

Iowa and the Family Violence Indicator

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (P.L. 104-193 or PRWORA) expanded the existing Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) by adding two new components—the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) and the Federal Case Registry of Child Support Orders (FCR). Similarly, each State was required to establish a State Directory of New Hires (SDNH) and a State Case Registry (SCR), as necessary components of its statewide automated system.

Because of this expansion in the amount of data available, States' child support plans must now include certain provisions for safeguarding the confidential information handled by the State IV-D agency. Specifically, States are required to have “prohibitions against the release of information on the whereabouts of 1 party or the child to another party against whom a protective order with respect to the former party or the child has been entered[.]” (42 U.S.C. §654(26)(B)) States also are to have “prohibitions against the release of information on the whereabouts of 1 party or the child to another person if the State has reason to believe that the release of the information to that person may result in physical or emotional harm to the party or the child[.]” (42 U.S.C. § 654(26)(C))

In addition to these requirements for State-level data management and protection, the law requires State plans to have procedures regarding the transmission of information to, and the release of information from, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). The States must have procedures “to notify the Secretary...that the State has reasonable evidence of domestic violence or child abuse against a party or the child and that disclosure of such information could be harmful to the party or the child[.]” (42 USC §654(26)(D)) This notice permits DHHS, at the Federal level, to safeguard data regarding the at-risk person as well.

States provide notice of possible domestic violence or child abuse—collectively called “family violence”—by means of a data element that is transmitted from each State's SCR to the FCR. This data element is called the “Family Violence Indicator” or “FV Indicator.”

Once States determine the criteria they will apply to set the FV Indicator, they must decide how they will acquire that information. Generally, States either place the responsibility on the protected person to supply the relevant family violence information or they may take some independent action to uncover the facts that will lead to the placement of the FV Indicator.

In Iowa, child support participant data is compared to data from the Department of Public Safety's protective order file, as well as data from the Central Child Abuse Registry. A disclosure risk indicator (DRI)—the Iowa FV Indicator—is placed on a person when there is:

- A protective order safeguarding one person from another person in the same case;
- A founded allegation of child abuse against an adult in the same case as the child;
- A good cause indicator on the case;
- An order by a court in Iowa that an address for an individual on the case not be disclosed for UIFSA purposes;

- A determination in another state that a disclosure risk comparable to any of the above risk indicators exists; or,
- A court order dismissing a petition for the information to the requester.

If a custodial party is protected by the DRI in a given case, all children on the case are also automatically flagged. If a child on the case is the person initially flagged, the custodial party and all other children on the case are automatically flagged. This prevents someone from getting the address of the protected person by requesting a search on someone else in the child support case who resides in the same household as the protected person.

In Iowa's automated match, the system examines for exact matches between the last name, the first five letters of the first name, the Social Security number (SSN), and the birth date. When the following data match for a victim and an offender on the same ICAR (Iowa Collections and Reporting System) case, the system adds a DRI.

Offender Data	Victim Data
SSN + last name + first name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Last name + first name o SSN + last name <u>or</u> first name o Birth date + last name <u>or</u> first name
SSN + birth date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Last name + first name o SSN + last name <u>or</u> first name o Birth date + last name <u>or</u> first name
Last name + first name + birth date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o SSN + last name <u>or</u> first name o Birth date + last name <u>or</u> first name

The DRI appears on various screens in ICAR and displays a victim code for each person identified as a victim on the case. ICAR also tracks the source of this information. It is either entered automatically, as a result of the match, or manually by a worker when the information comes from another source. The presence of a DRI on a case member's record is then used to set the FV Indicator in the FCR.

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