

# **ACF-118 E-Submission Site**



## **State/Territory User's Guide**

**Release 1**

**June 2011**

This user's manual is a technical assistance product of the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. The guide is for distribution according to department policy. It was produced by General Dynamics Information Technology under contract GS-35F-4357D.

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## Overview

All State and Territory grantees are required to submit a biennial Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan (ACF-118) that functions as the Lead Agency's application for CCDF funds. The Plan provides a description of the child care program and the services that will be made available to eligible families. It serves as the agreement between the Lead Agency and the Federal Government as to how CCDF programs will be administered in conformance with legislative requirements, pertinent Federal regulations, and other instructions and guidelines issued by ACF.

The Office of Child Care has recently developed a web-based submission site to allow State and Territory grantees to electronically submit their CCDF Plan, to allow the Regional Office (RO) and Central Office (CO) Staff users to electronically review and approve the Plans, and to allow Technical Assistance (TA) providers to have access to approved Plans as needed in order to provide targeted TA.

The submission site was developed to make the Plan submission and review processes easier and more efficient. The Office of Child Care Information System (OCCIS) receives and stores much of the required CCDF data that grantees submit. Two of the required reports already are submitted using a web-enabled submission form – the ACF-700 (Tribes), and the ACF-800 (States/Territories). The URL for the ACF-118 submission site is [https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/stplan/STPLAN\\_Login.jsp](https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/stplan/STPLAN_Login.jsp). It is recommended that you use Internet Explorer 7 to access the submission site.

The submission site allows:

- Grantees to enter and edit their CCDF Plan details and to certify/submit their Plan;
- Regional Office and Central Office to view all Plans and to track the submission status of Plans;
- Regional Office staff to recommend that Plans be approved or indicate that they need to be revised;
- Users to generate error reports and submission status reports;
- Technical Assistance providers access to CCDF Plans once they have been approved.

The five different types of users– State user/Super user, Regional Office, Central Office, and Technical Assistance– have different access and privileges. This document provides an overview of the basic features and functions of the ACF-118 submission site, details the access and privileges of the State and Super users, and offers guidance for submitting and certifying the CCDF Plan.

The electronic submission site reflects the final OMB approved Plan content although some formatting may be slightly different to allow for the electronic capture of the information.

## Basic Features of the Submission Site

The ACF-118 Submission site utilizes the same basic features and functions throughout the site. These include:

- Navigation Index – The section/question index on the left-hand side of the screen makes navigating to different sections and questions throughout the Plan easy.
- Common data entry functions – Standard functions and features such as copy and paste, radio buttons, check boxes, and drop-down selection lists are used throughout the site to enter and edit data as well as to view, submit and certify, and approve Plans;
- Multiple Users – Multiple users are able to access the same Plan version at the same time and enter or view information in different sections, however, users can not enter and save data for the same questions at the same time. If this situation does occur, the user who saves the data last will overwrite the data entry entered and saved previously by the other user;
- Links and Attachments – Where required, users can include active URLs in text fields to provide hyperlinks to information found on the internet. Certain questions also ask grantees to submit attachments. The system will allow the user to include attachments for these questions directly through the site;
- Consistency checks – The submission site will require that certain questions are completed depending upon how the user has answered a prior related question;
- Formatting Tool Bar – A formatting tool bar is available in all open text fields so the User can modify text. This same tool bar also allows users to check the spelling of entered text;
- Error Report – Prior to completion and certification of the Plan, users can generate an error report to easily determine which sections of the Plan have not been completed or have inconsistent responses;
- Embedded Help – Several questions have an embedded link that will provide the full text of lengthier questions in a new window. The user must click on the link to access the entire question and guidance from the Plan Pre-Print.

## State User and Super User Functions

State and Territory users need access to the ACF-118 Submission Site in order to enter the details of their CCDF Plan. There are two types of State/Territory users – State users and Super users. Both the State user and the Super user can enter and edit data in the submission site. They both also can generate an Error Report and PDF versions of the Plan sections. The system is designed so that only the Super user has the authority and ability to submit and certify the Plan. The State/Territory grantee may have as many State users as they need, but are limited to two Super users.

## Accessing the ACF-118 Submission Site

It is recommended that you use Internet Explorer 7 to access the submission site. The URL for the submission site is: [https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/stplan/STPLAN\\_Login.jsp](https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/stplan/STPLAN_Login.jsp). The ACF-118 submission site is password protected. Each user must acquire a username and password in order to access the site. The user must enter their username and password information in the appropriate fields and click the **Submit** button to log into the site. See Appendix 1 for the required registration form that must be submitted to request a username and password from CCARC.

### ACF-118 Submission Site Login Page

OFFICE OF CHILD CARE

Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**ACF-118 Data Submission Center**

You have reached the ACF-118 Data Submission Center

This Web Site allows all Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies in the States, the District of Columbia, and the Territories to interactively submit their ACF-118 data

For accessibility issues, please [click here](#)

Please sign into the ACF-118 Data Submission Center

Username:

Password:

After the user logs into the ACF-118 Submission Site, the Government System login disclaimer will be displayed.

## Government System Disclaimer

You are accessing a U.S. Government information system which includes (1) this computer, (2) this computer network, (3) all computers connected to this network, and (4) all devices and storage media attached to this network or to a computer on this network. This information system is provided for U.S. Government-authorized use only.

Unauthorized or improper use of this system may result in disciplinary action, as well as civil and criminal penalties.

By using this information system, you understand and consent to the following:  
You have no reasonable expectation of privacy regarding any communications or data transiting or stored on this information system. At any time, and for any lawful Government purpose, the government may monitor, intercept, and search and seize any communication or data transiting or stored on this information system.  
Any communication or data transiting or stored on this information system may be disclosed or used for any lawful Government purpose.

OK

The user must read the disclaimer and click **OK** to accept the user agreement in order to gain access to the site. The main menu will then be displayed.

In order to access a Plan to view and/or edit it, the State or Super user must select both the Plan Year and the version of the Plan that they wish to work with from the drop down lists and click the **Plan Data Entry** button.

## ACF-118 Grantee User Main Menu

OFFICE OF CHILD CARE

Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

ACF-118 Data Submission Center

Welcome **State User**

You have successfully entered the ACF-118 Data Submission Center. [Logout](#)

Please select the desired Plan Year

Plan Year: 2012-2013

Please select desired Plan Version

Plan Version: Initial Submission Effective Date-2011-03-03

Plan Data Entry

## Table of Contents

After the user selects a Plan version to view, the Table of Contents, which details the sections of the Plan, will be displayed. The page will indicate the percentage of the questions in each section of the Plan that have been completed. A check (✓) indicates that all required questions in that section have been answered.

## Table of Contents Page

OFFICE OF CHILD CARE 

Administration for Children and Families  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

ACF-118 Data Submission Center

Alabama  
Status: Work In Progress

Plan: FFY2012 - FFY2013  
Initial Submission: Effective Date- 10/01/2012

### Table of Contents

Part 1: Administration	
✓ 1.1	<a href="#">Contact Information</a>
4% 1.2	<a href="#">Estimated Funding</a>
12% 1.3	<a href="#">CCDF Program Integrity and Accountability</a>
0% 1.4	<a href="#">Consultation in the Development of the CCDF Plan</a>
4% 1.5	<a href="#">Coordination Activities to Support the Implementation of CCDF Services</a>
0% 1.6	<a href="#">Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan</a>
Part 2: Program Administration	
16% 2.1	<a href="#">Administration of the Program</a>
20% 2.2	<a href="#">Family Outreach and Application Process</a>
✓ 2.3	<a href="#">Eligibility Criteria for Child Care</a>
4% 2.4	<a href="#">Sliding Fee Scale and Family Contribution</a>
4% 2.5	<a href="#">Prioritizing Services for Eligible Children and Families</a>
8% 2.6	<a href="#">Parental Choice in Relation to Certificates, Grants or Contracts</a>
0% 2.7	<a href="#">Payment Rates for Child Care Services</a>
Part 3: Health Quality Initiative	
8% 3.1	<a href="#">Activities to Ensure the Health and Safety of Children in Child Care (Component #1)</a>
0% 3.2	<a href="#">Establishing Voluntary Early Learning Guidelines (Component #2)</a>
0% 3.3	<a href="#">Creating Pathways to Excellence for Child Care Programs through Program Quality Improvement Activities (Component #3)</a>
0% 3.4	<a href="#">Pathways to Excellence for the Workforce – Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (Component #4)</a>
Part 4: <a href="#">Amendments Log</a>	
Part 5: <a href="#">Appendix 1</a>	
Part 6: <a href="#">Appendix 2</a>	

In addition to accessing the data entry form itself, there are four standard functions that are available to State users. Additional functions will vary depending on the user type. These common functions are:

- Error Report Generation - display a report that indicates the questions in each section that have not been answered (see sample below);
- Display/Print Plan – generate a PDF version of a section of the State/Territory Plan;
- Display ACF-118 Pre-Print - print the selected ACF-118 Plan Pre-print;
- Return to the Main Menu.

## State/Territory Plan Error Report

The Error Report indicates whether the questions in each section of the Plan have been completed. A check ( ✓ ) indicates that all required parts of the question have been answered. This inconsistent/missing symbol ( ⚠ ) means that some part of that question has inconsistent information or missing information and requires additional input.

### Sample Error Report

State/Territory Plan Error Report		
State Name		
Plan: FFY2012 - FFY2013		
Initial Submission: Effective Date- 10/01/2012		
Part1: Administration		
<b>Section 1.1</b>		
	1.1.1	✓
	1.1.2	✓
<b>Section 1.2</b>		
	1.2.1	⚠
	1.2.2	⚠
<b>Section 1.3</b>		
	1.3.1	⚠
	1.3.2	⚠
	1.3.3	⚠
	1.3.4	✓
	1.3.5	✓
	1.3.6	⚠
<b>Section 1.4</b>		
	1.4.1	⚠
	1.4.2	⚠
	1.4.3	⚠
<b>Section 1.5</b>		
	1.5.1	⚠
	1.5.2	⚠

## Display/Print Plan Function

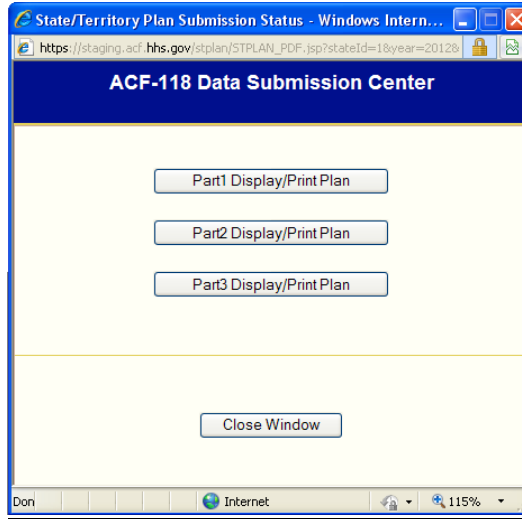
Users can generate a PDF file of each of the 3 sections of the State/Territory Plan. The PDF software associated with the submission site will not accommodate a file size large enough for the entire CCDF Plan. If the user would like to create one PDF file for the entire Plan, they can print a PDF of each of the sections, and create one file using their individually-owned PDF file creation hardware/software. Note that any uploaded attachments will not be a part of the generated PDF Plan. Any attachments must be viewed and printed separately.

To generate a PDF file of a section of the Plan, the user should click the **Display/Print Plan** button, which is available at the bottom of the page. After clicking the button, the screen below



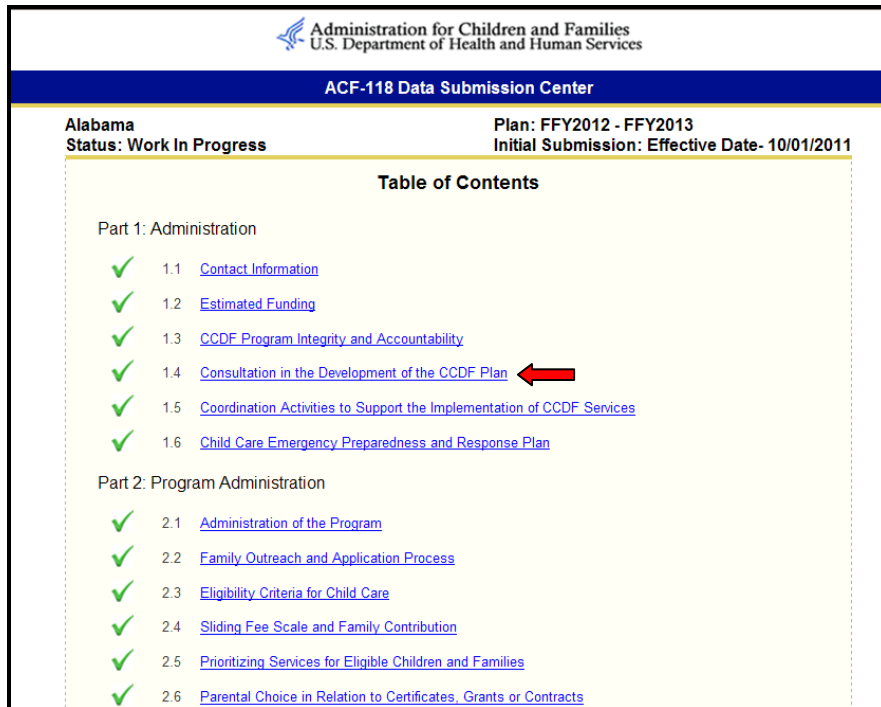
will display. The user should click the button for the part of the Plan for which they would like to create the PDF file. The system will generate the file, which can be either printed or saved.

### PDF File Generation Screen



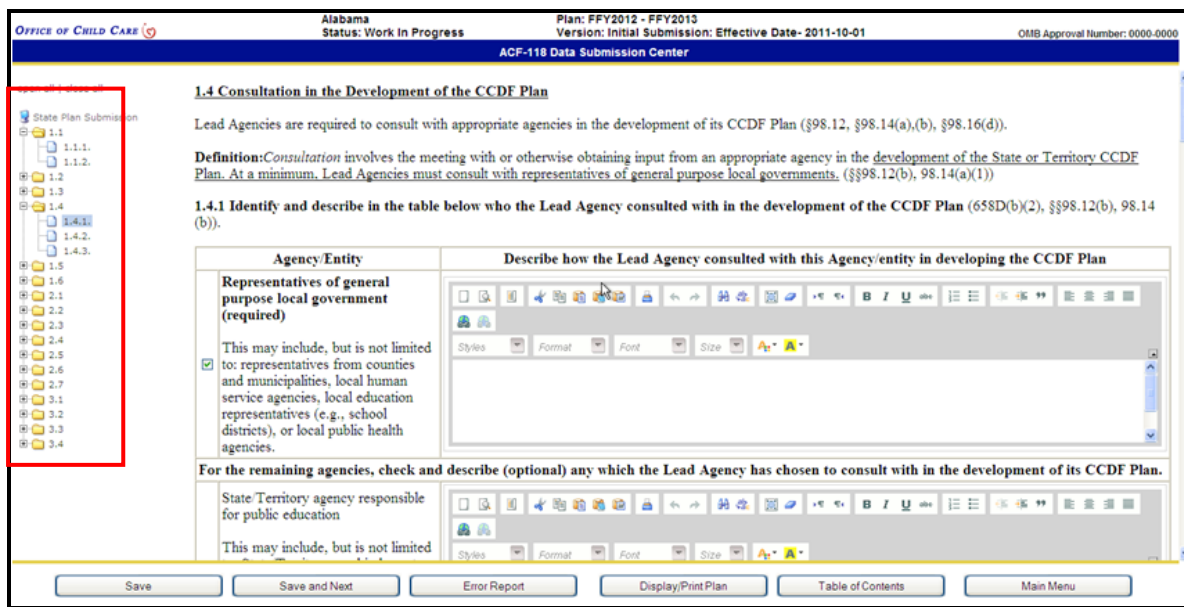
### Selecting a Question

From the Table of Contents, the user can select a section of the Plan to view and/or edit by clicking on the underlined section.



The selected question will be displayed. The user can navigate to other questions by selecting the desired Plan section on the Index at the left-hand side of the page. The user can expand the list of questions in the section by clicking the plus (+) sign to the left of the desired section or click the minus (-) sign to collapse the list.

### ACF-118 Sample Question Display



Before the Plan has been Submitted/Certified or Accepted for Approval (e.g, it is a “work in progress”), the State user and Super user will be able to:

- Enter/Edit answers to the selected question;
- Use the Index to select another question for viewing, entering data, and/ or editing;
- Save - save answers to the selected question;
- Save and Next - save answers to the selected question and move on to the Next question;
- Generate an Error Report - generate a Missing Information/Error Report (see below);
- Display/Print Plan - generate a PDF version of a section of the Plan (and subsequently print and save as PDF);
- Return to the Table of Contents Page;
- Return to the Main Menu Page;
- Submit and Certify the Plan (Only the Super user will have this option available to them).

Once the Plan **has been** Submitted/Certified or Accepted for Approval no additional changes can be made unless the Regional Office staff determines that revisions need to be made to the plan,

in which case they can re-open the Plan. Otherwise, at this point, the available State user and Super user functions will be limited to the following:

- Use the Index to select another question for viewing only;
- Display/Print Plan - generate a PDF version of a section of the Plan (and subsequently print and save as PDF);
- Return to the Table of Contents Page;
- Return to the Main Menu Page.

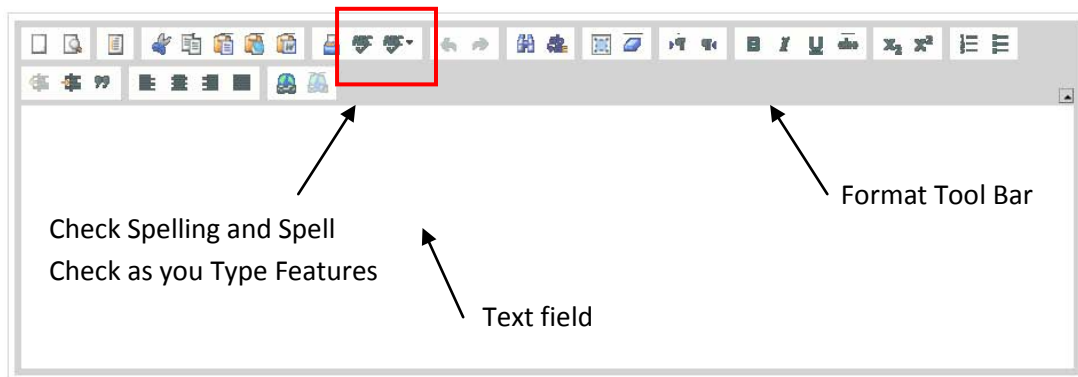
## ***Entering Information***

Only State users and Super users can enter the details of and edit CCDF Plan responses. Depending upon the type of question, users will enter descriptive text in text boxes, select from multiple choice answers, or select yes or no to answer questions.

### **Text Boxes**

Text boxes are provided when questions require descriptive responses. A formatting tool bar that is similar to most word processing software functions appears above some text boxes. The user can navigate their mouse over the various icons and the function name will appear.

The text boxes with the formatting tool bar allow unlimited text. Text boxes that do not have the format tool bar have a limit to the amount of text that can be entered. This limit varies and is dependent upon the number of characters OCC determined the text box should accommodate.



### **Spell Check**

It is important to use one of the spell check functions to check your spelling because the submission site does not automatically underline misspelled words as Microsoft Word does. There are two Spell Check options available to you to check the spelling of information you have typed in the text fields – Check Spelling and Spell Check As You Type. The first will allow you

to check the spelling of text that you have already entered in the text field. After you have finished typing your text, click on the Check Spelling icon to check the spelling of entered text. The second option will allow you to check the spelling of text as you type. In order use this function, click on the Spell Check As You Type icon prior to typing text in the field. Any misspelled words will be underlined so you can locate them and make corrections.

### **Check Boxes and Radio Buttons**

Some questions offer multiple choice responses in the form of check boxes. Users will be able to check multiple responses as allowed by the question. Other questions may allow for only a single response. In such cases, only the last selection will be saved. If the user has checked one response and then checks another, the previously checked selection will be unchecked.

Similarly, when questions require a yes or no answer, the submission site will only allow the user to select one answer. If the user has selected an answer and then selects another, the previously selected alternative answer will be removed. The last selected response will be recorded.

### **Required Questions**

Depending upon how certain questions are answered, the grantee may be required to also answer follow-up questions. For example, question 3.1.3.a asks if the lead agency includes announced or unannounced visits in its' policies as a way to effectively enforce the licensing requirements. If the Lead Agency answers yes to this question, they are required to answer the follow-up questions regarding the frequency of such visits.

Additionally, if a user selects a response that requires a description, for example, "other – describe", the grantee will be required to complete the follow-up. If the required description is not provided, the Plan would be considered incomplete. The Plan cannot be Submitted/Certified until all required questions have been answered.

### **Links and Attachments**

Some questions may require that users include a link to information on the Internet. For example, question 3.1.2 (e) asks the Lead Agency to provide a web address for the State/Territory's health and safety requirements. To include a link in the text box, the user should copy the url and paste it in the box.

## ACF-118 Sample Question Display (Link Example)

ACF-118 Data Submission Center  
\*\*\* Please click "Save" or "Save and Next" to save any changes \*\*\*

e) Provide a web address for the State/Territory's health and safety requirements, if available:

A red arrow points to the end of the URL in the text input field.

Other questions may allow or require users to attach documents to provide further detail, for example question 2.6.1(c) asks the Lead Agency to attach a copy of their child care certificate. The attachments can be in the form of either a Microsoft Word document or saved as an Adobe Acrobat file (.pdf). Lead Agencies must upload all required documents via the electronic submission site; documents may not be submitted via e-mail or other means.

**Note: Microsoft Office documents should be saved as .doc, .xls, etc. (The submission site will not accept .docx, .xlsx, etc. files).**

## ACF-118 Sample Question Display (Attachment Example)

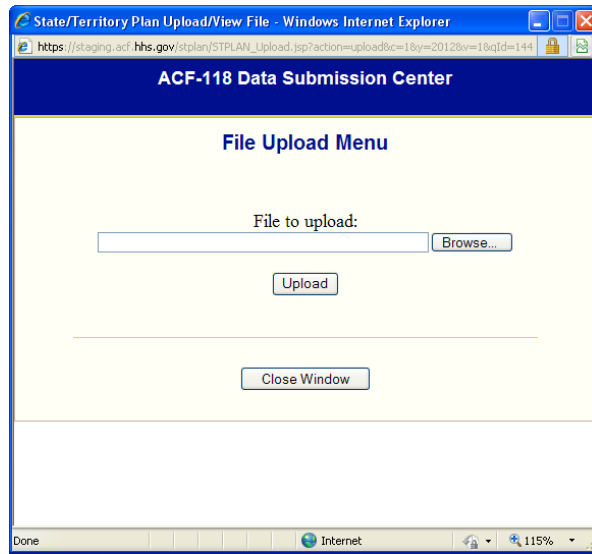
c) What information is included on the child care certificate? Attach a copy of the child care certificate as Attachment 2.6.1. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))

- Authorized provider(s)
- Authorized payment rate(s)
- Authorized hours
- Co-payment amount
- Authorization period
- Other.Describe:

A red arrow points to the 'Click to View' button, and another red arrow points to the 'Click to Attach' button.

To attach a document, the user must click the **Click to Attach** button associated with the question and type the location of the file or browse to where the file can be found on the user's computer and select the file. After the file location and name appear in the text box, the user should click the **Upload** button. The system will indicate when it is done uploading the document. The user should click the **Close Window** button to return to the selected question. To view the document that was uploaded, use the **Click to View** button.

## File Upload Screen



### Local Variation

For some questions, Lead Agencies that are locally-administered will need to provide multiple responses. Some sections in the Plan (e.g., Section 2.6.2 on child care services provided through certificates, grants and/or contracts, Section 2.7 on payment rates) specifically ask about the application of policy across the entire State or Territory. In those cases, Lead Agencies should describe the local variation and include any associated attachments. The Lead Agency need not specify the details of each local variation unless the Lead Agency chooses to provide such detail. For example, in response to Section 2.5, the Lead Agency could list the State-level priorities, but note that local counties have the flexibility to change the order of the priorities. It would not be necessary to list the priorities in each county. An acceptable response would be: *“Counties must submit their priorities to the State Lead Agency office for approval.”* Responses merely indicating that counties set their own priorities may not be acceptable unless it is made clear that the Lead Agency maintains its required “overall responsibility.”

This issue applies to questions in 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 (eligibility may be set by each local entity), 2.4 (e.g., each county can have its own sliding fee scale with a different effective date), 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 (each entity can have its own payment rates with different effective dates) and Part 3 (Health and Safety and Quality Improvement Activities).

### Quality Performance Report

Appendix 1 of the Plan Pre-Print, the Quality Performance Report, is currently included in the submission site for reference purposes only. You will not be able to enter any information for

this section of the Plan at the time of core Plan submission. A future release of the submission site will accommodate the completion of this report. The Quality Performance Report for FFY2012 is due no later than December 31, 2012.

## Logging Out

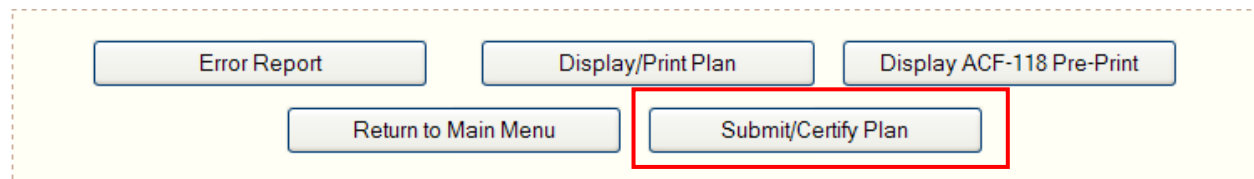
In order to log out of the submission site, users must first return to the main menu. From the main menu, the user can click the **Logout** link.

## Submit/Certify Process

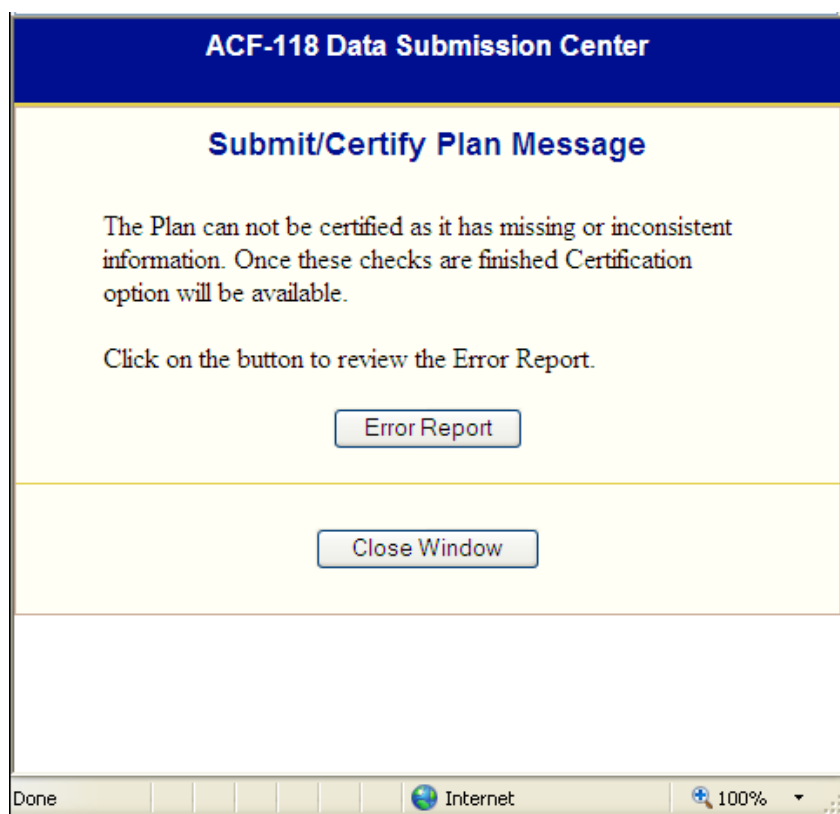
After users have answered all of the Plan questions, the Plan must be officially submitted and the Lead Agency must certify that their program has met all CCDF Program requirements. Only the Super user has the authority to submit and certify the Plan.

### ACF-118 Sample Question Display

The screenshot displays the ACF-118 Data Submission Center interface. At the top, it shows the user's location as Alabama, the status as 'Work In Progress', and the plan details: 'Plan: FFY2012 - FFY2013' and 'Version: Initial Submission: Effective Date: 2011-01-01'. The main content area is titled '1.6. Child Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan'. It includes a detailed instruction paragraph and a sub-question '1.6.1. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of your efforts in this area. Check only ONE.' Below this are three radio button options: 'Planning', 'Developed', and 'Other/Describe:'. The 'Other/Describe:' option is selected, and a rich text editor is provided for input. At the bottom of the interface, a row of buttons includes 'Save', 'Save and Next', 'Error Report', 'Display/Print Plan', 'Table of Contents', 'Main Menu', and 'Submit/Certify Plan', with the 'Submit/Certify Plan' button highlighted by a red box.



The Super User must click the **Submit/Certify Plan** button in order to begin the submission process. The submission site automatically checks the Plan for completeness. If all sections of the Plan **have not** been completed, a message will display indicating that the Plan can not be submitted and certified. The user will have the option to generate an error report. To generate the report, the user should click the **Error Report** button. The report, which will open in a new window, will detail the sections of the plan that have not been completed. The State users must return to the incomplete sections and complete the data entry process before the Super User can Submit/Certify. Users will not be able to submit the Plan unless all sections of the Plan have been completed.



If all sections of the Plan **have** been completed, the Super User will be prompted to certify the Plan via electronic-signature. The Super User must acknowledge that the Plan meets the required assurances and certifications listed in Appendix 2 of the Plan by clicking the check box and then clicking the **Submit/Certify Plan** button.



## Submit/Certify Page

**ACF-118 Data Submission Center**

**Submit/Certify Plan**

Please check the box below and select the **Submit/Certify Plan** button to indicate that the Plan is complete and ready for review by the Office of Child Care.

**NOTE:** Once the Plan has been certified and is being reviewed by the Office of Child Care, the Plan cannot be modified. If changes need to be incorporated, please contact your Regional Office to discuss request.

I acknowledge that the Plan meets the required assurances and certifications listed in [Appendix 2](#)

After the Super user submits the Plan, both Super users and the Regional and Central Offices will receive an e-mail confirming that the Plan has been submitted and certified. At this point, the State users will no longer be able to make any further changes, and the Regional Office can begin the review and approval process. Users will be able to access the Plan for viewing and printing only. During the Plan review and approval process, the Plan can only be re-opened for further editing if the Regional Office staff determines that the Plan needs revision.

### ***Amendments***

Lead Agencies may make changes to their Approved CCDF Plans. Any such Ammendments to Plans can be submitted via the electronic submission site during FFY2012.

## Resources for Additional Help

If you have other questions or need more information about the ACF-118 Plan, there are two primary resources for additional help – the Office of Child Care (OCC) Central Office for general reporting questions. You should contact your Regional Office Child Care Program Manager if you have questions regarding your Plan submission. Contact information for the **Regional Offices** can be found on the OCC website:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/ta/raaddr/program\\_managers.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/ta/raaddr/program_managers.htm)

If you need a username and password to access the ACF-118 Submission Site, or have problems accessing the site, please contact the Child Care Automation Resource Center (CCARC). You can reach **CCARC** Monday to Friday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, prevailing Eastern Time.

Phone (toll-free):	1-877-249-9117
E-mail:	<a href="mailto:ccarc@childcaredata.org">ccarc@childcaredata.org</a>
Fax:	301-692-0700
Mail:	2600 Tower Oaks Boulevard Suite 600 Rockville, MD 20852

# Appendix 1



## CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND CCDF Plan (ACF-118) Internet Submission

To ensure appropriate authorization for accessing or submitting ACF-118 information via the Internet, please provide the following information:

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Title:</b>
<b>Agency:</b>
<b>Mailing address:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>
<b>Fax:</b>
<b>E-mail:</b>
<b>User Type:</b> State user <input type="checkbox"/> Super user <input type="checkbox"/>

**Please complete this form for each authorized individual.**

Then e-mail, fax, or mail to:

Child Care Automation Resource Center  
2600 Tower Oaks Blvd.  
Suite 600  
Rockville, MD 20852  
**ccarc@childcaredata.org**  
Fax: 301-692-0700

A Child Care Automation Resource Center liaison will contact you to provide additional information and instructions about accessing the ACF-118 Submission Site. They can be reached at 1-877-249-9117 or via email at [CCARC@childcaredata.org](mailto:CCARC@childcaredata.org).