data quality.

Figure 2. General Requirements

1. The state reports information on all youth in the served population.
2. The state reports information on all youth in the baseline population.
3. The state reports information on all youth in the follow-up population.
4. The state implements an appropriate survey methodology to collect youth outcomes data.
5. The state follows ACF's sampling procedures (*applicable to states opting to sample only*).
6. The state reports NYTD data files following ACF's specifications.
7. The state conducts quality assurance to ensure NYTD information can be analyzed and used.

During a NYTD Review, each of the seven general requirements and each of the 58 data elements are assessed against the requirements in the regulation and other policy and technical issuances. The state's NYTD data also are evaluated for quality. In order for the data to be considered quality data, it must be timely, accurate, complete and reliable. Findings and observations from each component of the review are analyzed to determine a rating factor for each general requirement and each data element (see Section 2.7 for more information).

The rating factors used to evaluate NYTD requirements and data elements are listed in Figure 3. A state must make improvements in each requirement/element identified in the final report with a rating factor of "3" or lower (i.e., the state does not fully meet the requirement). These improvements may involve making changes to the information system, extraction routine, and/or data entry in order to fully satisfy the requirement. In other cases, improved training or clarifying guidance or documentation may be recommended. A "4" rating factor (i.e., state fully meet the NYTD requirement) is not assigned until all system issues and data quality issues have been addressed in the improvement planning phase. While there is not an expectation that data are 100% accurate for every element, there is an expectation that the data be of a significant level of completeness and without inconsistency errors, and that this quality would also be maintained over a number of report periods.

Figure 3. NYTD Review Rating Factors

Rating Factor	General Requirements Definition	Data Elements Definition
4	<p>The requirement has been met and the state has developed and implemented policies/practices that support the collection and reporting of high quality data to the NYTD system. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state has collected accurate, timely and complete information on required reporting populations. • The state has implemented a survey methodology using a valid survey instrument and has achieved a high survey participation rate. • The state has followed all technical guidance in conducting sampling and reporting the NYTD file. <p>There are quality assurance processes in place to ensure all NYTD data are accurately entered into the system and to identify and resolve data quality issues.</p>	<p>The requirement has been met and the state has sustained a high level of quality data for the element. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state's methodology for collecting, extracting and reporting information for an element is consistent with NYTD requirements. • The state has a process to keep data elements up-to-date, even for a youth exiting foster care. • The state has reported consistently high quality data for the element over time.
3	<p>There are practice or design issues affecting data quality. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is inadequate training for workers to understand how to collect NYTD data. • The state has reported missing or logically inconsistent responses from youth on the NYTD survey. <p>There are inadequate supervisory controls for ensuring timely and accurate data entry.</p>	<p>There are data quality issues identified for a data element. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are data errors or data quality advisories flagged for the element in NYTD reports. • Information for the element is not consistently entered by workers. <p>There incorrect or ambiguous instructions, definitions, data entry screens or forms for the element.</p>

Rating Factor	General Requirements Definition	Data Elements Definition
2	<p>There are technical problems prohibiting the system from meeting the requirement. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system requires modification to collect accurate, timely and complete information on required reporting populations. • The state's survey instrument contains incorrect questions, response options or contains misleading information that hinders a youth's participation in the survey. 	<p>There are technical problems prohibiting the system from collecting information consistent with NYTD requirements. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state's data collection method and/or information system has the capability to collect the data, but the program logic used to construct the NYTD file has errors. • The state uses default values for blank information for the element. • Information for the element is coming from the wrong module or field in the system. • The system needs modification to encompass all conditions or possible values to collect information on the element. <p>The extraction code for the NYTD report selects and reports incorrect information for the element.</p>
1	<p>The requirement has not been implemented. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state is not collecting and reporting information on a required reporting population. <p>The state does not conduct quality assurance on NYTD data.</p>	<p>The data element is not collected or reported in the system. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state's data collection method and/or information system does not have the capability to collect the correct information for the element (i.e., there is no data field on the screens or form). <p>There is no program logic to extract information on the element.</p>
0	<p>State operating a CCWIS for which it received federal financial participation (FFP) found not to be collecting or managing NYTD data in its system consistent with federal requirements.</p>	<p>State operating a CCWIS for which it received federal financial participation (FFP) found not to be collecting or managing NYTD data in its system consistent with federal requirements.</p>

2. Findings

2.1 Overview of the Onsite Phase in Maine

On June 19-22, 2019 the Children's Bureau conducted the onsite NYTD Review in collaboration with Maine's National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) implementation team in the Department of Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS). The federal team consisted of representatives from the Children's Bureau Central Office, the Region 1 Office, staff from the Children's Bureau's NYTD Help Desk, and young adult NYTD Reviewers who are consultants from JBS International, Inc.

The onsite review began with a demonstration of the state's child welfare information system, MACWIS (Maine's Automated Child Welfare Information System). Next, the federal team completed the case record review using a 30-case sample of records reported in the 2016A² file (October 1, 2015 – March 30, 2016) and 2017B file (April 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017). Finally, the federal team interviewed over 27 individuals including case managers, Youth Transition Specialists, independent living service providers, judicial partners, foster parents and other child welfare officials. In addition, we spoke to youth in foster care and young adults formerly in foster care.

2.2 Overview of Findings

As part of the post-onsite phase, the state's documents, data, case file review findings, and onsite notes were assessed to make the final determination of findings. This section contains a summary of the significant reporting and data quality issues we identified as part of this comprehensive assessment. Where applicable, the data element, test case number, or case review sample number applicable to each finding is in parentheses. The state should review carefully all the findings in this report as the Children's Bureau has made changes to the findings and rating factors. For additional information on specific issues for the general requirements and the data elements, please see Appendix C.

² In consultation with the state, an earlier reporting period for the follow-up survey was selected. During the case record review, reviewers were able to look at the survey responses for the 2018A period (survey at age 21, October 1, 2017- March 30, 2018) to determine if there were opportunities at the time the survey was taken at age 19 (October 1, 2015- March 30, 2016) to help the state survey the youth at age 21. This ability to "look forward" to the age 21-year old survey was helpful to determine patterns of youth response or non-response.

Table 1. Summary Ratings for General Requirements and Data Elements

Rating	Number of 7 General Requirements With a Rating	Number of 58 Data Elements With a Rating
4	0	24
3	1	1
2	5	33
1	0	0
0	0	0
Not applicable	1	-

2.2.1 Data Collection on Youth Demographics

(General Requirements 1, 2 and 4; Data Elements 4–19, 36)

NYTD collects information on youth demographics in NYTD data [elements 4–19 and 36](#). These data elements provide critical information on basic characteristics of youth reported to NYTD. Many of these elements already are required to be reported for other purposes, including in reports to AFCARS. Having reliable and accurate data on the characteristics of youth is an important component in assessing the adequacy and quality of services provided to meet the unique needs of youth in transition.

Notably, the state of Maine is collecting the race and ethnicity information according to NYTD Policy and Guidance ([elements 4- 11](#)). All required response options are available and operate as expected in allowing casework staff and others to select them in combination as required by NYTD. Screens are easy to navigate.

During the NYTD Review, CB did determine that changes will need to be made to the reporting of some youth demographic information, as follows.

- **Not collecting all allowable values.** We learned that youth placed in Maine from another state via the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) are not reported with the sending state’s local agency code ([element 15](#)). MACWIS must be able to capture the “sending” state’s FIPS code for this element. In addition the state must modify [element 16](#) (Federally Recognized Tribe) to allow the state to report “blank” when membership in a federally recognized tribes is still pending verification.
- **Adding Logic to Report Education Values.** For both [element 18](#) (education level) and [element 19](#) (special education status) the state does not have logic to support the reporting of these values as the most current record. In addition for [element 18](#) (education level) the state must report the last grade completed for those who received a GED and report the value of “college” for those young adults who have completed one semester.
- **Reporting Demographic Information on Youth who are Not in Foster Care.** Of note, the state is not collecting information on the services provided to youth who are no

longer in foster care. Once this functionality is developed, the state will need a process to collect and update the demographic information as required (**elements 4 to 19**).

- **Reporting Foster Care Status.** At the time of the onsite review, the state was not reporting foster care status (**elements 14 and 36**) correctly. The state will need to develop logic to report foster care according to the federal definition of foster care (45 CFR 1355.20) and NYTD guidance.

2.2.2 Data Collection on Independent Living Services (General Requirement 1; Elements 20–33)

NYTD collects information on Independent Living (IL) services provided to youth in data **elements 20–33**. Given NYTD’s goal of providing data to help determine which services are related to positive outcomes for youth, complete and accurate services data are vital.

Maine’s OCFS administers, supervises, and arranges for IL services (Chafee and Education and Training Vouchers [ETV]) to start at ages 14 and older. Notably, the state offers federal extended foster care to age 21 through an agreement called the “V9.” In existence since 1972, Maine’s V9 program provides financial and other supports to youth who voluntarily remain under the care and supervision of OCFS up to age 21. Both internal and external partners provide Independent Living services based on assessments, identified needs, and case plan requirements. All youth have an OCFS case worker who acts as the case manager while they are in foster care. The OCFS caseworker is responsible for development of the case plan, transition team and plan, and most formal case management activities. Youth ages 14 and older are referred to Youth Transition Services and are also assigned a Youth Transition Specialist (YTS). YTS workers are district-based and there are seven YTSs assigned to each of the districts across the state.

For a small, rural state, Maine has an abundance of services and supports available to youth who are in foster care and transitioning out. The state has created strategic relationships and partnerships to support the provision of services, including funding services through organizations best positioned to provide expertise (i.e., the partnership with Jobs for Maine’s Graduates (JMG) for education services). The YTS staff is a relatively stable population of the workforce. They are well-trained and well-versed in community services and supports available outside of the child welfare agency. YTS workers provide a variety of services directly, including completing paperwork for emergency assistance, leading Family Team Meetings, and providing or arranging for transportation for youth. (It should not be underestimated how important transportation is in the state of Maine). The state also reports a robust program to assist youth in completing the required training and qualifications to obtain a Driver’s License. As a Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative site, Maine also offers education and training on budget management and access to an Individual Development Account.

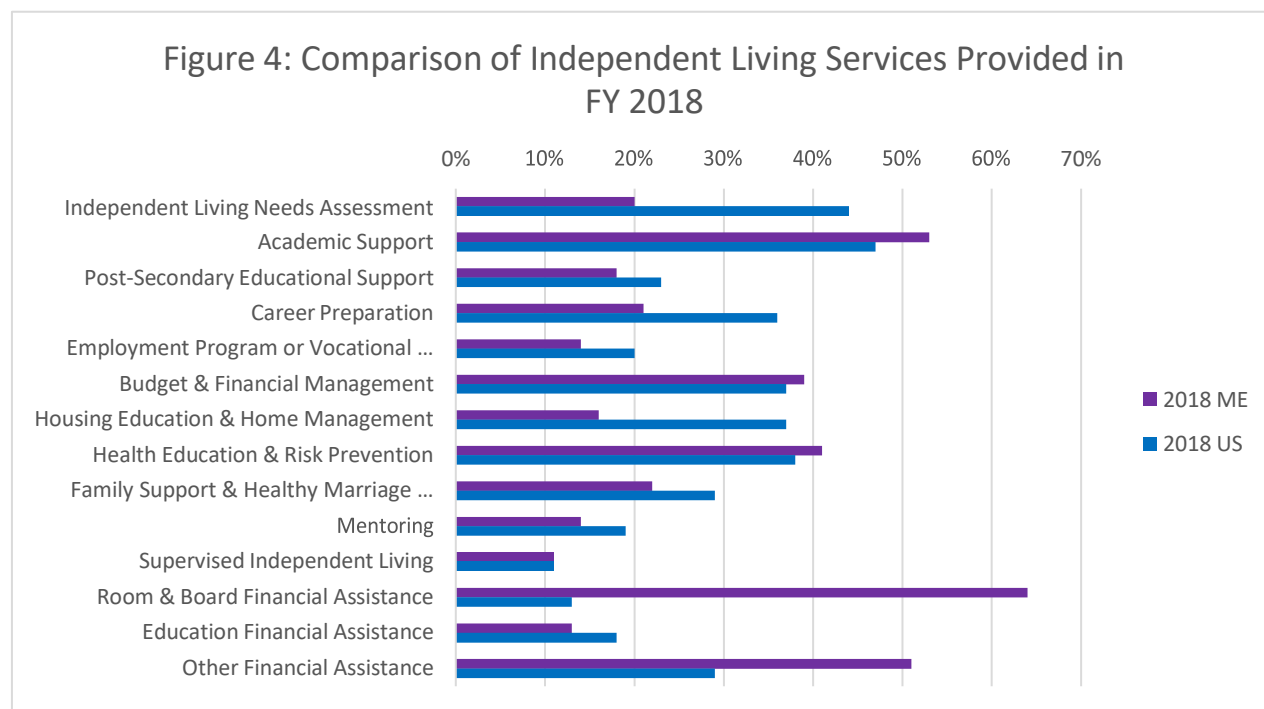
The state is known nationally for its efforts to involve and empower youth and young adults in the child welfare system. OCFS views youth voice as a cornerstone of the policies and practices that make up Maine’s Youth Transition Program. In partnership with the University of Southern Maine, Muskie School of Public Service, Maine works closely with the Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT) to represent the needs of youth in Maine’s foster care

system. Using a youth/ adult partnership model, YLAT is committed to improving the short-term and long-term outcomes for youth who are or have been in foster care. OCFS views YLAT members as instrumental in policy development and practice improvements. To fulfill this mission, the state offers a Teen Conference developed and implemented by members of YLAT and supported by OCFS. The state of Maine has worked closely with YLAT to develop services, partnerships, and supports as indicated by youth and young adults directly participating in the state's IL programs.

To report IL services to NYTD, Maine developed the "NYTD Independent Living Checklist" screen in MACWIS which lists all the NYTD service elements ([elements 20-33](#)). The assigned worker "checks" the appropriate IL service categories for each youth and when a "yes" is selected the service category is reported to NYTD. To provide additional information on the IL service, the assigned worker should enter supporting information into the case notes section of MACWIS. The "NYTD Independent Living Checklist" screen "pops-up" every six months to prompt a caseworker to complete it. A historical record of the NYTD Independent Living Checklist screen is kept. Because access to MACWIS is limited, it is the responsibility of the assigned caseworker in MACWIS to enter in all the services provided, including those provided by the foster parent or other case planning agency.

There are two primary tools the state uses to conduct assessments for IL services. The state uses the Youth Transition Planning Tool that they developed and also considers the V9 Agreement as a transition tool. Based on these assessments, IL services and support should be provided to the youth.

Figure 4. Comparison of Independent Living Services Provided in FY 2018, Maine and United States



Due to the way that Maine has constructed the “NYTD Independent Living Checklist” in the MACWIS system, we were unable to validate most of the information reported to NYTD for **elements 21- 33**. During the case record review, of the 26 cases that contained NYTD IL services information, 25 of those cases had at least one error in under- or over-reporting of IL services. Because the NYTD service information isn’t tied directly to the narrative (case notes), reviewers were left guessing the reason why the caseworker might have selected to report the services in **elements 21-33**. In particular, Maine will need to review the types of services reported to NYTD for the financial elements (**elements 31- 33**).

We also learned about gaps in the services reported to NYTD. Services provided to youth through in the following contexts are not consistently reported to NYTD:

- Youth who have been discharged from foster care, including youth who receive services from the Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT));
- Youth who receive Education and Training Vouchers;
- Youth who are participating in contracted services, including Opportunity Passport (budget and financial management- **element 25**) and Jobs for Maine’s Graduates (JMG) (career preparation- **element 23**);
- Services offered and supported by Maine’s teen conferences; and
- Services provided to youth pursuant to a Tribal agreement.

We also ask the state to review to what extent IL services are provided by the foster parents or in other caregiving settings are being reported to NYTD.

Feedback From Stakeholders Regarding the Independent Living Program

In general, stakeholders from various perspectives reported similar opportunities and challenges in the state's IL program. Across the interviews with child welfare leaders in the state, it was clear that youth voice was foundational to the program and program improvement efforts. Furthermore, the state is commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) to understand the state's functioning and to assist caseworkers in improving how they serve families and youth. Most stakeholders agreed that the state has a long-standing commitment to the specialized needs of transition-age youth. The use of the "V9" Agreement (extended foster care) was an important resource that transition-age youth need. Almost all stakeholders agreed that youth need to be educated about the benefits and supports available to fully participate in the V9 program.

Stakeholder and state leadership generally agreed on the challenges in the state: housing and transportation support, meeting the needs of youth/ young adults in rural areas, and quality family-based foster care settings for youth. Concerns about the impact of waitlists and delays in services were identified by stakeholders as a barrier to providing timely services to youth. Some stakeholders identified YLAT as an important aspect of Peer Support and wished the state would continue to build on peer support efforts, specifically in post-secondary environments.

When the NYTD team conducted the focus group with young adults in Maine, similar issues were identified by the youth. Of particular note, youth expressed that affordable housing, housing programs, and housing supports that cause them to have to leave their home communities were problematic for them and a barrier to participation. (Programs and affordable housing are only available in certain parts of the state.) Young adults indicated a need for more services to continue to be developed and often expressed a need for services to be available for a longer period of time.

Some youth in the focus group made note of the difference in their relationship with their caseworker versus the YTS worker. A few youth noted that they had turnover in their caseworker, but that the YTS was a consistent person in their life. However, no matter who the worker was that the young adult highlighted as important- one factor emerged- that they were a stable presence in their life. Young adults found adults who were non-judgmental and supportive of their goals to be critical to their trust and engagement with the professional. Underscoring the importance of transportation, one youth called their YTS their "Uber," highlighting how important it was to be able to get to places to access resources and get supports.

Another resource the young adults highlighted was Opportunity Passport Program, the financial literacy program in the state and the dedicated matched saving account. Youth reported that the ability to have a match up to \$1,000 a year as a critical concrete resource that helped them attend school and weather emergencies.

The most important issue to the youth and young adults was securing a Driver's License and access to reliable transportation. State leadership reported that due to youth advocacy efforts over the years to gain greater access to services and supports to obtain a Driver's License, programs had been put into place. Youth may now have Driver's education classes paid for by the state agency. However, the youth in focus groups reported that they felt little progress had been made on the issue. One youth may not have been aware that the state would pay for his driving lessons and listed the cost as a barrier. Another youth said that she didn't have access to a car to practice driving. However, the real barrier was the ongoing high cost of insurance. It was noted that matched savings accounts through Opportunity Passport could cover costs associated with driving lessons or insurance, but it generally wasn't enough money over the year to offset the high cost of insurance. When state leadership and others were asked how many youth in the state have a Driver's License or how many individuals has accessed the resources for Driver's License, they did not know.

Youth also stated that they know and are educated about the fact that they have health insurance until age 26 and how to use their insurance, MaineCare. Interestingly, the young adults noted that there are few providers who will take the insurance and that it does not cover glasses or dental care after age 21. One youth noted that MaineCare "will only cover you to stop you from dying."

In all cases, stakeholders affirmed that they wanted to know more about NYTD, what the state was reporting for NYTD data, and how that information was used. Stakeholders also suggested they could be a support to the NYTD efforts and were willing to be a resource. Stakeholders seemed eager to continue their partnership with the state in system improvement efforts to continue to build a stronger array of services for youth.

2.2.3 Data Collection on Youth Outcomes **(General Requirements 2–4; Elements 34, 35 and 37–58)**

States are required to collect outcomes information using the survey questions listed in Appendix B of the NYTD regulation on a *baseline population* of youth in foster care at age 17 and a *follow-up population* cohort of 19- and 21-year-old youth. While the NYTD survey questions are listed in the NYTD regulation, states are responsible for crafting a survey instrument and selecting a method for administering the survey. The NYTD Review documents and assesses the state's efforts to administer the NYTD survey appropriately, from invitation to survey completion, to ensure that outcomes data are collected accurately and that the state's outcomes data collection methods reflect best practices in survey administration and youth engagement. During the onsite review, we discussed Maine's process for administering the baseline and follow-up surveys, including the state's efforts to locate and engage youth in this outcomes data collection effort.

General Information on the State's Survey Effort

Overall, Maine has embraced the data collection effort required as part of NYTD. The state has a long history of seeking youth voice to understand their experiences and understand their outcomes. However, because the state has a small population of youth, every youth completing

the survey becomes critically important to meet the state's participation rates at ages 19 and age 21. Of note, we selected an earlier reporting period for the case record sample to determine what efforts might have been made at age 19 to help the state engage the youth in the survey at age 21.³ Based on the small number of records in the case record review sample, youth who left the foster care system after age 18 were consistently unable to be located at age 19 and age 21. Conversely, youth who continued to be connected to services were able to be surveyed at follow-up (age 19 and 21). Of the 21 case records reviewed for survey information, 15 files contained information on how the youth was contacted and how the survey was administered. Many of the recommended best practices have already been implemented in Maine's administration of the survey (such as clear instructions, length of time of the survey, information about confidentiality of the survey, and contact information prompts).

While a few changes will need to be made to the state's survey instrument, overall it is in compliance with the NYTD regulation and guidance.

Data Collection on Youth Outcomes at Age 17

Baseline surveys are most often completed by OCFS caseworkers, but in some situations may be administered by the Youth Transition Specialist. The state conducts the survey either over the phone or in person. Youth also have the option to complete the survey independently. Of note, the state administers the survey to every 17-year old in Maine's foster care system and the state asks additional questions (using the NYTD Plus Survey).

When a youth turns age 17 in the state of Maine, the caseworker receives an "alert" or "tickler" that the youth needs to take the survey within 45 days. The information for eligibility in the baseline population is based only on an open removal episode in MACWIS. The caseworker then administers the survey and the caseworker goes to the NYTD Survey Screen to enter the survey information.

On the NYTD Survey screen the caseworker must select the "Reporting Status." The drop-down options under Reporting Status include those required in [element 34](#) and the state added the additional option of "youth in trial home placement." The worker selects if the youth is ineligible for the survey based on their placement type (trial home visits or incarceration). For NYTD, eligibility for the baseline is dependent on the youth being in foster care (using the federal definition of foster care at 45 CFR 1355.20) at any time during the 45-days after their 17th birthday (in a baseline year). Youth who are in facilities primarily for the detention of adjudicated youth and youth who are in "trial home visit" are not considered to be in foster care for the purposes of NYTD. Because the state is identifying eligible youth based on removal

³ We used the 2016A file for the case record review for the survey at follow-up (age 19). We will be able to pull records to look at Maine's survey engagement efforts at age 21. We sought to investigate if there was a relationship between if the youth took the survey at age 19 and age 21. For example, if the youth was engaged in the survey at age 19 were there opportunities that were missed if they didn't take the survey at age 21? We wanted to provide any information possible to the state to help improve the state's engagement, location, and other strategies for the NYTD survey efforts.

information in MACWIS only (and not removal and placement), it is up to caseworkers using the “Reporting Status” to determine if the youth is to be surveyed as part of the baseline as required by NYTD. Due to the importance of establishing the baseline correctly, the state of Maine will need to reexamine its process for inclusion in the baseline for accurate reporting to NYTD. In addition, for each youth who takes the survey, the caseworker must select the correct survey participation reason (Outcomes Reporting Status) including “participated” and “declined.” Currently, there is no relationship between the responses to the survey questions and the “Outcome Reporting Status,” causing errors in the file (for example, if a youth declines all the questions in the survey, they should be reported as “declined” not “participated”).

Table 2. Summary of Baseline Survey Effort To Date in Maine

Cohort 1 at Age 17	Cohort 2 at Age 17	Cohort 3 at Age 17*
55%	76%	61%
	51 out of 67	36 out of 59

Data Collection on Youth Outcomes at Ages 19 and 21

The state uses the same process to administer the survey at follow-up. If the young adult’s case is still open to OCFS, the caseworker or Youth Transition Specialist administers the survey. If the case is closed, the contact information is used to contact the youth. Of note, the state must use the guidance provided for **element 36** (foster care status- outcome) to report foster care status after the age of 18.

Across cohorts of young adults eligible to participate in follow-up survey, the state continues to struggle to survey youth who have left foster care. We know the state offers extended foster care and is always working to improve and strengthen the program. As more youth participate in extended foster care it creates the opportunity to survey more young people. We recognize that state is interested in the outcome of the young adults they survey, as evidenced by the additional information the state is collecting using the NYTD Plus Survey.

Table 3. Summary of Follow-Up Survey Effort To Date in Maine

Reporting Period	Participation Rate for Youth in Care	Participation Rate for Youth Discharged From Care
Cohort 1 at Age 19 (FFY 13)	79% 19 out of 24	31% 9 out of 29
Cohort 1 at Age 21 (FFY 15)	60% 6 out of 10	25% 10 out of 39
Cohort 2 at Age 19 (FFY 14)	90% 20 out of 21	23% 6 out of 26
Cohort 2 at Age 21 (FFY17)	79% 11 out of 14	14% 5 out of 35

Table 4. Comparison of Cohort 1 Youth Outcomes at Ages 17, 19, and 21 in Maine and United States

Outcomes (Cohort 1)	Age 17 Maine	Age 17 Nation	Age 19 Maine	Age 19 Nation	Age 21 Maine	Age 21 Nation
Employed full- or part-time	7%	13%	21%	34%	56%	50%
Receiving public assistance	NA	NA	33%	36%	40%	38%
Finished high school or GED	0%	8%	64%	54%	81%	65%
Attending school	93%	94%	46%	54%	19%	31%
Referred for substance abuse treatment	18% (lifetime)	27% (lifetime)	11% (past 2 years)	15% (past 2 years)	6% (past 2 years)	10% (past 2 years)
Incarcerated	24% (lifetime)	36% (lifetime)	11% (past 2 years)	22% (past 2 years)	6% (past 2 years)	22% (past 2 years)
Had children	7% (lifetime)	7% (lifetime)	7% (past 2 years)	12% (past 2 years)	13% (past 2 years)	27% (past 2 years)
Homeless	27% (lifetime)	16% (lifetime)	14% (past 2 years)	20% (past 2 years)	19% (past 2 years)	28% (past 2 years)
Connection to adult	87%	93%	82%	90%	100%	87%
Medicaid coverage	88%	83%	86%	72%	75%	66%

Table 5. Comparison of Cohort 2 Youth Outcomes at Ages 17 and 19 in Maine and United States

Outcomes (Cohort 2)	Age 17 Maine	Age 17 Nation	Age 19 Maine	Age 19 Nation	Age 21 Maine	Age 21 Nation
Employed full- or part-time	14%	14%	42%	40%	56%	57%
Receiving public assistance	NA%	NA%	50%	31%	40%	32%
Finished high school or GED	0%	5%	58%	58%	81%	70%
Attending school	98%	93%	54%	52%	19%	28%
Referred for substance abuse treatment	24% (lifetime)	27% (lifetime)	19% (past 2 years)	14% (past 2 years)	6% (past 2 years)	11% (past 2 years)
Incarcerated	20% (lifetime)	32% (lifetime)	8% (past 2 years)	19% (past 2 years)	6% (past 2 years)	19% (past 2 years)
Had children	4% (lifetime)	5% (lifetime)	0% (past 2 years)	10% (past 2 years)	13% (past 2 years)	23% (past 2 years)
Homeless	31% (lifetime)	17% (lifetime)	23% (past 2 years)	20% (past 2 years)	19% (past 2 years)	29% (past 2 years)
Connection to adult	96%	93%	85%	89%	100%	87%
Medicaid coverage	92%	85%	96%	77%	75%	70%

2.2.4 Sampling and File Reporting (General Requirements 5 and 6)

The state does not sample; therefore General Requirement #5 is not applicable to Maine.

Since the state began collecting and reporting data to NYTD in 2010, the state has consistently failed to provide files to ACF that were error-free. When files are submitted, the system checks for a logical relationship to exist between the services data elements and the outcomes data elements. We believe the relationship Maine created to report the data between the services data elements (**elements 20 to 33 to element 14**) and the outcomes data elements (**elements 37 to 58 to element 34**) does not support reporting record-level files error-free as required by NYTD regulations and guidance.

For services data, the state received Internal Consistency Check (ICC) #4 and/ or Internal Consistency Check #5 flags for the 2011A, 2011B, 2013A, 2013B, 2014B, 2015A, and 2015B files. We believe this is due to the lack of the logical relationship that should exist between

elements 14 to 33 (services data elements). Older file transmissions from Maine show records with the foster care status reported as “yes” and some services (**elements 20- 33**) reported as blank (if any element between **elements 20-33** is reported as “yes” none of the **elements from 15 to 33** can be blank). (Please see General Requirement #6 in Appendix C for examples of file reporting errors).

We believe that the technical calls during the pre-onsite phase of the review and discussions during the onsite review have helped clarify how the state can create the logic and develop reporting procedures consistent with NYTD requirements.

2.2.5 Data Quality, Analysis and Use (General Requirement 7)

Maine is using NYTD system tools such as NDRU and the NYTD Portal for quality assurance purposes before submitting files to ACF.

Transition aged youth are reviewed as part of Maine’s Quality Assurance system which uses the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) review process. The state had also done special reviews of young adults in extended foster care (V9 Agreements). As part of its Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system, Maine is including NYTD and youth transition specific review questions.

The state regularly meets with youth and develops policy based on concerns and feedback from youth. The state also works to develop services and supports based on needs of youth who remain connected to the system. Several types of services were developed as a direct result of feedback from youth.

Of note, the state is collecting baseline data from all youth who turn age 17 in foster care regardless of whether it is a NYTD baseline data collection year. The state is also using the “NYTD Plus” survey which asks additional questions. It is important for the information collected to be disseminated and used. This additional data collection offers a unique opportunity to analyze outcome data for all youth in foster care and should be the first resource for CQI and other data requests.

We strongly encourage the state to establish a feedback loop with young people, local agencies and other stakeholders so that they can learn how NYTD data can inform their understanding of the experiences of young people in Maine’s foster care system. In order to further the state’s efforts to analyze and use NYTD data as part of a CQI framework, we recommend the following strategies:

- Integrating NYTD data with other administrative data sets like AFCARS.

- Analyzing NYTD data in conjunction with what else is known about services provided to youth (e.g., services not paid for by Chafee, the difference in services paid for by the Chafee program versus provided by local mentoring programs, workforce development programs, etc.) to determine which services (type/dosage) really lead to improved outcomes.
- Create an evaluation plan using the additional data collected to conduct analyses to identify different rates of response among youth by demographic variables and by administration method (e.g., surveys conducted by phone versus surveys completed online).
- Conducting analysis of service data by locality to determine gaps in services or service needs.
- Disseminating NYTD data to state staff, youth, service providers, courts, foster parents and other stakeholders.
- Continuing efforts to develop and use a youth-specific tool to conduct case reviews for youth over the age of 18;
- Developing ways to measure whether policy and procedural changes actually facilitate improved access to services, resources, and supports; and
- Developing performance measures using NYTD data to raise visibility of practice issues impacting transitioning youth.

We also strongly encourage the state to engage young people as stakeholders in these CQI efforts by consulting with YLAT and other youth. Due to Maine's strong use of youth-adult partnership, the potential to collect data important to YLAT remains an important opportunity.

3. Conclusion and Next Steps

3.1 Conclusion

As noted in Section 1.2, the NYTD Review is a comprehensive evaluation of a state's methodology for collecting and reporting NYTD data. This report summarizes NYTD findings including the extent to which the state is meeting all of the NYTD requirements and is collecting and reporting high quality data on the 58 NYTD data elements. Demonstrating its commitment to assisting states with accurate and timely NYTD data collection and reporting, the Children's Bureau will work with Maine to assess options for system and business process improvements during the NYTD Improvement Plan phase.

3.2 NYTD Improvement Plan

In support of continuous quality improvement, states must complete and monitor a NYTD improvement plan based on findings from the NYTD Review for any elements/general requirements that receive a rating factor of "3" or lower. The Children's Bureau will provide an improvement plan template for the state's use, but the state may opt to use its own tool for this purpose provided that it conveys the information necessary to monitor the state's action planning and progress. After receipt of this final report, the state should evaluate each general requirement and data element identified as needing correction and determine the length of time it will take to complete the item. Within 30 days of receipt of the final report, the state is to submit the initial improvement plan electronically to the Children's Bureau with estimated dates for completing each action item. The Children's Bureau Regional Office will work with the state to determine whether technical assistance is needed and available to implement the plan. All items in the improvement plan must have a rating of "4" before the plan is considered completed. Once the improvement plan is completed and approved, the Children's Bureau will send a letter to the state acknowledging completion.

Upon receipt of the state's initial improvement plan, the Children's Bureau will review the due dates to ensure the plan will be implemented in a timely manner. The electronic version of the improvement plan is used by the state and the Children's Bureau for tracking changes, progress notes, and the Children's Bureau's approval of completed action items. As changes are made to either the program code or screens, documentation noting the updates must be included with the electronic improvement plan. This may include revised program code or screen shots that reflect the changes made to the system.

The state must provide semiannual updates of its progress to the Children's Bureau. As updates are received and reviewed, the Children's Bureau will notify the agency of the next improvement plan due date. Please note that the state must summarize its progress in implementing the

NYTD improvement plan in its Annual Progress and Services Report⁴ (APSR) and, if applicable, the state's Advance Planning Document (APD) Update⁵ if changes are being made to the CCWIS.

⁴ Instructions for completing the APSR are published in a program instruction (PI) each year. See <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/laws-policies/policy-program-issuances> for more information or contact your Regional child welfare program specialist for more information.

⁵ Please contact your assigned Division of State Systems analyst for more information or visit <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/state-tribal-info-systems>.

Appendix A. Test Case Findings

As noted in Section 2.1, the Children's Bureau provided test case scenarios to the state on April 11, 2018. The state was able to enter, extract and report these test data from MACWIS on May 5, 2018.

Findings from the test cases were discussed during the final planning call with the state of Maine and during the onsite review.

Test Case 1 Findings:

- **Element 18 (Educational level).** The state incorrectly reported that the highest grade completed by was 11th. The scenario indicates the youth would have completed the 12th grade by the end of the reporting period.

Test Case 2 Findings:

- **Element 19 (Special education).** The state left the response blank. For youth in the served population, the state must report "yes" or "no."
- **Element 25 (Budget and financial management).** The state incorrectly reported that the youth received budget and financial management during the reporting period (the state reported "yes"). However, because the items discussed by the caseworker are related to financial aid and support himself while he attend college, these services should only be reported in element 22 (post-secondary educational support).
- **Element 26 (Housing education and home management training).** The state did not report that the youth received housing education and home management training during the reporting period (the state reported "no"). In the scenario, the caseworker helped the youth find and apply for an apartment.
- **Element 27 (Health education and risk prevention).** The state reported that the youth received this service but there is no information in the scenario that the youth received health education and risk prevention services.
- **Element 30 (Supervised independent living).** The state did not report that the youth was in a supervised independent living placement during the reporting period. The youth's on campus housing is considered to be a supervised independent living placement.
- **Element 32 (Education financial assistance).** The scenario indicates that the youth is receiving ETV, but the state did not report this financial assistance.

Test Case 3 Findings:

- **Element 19 (Special Education).** The state left the response blank. For youth in the served population, the state must report "yes" or "no."

- **Element 34 (Outcomes reporting status).** The state reported “declined.” However, the youth was never approached to take the NYTD survey (it was briefly discussed with him), and therefore should have been reported as “unable to locate/ invite.”
- **Element 35 (Date of outcome data collection).** The state reported May 17, 2017 as the date of outcome data collection, but the response should have been “blank” (this element should be left blank if the youth does not participate in the survey).

Test Case 4 Findings:

- **Element 16 (Federally recognized tribe).** In the scenario, the youth’s membership in a federally recognized tribe was pending. The state was to report “blank” while the membership is pending instead of “yes.”
- **Element 29 (Mentoring).** The state reported the youth received mentoring during the reporting period (“yes” to the mentoring element). The youth did not receive mentoring services that met the definition of mentoring as defined in the NYTD Regulation.
- **Elements 34 – 58.** Elements 34-58 should have been reported as “blank.” These elements should be left “blank” and the information reported in the following reporting period (2018A file).

Test Case 5 Findings:

- **The state was unable to submit this test case. Because the youth is not in foster care, MACWIS does not have the functionality to report NYTD information and services.**

Test Case 6 Findings:

- **In order to submit test case #6, the state reported it in the 2018A reporting period instead of 2017B.**
- **Element 42 (Public financial assistance).** The state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be report when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.
- **Element 43 (Public food assistance).** The state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be report when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.
- **Element 44 (Public housing assistance).** The state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be report when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.

Appendix B. Case Review Findings

As noted in Section 2, the Children’s Bureau drew a random sample of 30 youth records (10 records from each reporting population from the last data file containing information on that population) and provided encrypted youth identification numbers to the state so these records could be made available for review during the onsite review. Maine provided both the electronic records and paper records for these youth in support of the case review. The periods under review were the 2017B file (April 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017) for the services and baseline populations and 2016A file (October 1, 2015 – March 30, 2016)¹ for youth in the follow-up survey. Of the 30 records in the sample, all were reviewed. The list below summarizes the findings from the case review.

Case Record 1 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state reported that the highest level completed by the youth was “9th grade.” The information in the case record indicated that the youth went to college by March, 2015 and therefore the grade reported was incorrect.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state responded “no” to this element. The case record indicates that the youth receives \$10 a day for room and board.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** This element was reported as “no.” The case record (MACWIS client ledger) indicated that the youth received other financial support to help them live independently (youth on own services) and therefore should be reported as “yes” for other financial service.

Case Record 2 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** This element was reported as the last grade completed as “12th.” However, there was a college transcript in the case record.
- **Element 21 (academic record).** This element was reported as “yes” but there was no information on the service. Because the youth was already in college during the period under review they can only receive “post-secondary support; academic support can only be applicable to youth completing secondary education.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** This element was reported as “yes.” The case record did not include any documentation as to the type of post-secondary educational support the youth received. There was, however, documentation about transportation.

¹ In consultation with the state, an earlier reporting period for the follow-up survey was selected. During the case record review, reviewers were able to look at the survey responses for the 2018A period (survey at age 21, October 1, 2017- March 30, 2018) to determine if there were opportunities at the time the survey was taken at age 19 (October 1, 2015- March 30, 2016) to help the state survey the youth at age 21. This ability to “look forward” to the age 21-year old survey was helpful to determine patterns of youth response or non-response.

- **Element 30 (supervised independent living).** This element was reported as “no” by the state. The case record indicated that the youth lived in a college dorm during the entire reporting period.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these question. This element was reported as not applicable (“yes” to element 42 and “no” to elements 43 and 44). These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 3 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** This element was reported as “10th grade.” The MACWIS narrative log indicated on 4/26/17 that the youth completed 11th grade.
- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “no” for this element. There is record of a needs assessment (YTPT) in the case record.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** The state reported “no” for this element. The case record indicated that post-secondary information was provided to the young person as well as support for applying to college, and the young person completed college tours.
- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state reported “no” for this element. The case record indicates that the youth attended classes and received training through the JMG Program.
- **Element 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record indicated that the youth had discussions about the youth’s healthcare provider, but reviewers were unable to determine if this conversation was a service.
- **Element 28 (family support/healthy marriage education).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record had no information that the youth had received family support or healthy marriage education.
- **Element 29 (mentoring).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record showed no evidence that the youth had received mentoring services.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Elements 42 - 44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 4 Findings:

- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record indicated that the use Youth Transition Planning Tool was completed, but not during the reporting period.

- **Element 21 (academic support).** The state reported “yes” for this element. There was no documentation of services provided.
- **Element 24 (employment programs or vocational training).** The state responded “yes” to this element. Information in the case record states that the youth was referred to a vocational rehab coordinator, but was deemed not appropriate for the program. There is no other information to indicate that the youth received these services.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 5 Findings:

- **Element 21 (academic support).** The state reported “yes” to this element. The case record shows that a scheduled discussion about summer classes did not take place due to a management change at the school.
- **Element 24 (employment programs or vocational training).** The state responded “yes” to this element. The case record indicates the youth declined an invitation to participate in vocational rehab and that the youth’s treatment plan discontinued the goal of employment.
- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “yes” to this element. There is no evidence in the case record that the youth received these services.

Case Record 6 Findings:

- **Element 22 (post-secondary education support).** The state responded “yes” to this element. There is no documentation about the actual services that were being provided even though it is clear that the youth received ETV payments (payments should be reported in element 32).
- **Element 29 (mentoring).** The state responded “yes” to this element. There was no documentation in the case record that indicated that the youth received mentoring services.
- **Element 30 (supervised independent living).** The state responded “no” to this element. The youth was living in a dorm during the reporting period.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 7 Findings:

- **Element 14 (foster care status services).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record indicates the youth was in a correctional facility during the entire reporting period and that placement does not count as foster care.
- **Element 17 (adjudicated delinquent).** The state responded “no” to this element. The case record indicated that the youth was involved in an altercation in February and was incarcerated per judicial review orders. The narrative supports that the youth was “adjudicated delinquent.”
- **Element 21 (academic support).** The state responded “yes” to this element. There was no documentation in the case record that supports that the youth received academic support.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary education support).** The state reported “yes” for this item. There was not significant information in the case record narrative to suggest that support or services were provided. The youth was made aware that he would qualify for a tuition waiver in the future.
- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “yes” for this item. Although the case record indicates that there is an IEP and it lists things “to do” under the category career preparation. Services provided by another agency or through an IEP should not be reported to NYTD. There are no other services that were reported under this category.
- **Element 29 (mentoring).** The state reported “yes” for this element. The case record does not include documentation or anything in the narrative that confirms that the youth received mentoring services.

Case Record 8 Findings:

- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The assessment was completed before the reporting period.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information. The state responded “yes” to this element.

Case Record 9 Findings:

- **Element 17 (adjudicated delinquent).** The state responded “no” to this element. The case record indicated that the youth was incarcerated in 2012 likely indicating the youth has a history of adjudication for delinquency.

- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The case record suggests that the assessment took place outside of the reporting period.
- **Element 26 (housing education and home management training).** The state reported “no” on this element. Information in case plan narrative suggests that the youth is receiving these services at the residential placement facility. It was reported in the Child Plan but not to NYTD.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 10 Findings:

- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state responded “no” to this element. The case record indicates that the Youth Transition Planning Tool was completed on 8/31/17 (during the reporting period) but was not reported to NYTD.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** The state responded “no” to this element. The residential treatment plan suggests that the caseworker and placement worked with the youth to research colleges.
- **Element 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case record indicated that the youth and caseworker spoke about self-care to reduce swelling after his wisdom teeth were pulled. The caseworker used the procedure as a tool to talk to the youth about the importance of self-care and healthy behaviors and activities.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 11 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state reported that the highest grade the youth completed was the 9th. The narrative log indicated that as of 3/28/2016 the youth was a senior and was on track to graduate that year.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** The state reported “no” on this element. The case record suggests that the youth was given information and signed up for college tours.

- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “no” on this element. A narrative note suggests that the youth’s foster mother provided budgeting and financial management support. The youth also participated in Opportunity Passport during the reporting period.
- **Element 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include any evidence that the youth received this service.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 12 Findings:

- **Element 5 (sex).** The state reported female as the youth’s sex. The case record indicated that the youth was male as did the birth certificate and all other records.
- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record did not include information on what service was provided.
- **Element 43-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to both). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 13 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state reported that youth completed the 9th grade. The case record indicates that the youth completed the 10th grade.
- **Element 19 (special education).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record indicated that the youth dropped out of school and therefore did not receive services.
- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The case record does not include any information that an IL need assessment was completed.
- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “no” to this element. The case record indicated that the youth received assistance applying for a job and vocational rehab services during the reporting period.
- **Element 24 (employment programs or vocational training).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The case record indicates that the youth applied for vocational rehab services, but had not yet received any services.

Case Record 14 Findings:

- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “yes” on this element. Although the case record indicates that there is an IEP and it lists things “to do” under the category of services. Services provided by another agency or through an IEP should not

be reported to NYTD. There are no other services that were reported under this category.

- **Element 24 (employment programs or vocational training).** The state responded “yes” for this item. Although the case record indicates that there is an IEP and it lists things “to do” under the category of services. Services provided by another agency or through an IEP should not be reported to NYTD. There are no other services that were reported under this category.
- **Element 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state responded “yes” to this element. The case record does not include documentation that the received these services.
- **Element 28 (family support/healthy marriage education).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record suggests that the youth did not receive these services during the reporting period.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 15 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state responded that the 12th grade was the highest grade that the youth completed. The transcript in the case record indicated that the youth completed some college.
- **Element 21 (academic support).** This element was reported as “yes” but there was no information on the service. Because the youth was already in college during the period under review they can only receive “post-secondary support; academic support can only be applicable to youth completing secondary education.
- **Element 30 (supervised independent living).** The state reported “no” on this element. The youth was living independently during the reporting period.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what

substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 16 Findings:

- **Element 30 (supervised independent living).** The state responded “no” on this element. The MACWIS screen reported the youth was living on her own. This was not reported to NYTD.
- **Element 32 (education financial assistance).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case files indicates that the youth received payments for “school related materials” during the reporting period.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 17 Findings:

- **No errors found.**

Case Record 18 Findings:

- **Element 21 (academic support).** The state reported “yes” to this element. The case record indicates the youth was provided tutoring but it was unclear if it was provided by the IEP or the child welfare agency. There was no payment records in MACWIS for the tutoring.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The case record has no information on services provided under this category to the youth.
- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include any mention of career preparation services during the reporting period.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The stated reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Elements 42-44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 19 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state responded that the highest grade the youth completed was the 9th. The case record indicates that the youth was a senior at the time of the interview. The youth completed the 11th grade.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state responded “yes” to this element. We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD. A clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that this service category was reported to NYTD. There is no indication that the clothing allowance was paid for by Chafee. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 20 Findings:

- **Element 19 (special education).** The state reported “no” on this element. The case record includes the youth’s IEP and information that they attend a special school that provides day treatment for special education.
- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case file includes a copy of the YTPT conducted during the reporting period.
- **Elements 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state reported “no” on this element. The case record indicates that the caseworker had discussions about losing weight by continuing with cross-country running and medication management. The caseworker also facilitated transportation to a provider to discuss medication.
- **Elements 28 (family support/ healthy marriage education).** The state responded “yes” to this element. The case record did not include any evidence of family support/healthy marriage education.
- **Elements 29 (mentoring).** The state responded “yes” to these elements. The case record did not include any evidence of mentoring.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The state reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state reported “no” on this element. The case record stated that the youth received money to pay the driver’s education fee. The youth registered, enrolled, and started driver’s education during the reporting period.
- **Elements 42 – 44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Case Record 21 Findings:

- **No errors found.**

Case Record 22 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state reported that the highest grade the youth achieved was 10th. The report card in the in the case record indicated that the youth had completed the 11th grade.
- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state reported “yes” on this element. The case record indicated that the needs assessment was completed after the reporting period.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The stated reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.

Case Record 23 Findings:

- **No errors found.**

Case Record 24 Findings:

- **Element 27 (health education and risk prevention).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include any supporting information about these services.
- **Element 28 (family support/healthy marriage education).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not provide any supporting information that these services were provided.
- **Element 31 (room and board financial assistance).** The stated reported “yes” for this element. Because the youth is under the age of 18, room and board payments should not be reported to NYTD. See Appendix C for more information.
- **Elements 42 – 44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“declined” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.
- **Element 53 (marriage at child’s birth).** The state responded “not applicable” to this element. The youth “declined” to respond, but should not have been asked this question because the youth did not have a child. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.
- **Elements 56.** The state reported “not applicable” on these elements. The case record indicates that the youth responded “yes” to these elements. The youth should not have answered these questions as they answered “no” to the prior question. Element 56 is only applicable to youth who answer “yes” to element 55.
- **Element 57-58.** The state reported “not applicable” on these elements. The case record indicates that the youth responded “yes” to these elements. The youth should not have answered these questions as they answered “no” to element 55 (other health insurance coverage). Elements 57 and 58 are only applicable to youth who answer “yes” to element 55 and element 56.

Case Record 25 Findings:

- **No errors found.**

Case Record 26 Findings:

- **Element 20 (independent living needs assessment).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case record did not include evidence that the needs assessment was completed during the reporting period.
- **Element 21 (academic support).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record indicated that there were conversations about GED and tutoring, but the youth did not follow through.
- **Element 24 (employment programs or vocational training).** The state responded “yes” to this element. The case record does not provide any supporting evidence that this services was provided.
- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “yes” to this element. The case record does not provide any supporting evidence that this services was provided.
- **Element 26 (housing education and home management training).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case records indicates that there was a conversation about pending eviction, but does not mention any services.
- **Element 33 (other financial assistance).** The state reported “no” on this element. The case record stated that the youth received money to pay the driver’s education fee. The youth registered, enrolled, and started driver’s education during the reporting period.
- **Element 34 (outcomes reporting status).** The state responded that the youth “participated,” but all of the response are blank. Therefore the case should have reported “declined.”
- **Element 35 (date of outcome data collection).** The youth “declined” to participate in the survey but the state reported a date of outcomes data collection. If the youth does not participate the state is report this element blank.

Case Record 27 Findings:

- **Element 22 (post-secondary educational support).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case record narrative log indicated that the caseworker worked with the youth to complete the FAFSA, determine colleges of interest, and outlined the steps to attend college.
- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “no” on this element. The case record received the Opportunity Passport Program during the reporting period.

Case Record 28 Findings:

- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include any information to support that the youth received this service.

Case Record 29 Findings:

- **Element 25 (budget and financial management).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not provide any information that the youth received this service.

Case Record 30 Findings:

- **Element 18 (education level).** The state reported that the youth completed the 10th grade. The case record indicated that the highest grade the youth completed was the 12th grade.
- **Element 22 (post-secondary education support).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include information that the youth received this service.
- **Element 23 (career preparation).** The state responded “yes” on this element. The case record does not include information that the youth received this service.
- **Elements 42 – 44.** The youth was asked and responded to these questions (“no” to all). This element was reported as not applicable. These questions should not have been asked of the youth because the youth was still in foster care. The state should not change the answers of a youth to conform to NYTD Reporting.

Appendix C. NYTD General Requirements and Elements – Final Ratings and Findings

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1: The state reports information on all youth in the served population findings:

Rating: 2

In order to implement the reporting of the Independent Living services paid for or provided by Maine, the state created the “Independent Living Service Checklist” screen in MACWIS. The “Independent Living Service Checklist” is an independent screen that is required to be completed by the caseworker for all children over the age of 14 who are in an open custody case (foster care) in Maine. Each of the 13 NYTD Independent Living service categories (**elements 20- 33**) are reported if the case worker “checks” the box next to the NYTD service category. Maine also added additional information regarding the definitions of the NYTD IL Services categories.

There is an “Independent Living Service Checklist” for each 6-month reporting period. The “Independent Living Service Checklist” is created at the beginning of the reporting period and near the end of the reporting period, the caseworker starts to receive prompts that remind them that they need to complete the screen. The caseworker can also select “No Services Provided During this Reporting Period.”

MACWIS will not allow a worker to close the case without completing the “Independent Living Services Checklist.” After the reporting period, the “Independent Living Service Checklist” is locked and no further information can be entered or changed.

The caseworker should be completing the “Independent Living Services Checklist” based on the services provided by them, the foster parent, or by other case planning agencies. Because access to MACWIS is limited, it is the caseworker’s responsibility to gather and enter the information.

During the case record review, we found little documentation to support the services provided to youth. Of the 30 case records reviewed, 26 cases had services reported (**elements 20- 33**) for a total of 102 total services. However, reviewers were unable to determine any information about the type of service provided, when, and by whom for 47 of those 102 services (22 out of 26 cases). Twelve of the 26 cases included services that were provided but were not reported to NYTD (for a total of 22 additional services provided, but not reported). Overall, 25 of the 26 cases with services had either at least one error in under- or over-reporting of services.

In addition, we learned that the state does not have a consistent process for collecting or reporting services data on:

- Youth who have been discharged from foster care (refer to test case #5 findings) including youth who receive services from Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT) (see **NYTD Q&A: 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.10, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, and 1.39**);
- Youth who receive Education and Training Vouchers;
- Youth who are participating in contracted services, including Opportunity Passport (budget and financial management- **element 25**) and Jobs for Maine's Graduates (JMG) (career preparation- **element 23**);
- Services offered and supported by Maine's teen conferences; and
- Services to youth pursuant to a Tribal agreement.

As a result, this requirement and all independent living services data elements (20-33) are rated a "2."

2: The state reports information on all youth in the baseline population findings:

Rating: 2

In Maine, every youth with an open removal in MACWIS who attains age 17 is invited to participate in the NYTD Plus Survey (this includes additional questions asked by the state). Maine runs a nightly job that creates a "candidate table" of youth who have had their 17th birthday and are in an open removal. The caseworker is sent a message (tickler) that indicates that the NYTD Baseline Survey needs to be completed within 45 days. If the survey is not completed by the 25th day, another tickler is sent to the case worker and their supervisor. The MACWIS ticklers are sent as a message displayed on a caseworker's worklist as a reminder of tasks they need to complete (we note that there are numerous ticklers on the worklist). The caseworker should contact the youth to participate in the survey. The caseworker has access to a paper copy of the survey, but the answers from the paper survey must be entered into the MACWIS NYTD electronic survey screen to be reported.

On the NYTD Survey screen, the caseworker selects the "Reporting Status." The drop-down options under reporting status include those required in **element 34** and adds the additional option of "youth in trial home placement." Notably, the caseworker must also select "participated" from the "Reporting Status" in addition to entering the survey responses for youth who have participated (a youth is considered to have participated if they have provided one valid response option to any of the survey questions; conversely, a youth who does not provide one valid response option should be reported as "declined") (See **NYTD Q&A 2.51**). As seen in case record #26, the state reported that the youth "participated" in the survey for **element 34**, but the youth declined to provide at least one valid response (therefore the state should have reported declined). As required, the state is reporting to NYTD "late" surveys (a "late" survey is one where the youth participated in the survey but the state failed to meet the 45-day timeframe after their 17th birthday). In Cohort 3, FY 2017, Maine had 48 youth participate but 9 were late surveys (with a range from 46 to 114 days after turning 17).

For NYTD, eligibility for the baseline is dependent on the youth being in foster care (using the federal definition of foster care at 45 CFR 1355.20) at any time during the 45-days after their 17th birthday (in a baseline year). Youth who are in facilities primarily for the detention of adjudicated youth and youth who are in "trial home visit" are not considered to be in foster care for the purposes of NYTD. Because the state is providing eligible youth based on removal information in MACWIS only, it is up to caseworkers using the "Reporting Status" to determine if the youth is in the baseline. Furthermore, there is no relationship between the survey questions and the "Reporting Status," causing errors in the file.

The state must also have a process to identify youth who enter or exit foster care on or after their 17th birthday (looking at the 45 day timeframe). Because MACWIS does not take into consideration the placement type of the youth to determine the baseline, a caseworker might error in surveying youth who are not *currently* in the baseline population. More concerning, if these youth enter the NYTD baseline population from an ineligible placement (trial home visit or facility designed for the detention of adjudicated youth), they should then be surveyed while in foster care but the caseworker may not know that they are now eligible.

Lastly, the state is to report baseline records during the correct reporting period during the period of submission that corresponds with the youth's 17th birthday or the reporting submission that corresponds with the reporting period in which the youth participated in the survey (for youth who turn age 17 within 45 days from the end of the reporting period) (see 45 CFR 1356.83(d)) and (**NYTD Q&A 1.42, 2.56, 2.60**). The state has stated they will work to report youth in the correct reporting period.

Due to the process that Maine has constructed to determine eligibility for the baseline, we cannot accurately assess if the state is surveying all eligible baseline youth; therefore, this item is rated as a "2."

3: The state reports information on all youth in the follow-up population findings:

Rating: 2

The follow-up population is comprised of youth who reach their 19th or 21st birthday and participated in data collection as part of the baseline population (45 CFR 1356.81(c)). For each youth in the follow-up population, the state agency must collect outcomes data (**elements 34-58**) during the reporting period of the youth's 19th and 21st birthday (45 CFR 1356.82(a)(3)).

During a follow-up year, the state determines who is eligible to take the survey. Many young adults in Maine remain connected to state services through the V9 Agreement (extended foster care). Because these youths have monthly contact with the caseworker at OCFS, they are able to be surveyed by the caseworker. For other young adults in the follow-up survey who are not in extended foster care, the state uses the contact information in the MACWIS system to try and contact the youth. Per policy, when a case closes, updated contact information should be added to MACWIS. In addition, the state asks the youth in the baseline and the follow-up survey about contact information.

Because of the struggles Maine has experienced with engaging young adults in the follow-up population, specifically those who are no longer connected to the foster care system, this item is rated as a "2."

4: The state implements an appropriate survey methodology to collect youth outcome data findings:

Rating: 3

Maine surveys every youth in foster care at age 17; and the surveys are generally completed by caseworkers or Youth Transition Specialists either in person or over the phone. The state also uses the NYTD Plus Survey where the state asks additional and/or follow-up questions to the NYTD required questions. Caseworkers and Youth Transition Specialists can also use a paper copy of the survey to give to youth who prefer to complete the survey themselves. The same process is used to survey youth in the follow-up population.

The state does employ instructions regarding the purpose of the survey, information on confidentiality, and how long it will take to complete the survey. The state has also customized the survey to refer to TANF (**element 42**) and MaineCare (**element 54**) as appropriate in survey questions. The paper survey does use “skip” logic to help youth answer only the questions appropriate to them. The survey also asks youth to provide contact information (phone number, mailing address, and email) and the information should be added to MACWIS.

Once the survey is completed, the information must be entered into MACWIS to be reported. Of the 21 case records reviewed for survey information, 15 files contained information on how the youth was contacted and how the survey was administered. We found 4 copies of the survey in the case file.

When reviewing the survey screens in MACWIS and the paper survey, the following minor issues were identified:

- **Elements 42-44** are asked of all youth. These questions should only be asked of those youth who are no longer in foster care.
- **Element 45**: The state will need to reorder this question to follow the sequence in the NYTD regulation.
- **Element 49**: On the MACWIS survey at baseline, the state is asking the youth if they were homeless in the last two years.
- **Element 54 and 55**: In MACWIS and on the paper baseline and follow-up survey the state’s choice for “Don’t Know” is “do not know.” Per NYTD, the response must be “do not know.”
- **Elements 56-58**: In MACWIS and on the paper baseline and follow-up survey the state will need to add “Don’t Know” and remove the option of “not applicable.”

We encourage the state to build on its survey methodology and consider the following recommendations:

- Develop a policy **element 34** (outcomes reporting status) to ensure consistent reporting.
- Review the instructions and the prompts to ensure they are youth-friendly and accurate (i.e. the length of time to take the survey and information about confidentiality).
- Consider incentives, especially for youth who are no longer in foster care.

Due to the minor issues with the survey, this item is rated as a “3.”

5: The state follows ACF’s sampling procedures (*applicable to states opting to sample only*) findings:

Rating: N/A

This general requirement does not apply to Maine as the state did not opt to sample.

6: The state reports NYTD data files following ACF’s specifications findings:

Rating: 2

Since the state began collecting and reporting data to NYTD in 2010, the state has consistently failed to provide files to ACF that were error-free. We believe the relationship between the service data elements (**elements 20 to 33 to element 14**) and the outcome data elements (**elements 37 to 58 to element 34**) does not support reporting record-level files according to NYTD regulations and guidance.

For services data, the state received Internal Consistency Check (ICC) #4 and/ or Internal Consistency Check #5 flags for the 2011A, 2011B, 2013A, 2013B, 2014B, 2015A, and 2015B files. We believe this is due to the lack of the logical relationship that should exist between **elements 14 to 33** (services data elements). Older file transmissions from Maine show records with the foster care status reported as “yes” and some services (**elements 20- 33**) reported as blank (if any element between **elements 20-33** is reported as “yes” none of the **elements from 15 to 33** can be blank).

To fix the ICC #4 and ICC #5 issue, Maine changed the extraction code program to comply with the NYTD standards. The state changed the code to determine if the “No services provided during the reporting period” check box on the MACWIS NYTD screen is checked, then the **elements 14 – 33** are set to blank. However, the 2017B file (#2859) had one youth where the ICC #5 error was generated because foster care status (**element 14**) was answered ‘no’ and **elements 20-33** were also set to ‘no’ (because the youth did not receive a service during the reporting period the record should not have been reported to NYTD or **elements 14-33** should be reported as blank if the youth was in the survey population).

We also found a lack of a logical relationship between the outcome reporting status (**element 34**) and the survey questions (**elements 37 to 58**). To provide examples, the following issues were found during a review of the record for the Maine case record review:

- For a 2017B baseline youth, the outcomes reporting status (**element 34**) was reported as blank. Youth in the baseline must have an outcome reporting status.
- For another 2017B baseline youth, the outcomes reporting status (**element 34**) was reported as “participated” but all survey answers (**elements 37 to 58**) were reported with blanks. A youth is considered “participated” if one of the survey questions was answered either “yes” or “no.”

- For a follow-up youth in the 2018A file (#2969), **elements 34 to 58** were blank. Youth in the follow-up population must have information for **element 34** and **36** to be in compliance.

In addition to the 2018A file with the missing information on the youth in the follow-up population, the 2015A and 2016B were also missing information on the survey elements.

Due to the technical challenges Maine has experienced in transmitting error-free files for NYTD, this item is rated as a “2.”

7: The state conducts quality assurance to ensure NYTD information can be analyzed and used findings: Rating: 2

Maine is using NYTD system tools such as NDRU and the NYTD Portal for quality assurance purposes before submitting files to ACF.

Transition aged youth, ages 14-18, when randomly selected, are reviewed as part of Maine’s Quality Assurance system which uses the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) review process. The state had also done special reviews of youth in extended foster care (V9 Agreements) and shared the results of the reviews to with leadership, and managers. As part of its CQI system, Maine is including NYTD and youth transition specific review questions.

In 2016, Maine conducted a statewide, in-depth survey of youth as part of the CFSR Statewide Assessment. This information was used to provide information to stakeholders. However, there have been no recent efforts to provide feedback to stakeholders and it is unclear how NYTD and NYTD Plus was used as part of these efforts.

The state regularly meets with youth and develops policy back on concerns and feedback from youth. The state also works to develop services and supports based on needs of youth who remain connected to the system. Several service streams are a direct result of feedback from youth.

Of note, the state is collecting baseline data from all youth who turn age 17 in foster care regardless of whether it is a NYTD baseline data collection year. The state is also using the “NYTD Plus” survey which asks additional important questions. It is important for the information collected to be disseminated and used. This additional data collection offers a unique opportunity to analyze outcome data for all youth in foster care and should be the first resource for CQI and other data requests.

We strongly encourage the state to establish a feedback loop with young people, local agencies and other stakeholders so that they can learn how NYTD data can inform their understanding of the experiences of young people in Maine’s foster care system. In order to further the state’s efforts to analyze and use NYTD data as part of a CQI framework, we recommend the following strategies:

- Integrating NYTD data with other administrative data sets like AFCARS.
- Analyzing NYTD data in conjunction with what else is known about services provided to youth (e.g., services not paid for by Chafee, the difference in services from those paid for versus provided by local mentoring programs, workforce development programs, etc.) to determine which services (type/dosage) really lead to improved outcomes.
- Create an evaluation plan using the additional data collected to conduct analyses to identify different rates of response to youth by demographic variables and by administration method (e.g., surveys conducted by phone versus surveys completed online).
- Conducting analysis of service data by locality to determine gaps in services or service needs.
- Disseminating NYTD data to state staff, youth, service providers, courts, foster parents and other stakeholders.
- Continuing efforts to develop and use a youth-specific tool to conduct case reviews for youth over the age of 18;
- Develop measurement to ensure policies and procedures changes actually facilitate access to services, resources, and supports; and
- Developing performance measures using NYTD data to raise visibility of practice issues impacting transitioning youth.

We also strongly encourage the state to engage young people as stakeholders in these CQI efforts by consulting with YLAT and other youth. Due to Maine's strong use of youth-adult partnership, the potential to collect data important to YLAT remains an important opportunity.

Because the state does not have a process to ensure the data collected by NYTD is accurate, complete, timely, and consistent this Item is rated as a "2." We also urge the state to embed NYTD Plus information into all aspects of programming and CQI.

DATA ELEMENTS

1. State findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

2. Report Date findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

3. Record Number findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

4. Date of birth findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

Of the 29 reviews for documentation, 29 records had a copy of the birth certificates or other official government document in the file to establish the date of birth.

5. Sex findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

Case Record Review: The information on the birth certificate in case record #12 indicates that the youth is male. The state reported “female” for this record.

6. Race: American Indian or Alaska Native findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

7. Race: Asian findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

8. Race: Black or African American findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

9. Race: Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

10. Race: White findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

11. Race: Unknown findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

12. Race: Declined findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

13. Hispanic or Latino ethnicity findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

14. Foster care status services findings:**Rating: 2**

The state currently determines the foster care status of youth receiving services based on if the youth received a service (**elements 20- 33**). The state must report the foster care status of a youth based on the federal definition of foster care (45 CFR 1355.20) at any time during the reporting period. We also note that since the state has opted into extending foster care after the age of 18, the state will need to report only youth who received a title IV-E maintenance payment as in foster care.

Case Record Review: In case record #7, the youth was in a correctional facility during the entire reporting period. The state reported that the youth was in foster care, but a detention facility does not meet the requirements of an eligible foster care placement.

15. Local agency findings:**Rating: 2**

During the NYTD review, we learned that youth placed in Maine from another state via the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) are not reported with the sending state's local agency code. The state must capture and report the "sending" state's FIPS code for this element. We also note that once the state starts reporting services for youth who are not in foster care, the state will need to report the five-digit FIPS code of the jurisdiction that has primary responsibility for providing services.

16. Federally recognized Tribe findings:**Rating: 2**

The state lacks a method to report "blank" when membership in a federally recognized tribe is still pending verification (73 FR 10346).

Test Case: In test case #4, the state did not report the youth's tribal membership as "pending" as required, as the membership had not been verified.

17. Adjudicated delinquent findings:**Rating: 3**

The state's program code is correctly reporting if the youth was ever adjudicated delinquent. We recommend the state explore creating a text field where a date of the adjudicated delinquency finding occurred.

Case Record Review: In case record #7, the youth was incarcerated during the entire reporting period and information in the case record and narrative supports that the youth is adjudicated delinquent. The state did not report the youth as adjudicated delinquent. In case record #9, the case record supports that the youth had a prior history of adjudication for delinquency. However, the state did not report the youth as adjudicated delinquent.

18. Educational level findings:

Rating: 2

During the NYTD review, we were able to determine that the state's program code does not include logic to check if the education level completed is based on the most recent record from the school history for the youth. Maine is in the process of a new system release to MACWIS that will align the reporting values to those required by NYTD (e.g., for youth who have received a GED the state must report the last grade completed and "college" should only be reported if the youth has completed at least a semester).

Test Cases: In test case #1, the state reported the last grade completed as 11th grade. However, in the scenario the youth was expected to graduate (complete 12th grade) by the last date of the reporting period. We note that the state was unable to report test case #5 to us (a youth receiving services who is no longer in foster care) which tests for the ability to report the last grade completed for a youth who receives a GED.

Case Record Review: In the following cases, the "last grade completed" was reported incorrectly: #1, #2, #3, #11, #13, #15, #19, #22, and #30. In almost all the cases, there was supporting information in the file of the last grade completed, but the education record had not been updated.

19. Special education findings:

Rating: 2

During the NYTD review, we determined that the element of "special education" is reported to NYTD without regard to if the special education services occurred during the same period of time that Independent Living Services were provided by the state (the state does not have code that reports this information based on the NYTD reporting period). The state will need to develop code to report "special education" if the youth received those services during the reporting period.

Test Cases: In both test cases #2 and #3, the state reported "blank." Because the youth in both scenarios are in the served population, the element of "special education" must be reported as either "yes" or "no."

Case Record Review: In case record #13, the youth had dropped-out of school prior to the reporting period. The state reported that the youth received "special education" services during the reporting period. In case record #20, the youth had an IEP meeting and report completed during the reporting period. The case record includes the youth's IEP and information that they attend a special school that provides day treatment for special education.

20. Independent living needs assessment findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on assessments that *systematically identify a youth's independent living skills, strengths and needs*.

For this element the state considers if the youth had a "Youth Transition Planning Tool" (YTPT) or "V9 Agreement" completed as an "independent living needs assessment."

Case Record Review: In the following case records a YTPT or V9 agreement was completed during the reporting period but not reported to NYTD: #3 (YTPT), #10 (YTPT), and #20 (YTPT). In case records #4 and #8, an YTPT was completed but it was before the reporting period. For case record #9, two assessments were completed on the youth but they were outside the reporting period. There was no documentation or other information of an IL assessment in case record #13. An assessment for the youth was completed after the reporting period for case record #22. In case record #26, no assessment was found during the reporting period and a V9 agreement was signed after the reporting period.

In the 4 case records that were reported correctly for this element, we found copies of the YTPT/ V9 Agreement in all four files. In the three additional cases where this element was under-reported, all three files had a copy of the YTPT/ V9 Agreement.

21. Academic support findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture services designed to help a youth *complete high school or obtain a GED*.

In the state of Maine, the state provides tutoring and other assistance to help youth complete high school or the HiSet (GED) as applicable to the youth. The state also assists youth in credit recovery and expects case workers to work closely with guidance counselors and others to help youth achieve academic progress. Maine also stated they work with youth around meeting timelines with school assignments, general management of school work, and discussion about completing homework. Providers are expected to assist youth as needed in school. Educational assistance needed by the youth should be identified during Family Team meetings and in the Child's Service Plan. The state also stated that services provided by child welfare should complement those that are part of the IEP.

Case Record Review: In case records #2 and #15, the state reported that the youth received "academic support" but there was no documentation (and the youth was already in college during the period under review; academic support can only be applicable to youth completing secondary education). In case record #4, there was no documentation to support that academic services were provided. In case record #5, the caseworker planned to discuss the youth taking summer classes but it was cancelled (the state reported "yes" for "academic support"). In case record #7, there was an IEP for the youth but there was no additional information that

an “academic service” was provided by the child welfare agency. Tutoring was provided to the youth in case record #18, but it is unclear if it was provided by the IEP or the child welfare agency. There was no history of payments for the tutoring in MACWIS. In case record #26, there were notes about a conversation about the GED and tutoring support the youth could receive, but services were not provided.

22. Post-secondary educational support findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture services designed to help a youth *enter or complete college or other post- secondary education*.

Maine stated that the most common services provided under this category are college and campus tours, assistance in helping youth enroll in college, and supporting the youth in applying for and receiving financial assistance, and help completing the FAFSA. The state also supports College Navigators and other supports that assist youth in sustaining and achieve college and other post-secondary outcomes.

Case Record Review: Case records #2, #18, and #30 provide no information on the service(s) provided under this category. For case record #6, we found records of payments made for college, including ETV. However, payments for educational services are to be reported in service category “educational financial assistance” (**element 32**). No additional information on post-secondary education services was found in the record to support the provision of a service. In case record #7, the narrative indicates the caseworker let the youth know that he qualifies for a tuition waiver and that the caseworker can assist the youth in completing applications for college, but there is no additional narrative to support services were actually provided (the state reported “yes” for this category).

In case record #3, there is information to support that post-secondary educational support was provided to the youth. In fact, the case worker took the youth on college tours and started to help the youth in applying to college. The case worker also helped the youth check-in to college during the reporting period. The state did not report that the youth had received these services during the reporting period. Similarly, in case record #10, the case worker and the residential placement worked closely with the youth during the reporting period to research colleges of interest to the youth. The state did not report this service. The case worker in case record #11 worked closely with the youth to sign her up for college tours, shared information on programs of interest to the youth and referred the youth to JMG for educational supports. Later notes confirm the youth connected with JMG services. The youth in case record #11 was not reported to NYTD as having received this service. The narrative log in case record #27 indicates that the case worker provided help to the youth regarding the FAFSA, information on colleges and school of interest, and outlined the steps to enroll in college. These services were not reported to NYTD for this reporting period.

23. Career preparation findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture services designed to help a youth *find, apply for, and retain appropriate employment*.

Maine stated that they have and offer many services applicable under this category and often partner with services under the JMG contract (such as mock interview and resume buildings). There are career assessments the state uses through the MyBestBets website and tools. Maine also works with youth to explore their career opportunities.

Case Record Review: In case records #7 and #14, there was information in the IEP about services to be received under the category of career preparation. However, there was no information on the services provided by the child welfare agency. Services provided by another agency should not be reported to NYTD. In case records #18, #28, and #30 there was no information to support the youth received any services under this category during the period under review.

Case record #13 has a note that the young adult received support in applying for a job during the reporting period, but the service was not reported to NYTD.

24. Employment programs or vocational training findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on training designed to build a youth's *skills for a specific trade/vocation or participation in an apprenticeship, internship, or summer employment*.

Maine stated they partner closely with other organizations including those offered under the Workforce Investment Act. There are many vocational rehabilitation services available in the state and Goodwill Industries is a partner. Many youth utilize CAN services, beauty school, and other tech schools.

Case Record Review: A summary report in case record #4 indicates the youth was referred to vocational rehabilitation services but was not deemed appropriate for the program. Similarly, in case record #5, the youth was referred to vocational rehabilitation services but the youth declined to participate. In case record #13, the youth was referred to vocational rehabilitation services but had not yet heard back. The caseworker in case record #26 talked to the youth about various services that could be provided. In all four cases there was no further documentation that any service was provided. The IEP for the youth in case record #14 indicated there were services under the IEP, but there was no information to support services provided by the child welfare agency.

25. Budget and financial management findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture services designed to help a youth *access training or practice with living within a budget*. The state of Maine is an Opportunity Passport site and works closely with youth to develop financial capacities. The state has a contract with Jobs for Maine to provide financial classes that allow a youth to then have a matched savings account. The state also works closely to ensure youth have an opportunity to examine their credit report as required. Finally, the V9 Agreement (the state's extended foster care program) has a component where the agreement talks about the budget and working out a budget for the youth.

Test Cases: In test case #2, the state incorrectly reported that the youth received budget and financial management during the reporting period (the state reported “yes”). However, the scenario outlines budgeting services that relate to “post-secondary education support” and should be reported in **element 22** (see NYTD Q&A 1.25).

Case Record Review: In case records #5, #12, #26 and #29, there was no information to support that a service was provided to the youth.

In the following case records, the youth was provided classes or other financial support services that were not reported to NYTD: #3 (through JMG); #11 (youth received services from the foster mother in budgeting and financial support and also participated in the Opportunity Passport); and #27 (youth attended an Opportunity Passport class).

26. Housing education and home management training findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on *assistance or training in locating and maintaining housing, or instruction in activities of basic living such as food preparation, laundry and housekeeping.*

Maine reported that the typical services provided under this category include helping youth look for and secure an apartment; working with a landlord to resolve issues and/or sign a lease; work on upkeep and keeping a home in a sanitary environment; working with youth to understand restrictions on visitors; and teaching youth how to shop and cook a meal.

Test Cases: In test case #2, the state did not report that the youth received housing education and home management training during the reporting period (the state reported “no”). In the scenario, the caseworker helped the youth find and apply for an apartment.

Case Record Review: The caseworker in case record #26 talked with the youth about his pending eviction, but no service was provided due to the difficult relationship between the worker and the youth.

In case record #9, the youth’s placement was working with to help him learn housekeeping and other chores that led to appropriate home management. This information was in the Child Plan but it was not reported to NYTD.

27. Health education and risk prevention findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on services designed to *provide information about hygiene, nutrition, fitness and exercise or the avoidance of health risks.*

The state describes services in this category that are related to helping youth with safe sex practices and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections. State staff described working with youth to help them learn how to arrange for and select a medical provider

or seek other medical services. Finally, the state talked about services to assist youth in nutritional practices and the importance of exercise.

Test Cases: In test case #2, the state reported that the youth received this service but there is no information in the scenario that the youth received health education and risk prevention services.

Case Record Review: In the case record #3, there was some discussions with the youth around their health care provider but there was no information on the specific services received. Case records #11 and #24 had no information to support that a service was provided. In case record #14, MACWIS notes indicate that the caseworker had meetings and discussion with the youth's clinician on his health care and other medical needs, but this does not support that the youth received a service in this category.

The youth in case record #10 had his wisdom teeth pulled out during the reporting period and the caseworker used it as an opportunity to discuss self-care with the youth and how to ensure healing after the surgery. This information was documented in MACWIS. The caseworker in case record #20 had discussions with the youth about losing weight and how cross-country running was important to his overall health.

28. Family support and healthy marriage education findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on *education about safe and stable families, healthy marriage and relationships*.

The state reported that they provide support to teen parents and how to create healthy relationships at home.

Case Record Review: Case records #3, #14, #20 and #24, had no information to support that a service was provided.

29. Mentoring findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on whether a youth has been *matched with a screened and trained adult for a one-on-one mentoring relationship*.

Test Cases: In test case #4, the state reported the youth received mentoring during the reporting period ("yes" to the mentoring element). The youth did not receive a mentoring service that met the definition of mentoring as defined in the NYTD Regulation.

Case Record Review: The following case records had no information to support that the youth received mentoring per the NYTD definition: #3, #6, #7, and #20.

30. Supervised independent living findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on youth *living independently under a supervised arrangement that is paid for or provided by the state agency*. In Maine, only youth over the age of 18 should be in an independent living arrangement that could include an apartment or a dorm.

Test Cases: In test case #2, the state did not report that the youth was in a supervised independent living placement during the reporting period. The youth's on-campus housing is considered to be a supervised independent living placement.

Case Record Review: In case records #2 and #6, the youth was living in a dorm during the entire reporting period, but this was not reported to NYTD. The youth in case record #15 was living independently with her boyfriend and step-mother during the reporting period. The MACWIS screen for the youth in case record #16 stated that she was living on her own, but it was not reported to NYTD.

31. Room and board financial assistance findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on *payments paid for or provided for room and board, including rent deposits, utilities, and other household start-up experiences*.

Case Record Review: Room and board payments paid for by title IV-E for youth under the age of 18 should not be reported to NYTD as room and board payments. In the following cases Maine reported payments incorrectly: #3, #4 (youth was in residential treatment), #10 (youth was in residential treatment), #14 (youth was in residential treatment), #18, #20, #22, and #24. Because there is no direct link to the financial payment system and what is reported to NYTD, reviewers were unable to determine conclusively if caseworkers reported "yes" to this element because of the room and board payment to a placement on behalf of the youth under age 18.

In case record #1, the youth was over the age of 18 and was receiving room and board assistance, but it was not reported to NYTD.

32. Education financial assistance findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on *payments that are paid for or provided for education or training*.

Test Cases: The scenario in test case #2 indicates that the youth is receiving ETV, but the state did not report this educational financial assistance.

Case Record Review: In case record #16, there is a payment for the youth related to school supplies, but it was not reported to NYTD.

33. Other financial assistance findings:

Rating: 2

This data element is intended to capture information on *any other payments made to help the youth live independently*.

This item is to capture information on Chafee or other financial payments made to a youth but may not include other items included in title IV-E payment- unless they are specifically paid for by Chafee (e.g., allowances). We should note that a caseworker completes this screen by answering “yes” or “no” to the question of “other financial assistance.” During the case record review, reviewers tried to determine from case record notes and the financial payment section what substantiated the “yes” response to NYTD.

Case Record Review: In the following case records, a clothing allowance was provided which may have been the reason that the service category was reported to NYTD: #6, #8, #9, #14, #15, #19, and #26.

In case #1, there was a payment to the youth (over the age of 18) coded as a service to support the youth living on their own, but it was not reported to NYTD. Case record #20 showed a payment for driver’s education, but it was not reported to NYTD.

34. Outcome reporting status findings:

Rating: 2

Test Cases: In test case #3, the state reported “declined.” However, the youth was never approached to take the NYTD survey (it was briefly discussed with him), and therefore should have been reported as “unable to locate/ invite.”

Case Record Review: In case record #26, the state indicated the youth participated in the survey, but all the responses were blank. The state should have reported the youth as “declined.”

35. Date of outcome data collection findings:

Rating: 2

Test Cases: In test case #3, the state reported May 17, 2017 as the date of outcome data collection, but the response should have been “blank” (this element should be left blank if the youth does not participate in the survey).

Case Record Review: In case record #26, the youth “declined” to participate in the survey but the state reported a date of outcomes data collection. If the youth does not participate the state is report this element blank.

36. Foster care status—outcomes findings:

Rating: 2

The state is currently using only an open removal episode to determine foster care status. However, the state must use the federal definition of foster care to determine the appropriate value (45 CFR 1355.20). For youth over the age of 18, youth who are receiving a title IV-E foster care maintenance payment should be include as “in foster care.”

37. Current full-time employment findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

38. Current part-time employment findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

39. Employment-related skills findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

40. Social Security findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

41. Educational aid findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

42. Public financial assistance findings:**Rating: 2**

On the baseline and follow-up paper survey, the state is asking about receiving public financial assistance. The survey in the MACWIS system also asks this question. This question should only be asked of youth not in foster care.

Test Cases: In test case, #6, the state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be report when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.

Case Record Review: In the following records, youth were incorrectly asked this question: #2, #3, #9, #11, #14, #16, #18, #20, #24, #26, and #30.

43. Public food assistance findings:**Rating: 2**

On the baseline and follow-up paper survey, the state is asking about receiving public food assistance. The survey in the MACWIS system also asks this question. This question should only be asked of youth not in foster care.

Test Cases: In test case, #6, the state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be reported when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.

Case Record Review: In the following records, youth were incorrectly asked this question: #2, #3, #9, #11, #12, #14, #16, #18, #20, #24, #26, and #30.

44. Public housing assistance findings:

Rating: 2

On the baseline and follow-up paper survey, the state is asking about receiving public financial housing assistance. The survey in the MACWIS system also asks this question. This question should only be asked of youth not in foster care.

Test Cases: In test case, #6, the state reported “not applicable,” but because the youth was no longer in foster care, her answer of “no” should have been reported to NYTD. The response of the “not applicable” should only be report when youth in foster care have not been asked this question.

Case Record Review: In the following records, youth were incorrectly asked this question: #2, #3, #9, #11, #12, #14, #16, #18, #20, #24, #26, and #30.

45. Other financial support findings:

Rating: 2

In the MACWIS survey and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey, this question is asked out of order.

46. Highest educational certification received findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

47. Current enrollment and attendance findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

48. Connection to adult findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

49. Homelessness findings:

Rating: 2

On the MACWIS survey at baseline, the state is asking the youth if they were homeless in the last two years.

50. Substance abuse referral findings:

Rating: 4

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

51. Incarceration findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

52. Children findings:**Rating: 4**

Data collection, mapping, reporting and data quality for this element is sufficient.

53. Marriage at child's birth findings:**Rating: 2**

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey, the state is not using the full question. The state must use the question in federal regulation, "If you responded yes to the previous question, were you married to the child's other parent at the time each child was born?"

Case Record Review: If case record #24, the youth answered "declined." Because the youth answered the prior question as "no" (**element 52**, that they have no children), the youth should not have been asked this question (if they were married at the child's birth). The state reported "not applicable."

54. Medicaid findings:**Rating: 2**

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey the state's choice for "Don't Know" is "do not know."

55. Other health insurance coverage findings:**Rating: 2**

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey the state's choice for "Don't Know" is "do not know."

56. Health insurance type: Medical findings:**Rating: 2**

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey the state will need to add "Don't Know" and remove the option of "not applicable."

Case Record Review: The state reported "not applicable" to this element. The case record indicates that the youth responded "yes" to this element in the survey. The youth should not have answered these questions as they answered "no" to **element 55** (other health insurance). **Elements 56** is only applicable to youth who answer "yes" to **element 55**. The state should not correct the answers to a youth's response without consulting the youth.

57. Health insurance type: Mental health findings:**Rating: 2**

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey the state will need to add "Don't Know" and remove the option of "not applicable."

Case Record Review: The state reported "not applicable" to this element. The case record indicates that the youth responded "yes"

to this element in the survey. The youth should not have answered these questions as they answered “no” to **element 55** (other health insurance). **Elements 57 and 58** are only applicable to youth who answer “yes” to **element 55 and element 56**. The state should not correct the answers to a youth’s response without consulting the youth.

58. Health insurance type: Prescription drugs findings:

Rating: 2

In MACWIS and on the baseline and follow-up paper survey the state will need to add “Don’t Know” and remove the option of “not applicable.”

Case Record Review: The state reported “not applicable” to this element. The case record indicates that the youth responded “yes” to this element in the survey. The youth should not have answered these questions as they answered “no” to **element 55** (other health insurance). **Elements 57 and 58** are only applicable to youth who answer “yes” to **element 55 and element 56**. The state should not correct the answers to a youth’s response without consulting the youth.

Appendix D. NYTD Improvement Plan General Requirements and Data Elements Final Ratings and Findings to Address

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1: The state reports information on all youth in the served population.

Rating: 2

Findings to address:

1.1 The state must establish a business practice to consistently and accurately capture information on all independent living services paid for or provided by the state, including:

- Youth who have left foster care, including youth who receive services from Youth Leadership Advisory Team (YLAT);
- Youth who receive Education and Training Vouchers;
- Youth who are participating in contracted services;
- Services offered and supported by Maine's teen conferences; and
- Services to youth pursuant to a Tribal agreement.

2: The state reports information on all youth in the baseline population.

Rating: 2

Findings to address:

2.1 The state is to create a business process to determine eligibility for youth to take the baseline survey.

2.2 The state must determine the appropriate process to engage youth in the baseline survey for a robust participation rate.

2.3 The state is to determine a process to ensure the "reporting status" is consistent with information in the survey.

2.4 The state is to modify its reporting process to ensure that baseline population youth records are reported both in the report period file that corresponds to the youth's 17th birthday and the report period file in which the youth was surveyed (see NYTD Q&A 2.55).

3: The state reports information on all youth in the follow-up population.

Rating: 2

Findings to address:

3.1 The state is to modify its logic for **element 36** (foster care status) to allow this information to be reported as indicated by the Federal definition of foster care.

3.2 The state should review their business process to collect location information, engage, outreach, to contact youth in the follow-up population to take the survey.

4: The state implements an appropriate survey methodology to collect youth outcome data.

Rating: 3

Findings to address:

4.1 The state must revise its NYTD survey instruments to include survey questions and valid response options as they appear in the NYTD regulation. In particular the state must make the following changes to the survey:

- **Elements 42-44** are asked of all youth. These questions should only be asked of those youth who are no longer in foster care.
- **Element 45:** The state will need to reorder this question to follow the sequence in the NYTD regulation.
- **Element 49:** On the MACWIS survey at baseline, the state is asking the youth if they were homeless in the last two years.
- **Element 54 and 55:** In MACWIS and on the paper baseline and follow-up survey the state's choice for "Don't Know" is "do not know." Per NYTD, the response must be "Don't Know."
- **Elements 56-58:** In MACWIS and on the paper baseline and follow-up survey the state will need to add "Don't Know" and remove the option of "not applicable." The state will need to determine a process to ensure only youth who answer "yes" to both element 55 and element 56 answer element 57 and 58.

4.2 We encourage the state to build on its survey methodology and consider the following recommendations:

- Develop a policy **element 34** (outcomes reporting status) to ensure consistent reporting.
- Review the instructions and the prompts to ensure they are youth-friendly and accurate (i.e. the length of time to take the survey and information about confidentiality).
- Consider incentives, especially for youth who are no longer in foster care.
- Better track how and by whom the survey was administered to support survey effort improvements.

6: The state reports NYTD data files following ACF's specifications.

Rating: 2

Findings to address:

6.1 The state must update the logic in MACWIS to create a relationship between **elements 14 to 33** that supports reporting as specified by ACF.

6.2. The state must update the logic in MACWIS to create a logical relationship between **elements 34 to 58** that support reporting as specified by ACF.

7: The state conducts quality assurance to ensure NYTD information can be analyzed and used.

Rating: 2

Findings to address:

7.1 The state must develop a quality assurance process to ensure that NYTD data are accurate, complete, timely, and consistent in definition and usage across the agency. Specially, the state is to:

- Develop a process to periodically examine the accuracy or completeness of data on youth served by the independent living program.
- A process to re-examine accuracy of survey data so that state does not “correct” a youth’s responses.

7.2 The state is strongly encouraged to develop a plan to integrate NYTD data into the state’s Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) work. To do so, the state should review the recommendation made in General Requirement #7 findings. It will be critical to involve youth and other stakeholders in developing and implementing the plans.

DATA ELEMENTS

14. Foster care status services findings to address:

Rating: 2

14.1 The state must accurately report the foster care status of youth/ young adults in the served population according to 45 CFR 1355.20.

15. Local agency findings to address:

Rating: 2

15.1 The state must report the “sending” state’s local agency code for youth placed and served in Maine from another state via the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC).

15.2. The state must develop a business process to report “local agency” for those youth receiving services who are no longer in foster care.

16. Federally recognized Tribe findings to address:

Rating: 2

16.1 The state is to report “blank” for this element when the federally recognized tribal membership or eligibility for membership is not known or is pending verification.

17. Adjudicated delinquent findings to address:

Rating: 3

17.1 The state is to review its data collection process to ensure accurate reporting of whether or not a youth in the served population was ever adjudicated delinquent.

18. Educational level findings to address:

Rating: 2

18.1 The will need develop program code to check if the education level completed is based on the most recent record from the school history for the youth.

18.2 For youth who complete a GED or are attending GED classes, the state must modify its data mapping to report the last grade level completed by the youth prior to earning a GED or beginning GED classes.

18.3 The state must modify its data mapping to ensure that youth who complete *at least one semester of study at a college or university* are reported with an education level of “college.”

18.4 The state must develop a business program that collects that information on a youth’s education status for youth no longer in the state’s custody.

19. Special education findings to address:

Rating: 2

19.1 The state system must be modified to track whether the youth was receiving special education during the report period in which the youth received services.

19.2 The state must develop a business program that collects that information on a youth’s special education status for youth no longer in the state’s custody.

20. Independent living needs assessment findings to address:

Rating: 2

20. 1 The state should conduct quality assurance to ensure independent living needs assessments are accurately reported during the report period in which they are delivered and that the specific assessment conducted meets the definition provided in 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(20).

21. Academic support findings to address:

Rating: 2

21. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

21.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “academic support” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(21).

22. Post-secondary educational support findings to address:

Rating: 2

22. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

22.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “post-secondary educational supports” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(22).

23. Career preparation findings to address:

Rating: 2

23. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

23.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “career preparation” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(23).

24. Employment programs or vocational training findings to address:**Rating: 2**

24. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

24.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “employment programs or vocation training” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(24).

25. Budget and financial management findings to address:**Rating: 2**

25. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

25.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “budget and financial management” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(25).

26. Housing education and home management training findings to address:**Rating: 2**

26. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

26.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “housing education and home management training” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(26).

27. Health education and risk prevention findings to address:**Rating: 2**

27. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

27.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “health education and risk prevention” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(27).

28. Family support and healthy marriage education findings to address:**Rating: 2**

28. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

28.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “family support and health marriage” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(28).

29. Mentoring findings to address:**Rating: 2**

29. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

29.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “mentoring” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(29).

30. Supervised independent living findings to address:**Rating: 2**

30. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

30.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “supervised independent living” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(30).

31. Room and board financial assistance findings to address:**Rating: 2**

31. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

32.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “room and board” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(31).

32. Education financial assistance findings to address:**Rating: 2**

32. 1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

32.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “educational financial assistance” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(32).

33. Other financial assistance findings to address:**Rating: 2**

33.1 The state must revise its business process for collecting information on IL services to ensure that service information is consistently captured regarding activities and supports paid for or provided by the state (see General Requirement #1).

33.2 The state must revise its data mapping to ensure the activities reported as “other financial assistance” are clearly defined and meet the definition of the element found at 45 CFR 1356.83(g)(33).

34. Outcome reporting status findings to address:**Rating: 2**

34.1 The state should develop a quality assurance process to ensure that the correct outcomes reporting status (i.e., “participated”) is reported for youth who participate in the NYTD survey.

34.2 The state should develop a policy to determine consistent practice for determining the reason for a youth’s non-participation in the survey.

35. Date of outcome data collection findings to address: Rating: 2

35.1 The state must develop a process to report “blank” for this element for youth who did not participate in the survey.

36. Foster care status—outcomes findings to address: Rating: 2

36.1 The state must accurately report the foster care status of youth/ young adults in the served population according to 45 CFR 1355.20.

42. Public financial assistance findings to address: Rating: 2

42.1 The state is to remove the survey questions related to a youth’s use of public assistance (elements 42-44) from the baseline survey instruments.

42.2 The state must develop a business process to ask this question only of youth who are no longer in foster care in the follow-up survey.

43. Public food assistance findings to address: Rating: 2

43.1 The state is to remove the survey questions related to a youth’s use of public assistance (elements 42-44) from the baseline survey instruments.

43.2 The state must develop a business process to ask this question only of youth who are no longer in foster care in the follow-up survey.

44. Public housing assistance findings to address: Rating: 2

44.1 The state is to remove the survey questions related to a youth’s use of public assistance (elements 42-44) from the baseline survey instruments.

44.2 The state must develop a business process to ask this question only of youth who are no longer in foster care in the follow-up survey.

45. Other financial support findings to address: Rating: 2

45.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper survey, the order of this question to match the intent of the Federal question.

49. Homelessness findings to address: Rating: 2

49.1 The state must revise its MACWIS baseline survey instrument to include the correct survey question (“Have you ever been homeless?”).

53. Marriage at child's birth findings to address:

Rating: 2

53.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to reflect the question in the NYTD federal regulation.

54. Medicaid findings to address:

Rating: 2

54.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys, to correct the response to “Don’t Know.”

55. Other health insurance coverage findings to address:

Rating: 2

55.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys, to correct the response to “Don’t Know.”

56. Health insurance type: Medical findings to address:

Rating: 2

56.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to add “Don’t Know” and remove the option of “not applicable.”

57. Health insurance type: Mental health findings to address:

Rating: 2

57.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to add “Don’t Know” and remove the option of “not applicable.”

57.2 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to create prompts/ logic for youth to only answer this question if they answer “yes” to both elements 55 and 56.

58. Health insurance type: Prescription drugs findings to address:

Rating: 2

58.1 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to add “Don’t Know” and remove the option of “not applicable.”

58.2 The state must modify the MACWIS and paper surveys to create prompts/ logic for youth to only answer this question if they answer “yes” to both elements 55 and 56.