EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Executive Summary outlines the functionality of the Federal Case Registry (FCR) and provides a brief explanation of some of the practices included in this Guide. In addition, it offers a high-level overview of the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS). This Summary also refers the reader to other sections within this Guide, as well as to other documents that contain related information for a more detailed explanation of the FPLS and the FCR.

This Guide provides information for a variety of professional positions at the State level. Although the primary audience is the IV-D agency technical staff, this Guide provides information that will assist State IV-D administrative and programmatic/policy staff in understanding the basic functionality of the FCR. In addition, this Guide provides information that can assist IV-D agency staff in explaining and defining the functionality of the FPLS. Finally, this document provides the information necessary to program for the exchange of data between the FCR and the State Case Registry (SCR).

FPLS Overview

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) operates a national automated system, the FPLS, that enables the IV-D agency to more effectively resolve some of the Locate and jurisdictional problems that are caused by interstate movement of custodial parties (CPs) and non-custodial parents (NCPs). By identifying information about persons involved in interstate child support enforcement cases, the FPLS increases the States’ ability to establish paternity; to establish, set the amount of, or modify child support obligations; and to enforce child support obligations. The FPLS consists of:

- the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH),
- the FCR, and
- the FPLS.

The NDNH is a national repository of:

- New Hire (W-4) information: States, territories and Federal agencies report newly-hired employees.
- Quarterly Wage (QW) information: States, territories and Federal agencies report employee quarterly wages.
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) information: States and territories report unemployment claimant information on persons who apply for or receive UI benefits.

The FCR is a national registry of:

- IV-D Cases: Each State and territory submits information on cases and persons for which the State IV-D agency is providing services.
- Non IV-D Orders: Each State and territory submits information on persons involved in support orders that are established or modified on or after October 1, 1998.
The FPLS is a system for requesting:

- Address,
- Employment,
- Income,
- Asset, and
- Social Security Number (SSN) information.

The FCR is used to receive and pass FPLS requests and responses. Using the FCR, States continue to receive the same information, although with some modification and improvement, that has been provided in the past through the FPLS. The following Locate sources provide the types of information listed above.

- Social Security Administration (SSA),
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS),
- Department of Defense (DOD)/Office of Personnel Management (OPM),
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI),
- Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), and
- National Security Agency (NSA).

The FPLS supplements, and extends the functionality of, the FPLS by providing:

- access to more recent information,
- quick response to requests,
- on-going cross-referencing of the FCR and the NDNH when key changes occur to a participant on either system, and
- IRS-1099 information.

The FCR component of the FPLS adds additional functionality by routinely comparing FCR and NDNH data under certain circumstances. For a comprehensive description of the matching processes, refer to Section 4.2.4, “FCR Proactive Match Processing”.

It is important to note that automatic data matching and other routine FCR processing is prohibited for a person who has been designated with a Family Violence (FV) Indicator. Section 1.2.4, “Implications of Family Violence on the FCR,” and Section 7.1.1, “Requesting an FV Indicator Override Through OCSE,” provide further explanations of the implications, functionality and override of a FV designation.

Federal law restricts who may request information from the FPLS and the information that the FPLS returns in response to the requests. Refer to Part 9, “System Access, Security and Privacy,” for an in-depth discussion of FCR and NDNH data access. Also, Section 6.7, “Request for Locate,” provides detailed information on:

- who is authorized to request FCR and NDNH information,
- the authorized purposes for which a request may be made, and
- the type and amount of information that the FCR returns to the State.
States must implement safeguards to protect the rights of individuals to privacy and to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of information. Each State must ensure the accuracy and completeness of information in their SCR, as well as restrict access to confidential information to authorized persons and for authorized purposes. FPLS information that is stored or processed in the States’ Child Support Enforcement (CSE) systems is subject to the security and privacy requirements of the *Automated Systems for Child Support Enforcement: A Guide for States*. Section 9.2, “FPLS Federal Level Security,” provides more information regarding privacy, disclosure and security requirements for State systems.

The magnitude of these changes and the increased access to other States’ information may heighten concerns regarding the need to restrict access to protect individuals’ privacy and to allow the exchange of information only for the intended authorized purpose. To address these concerns, the FCR ensures confidentiality and restricts access in compliance with all applicable Federal laws and regulations.

**Importance of SSNs in FCR Processing**

Social Security Numbers (SSNs) are critical in maximizing the usage of the FPLS. The FCR uses SSNs as key identifiers. The system requires an SSN to store a person on the FCR and to perform Locate Requests. A State must submit either an SSN, or information that is sufficient to identify an SSN, when sending a transaction to add a person to the FCR, or when requesting a Locate. A verified SSN is required in order to perform a Locate Request. The FCR uses only verified SSNs in the Matching or Locate processes. Verified SSNs greatly increase the reliability of data on the FCR. They also ensure that the State receives correct FCR and NDNH matching information to assist them in their child support enforcement efforts.

**Technical Assistance**

OCSE is providing technical and functional support to States for data submission and other interactions with the FCR in the following ways:

- conference calls,
- manuals,
- electronic aids,
- on-site support,
- information telephone line,
- question and answer process, and
- workshops.

The support is available to States through various means, including the FPLS Information Line, or the FPLS Website, identified below:

FPLS Information Line – 1-202-401-9267
FPLS Website – http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/
Appendix D, “Technical Assistance,” provides information on the individuals to contact if technical assistance is needed for a State’s planning for, and implementation of, the FCR interface.

**Additional Resources**

This Guide focuses on the technical aspects of the FCR. The following documents and sources provide additional information regarding requirements and functionality of the FPLS:

- *FCR Implementation Guide*
- *New Hire Implementation Guide*
- *NDNH Guide for Data Submission*
- *CSENet Interface Guidance Document*
- *CSENet User’s Manual*
- *CSENet Operations Manual*
- *CSENet Program Maintenance Manual*
- *Interstate Referral Guide*
- The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
- The Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act of 1997
- The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997
- The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997
PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Federal Case Registry (FCR) Interface Guidance Document (IGD) is to provide IV-D agencies with information on the technical aspects of establishing and maintaining the interfaces needed between their statewide automated systems and the FCR. Although the primary audience is the IV-D agency technical staff, this document provides basic information to assist IV-D administrative and programmatic/policy staff in understanding the functionality of the FCR. In brief, the IGD provides:

1. an overview of the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS),
2. an explanation of the FCR system,
3. detailed information regarding FCR processing of State data,
4. technical information for submitting and receiving data, and
5. guidance on the use of FCR data.

The IGD is written in a manner to make location of information as easy as possible. This document is divided into ten parts. The following descriptions provide a summary of the information contained in each section and the objective of each section.

The Executive Summary provides a high-level summary of the FPLS. The objective of this section is to provide IV-D directors and administrators with a working knowledge of the FCR and to refer them to other documents and resources that may assist in gaining additional information.

Part 1, “FPLS Overview”, provides detailed information regarding the FPLS, including an overview of the laws and regulations that are relevant to the FPLS, a description of the FPLS, FCR and National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) functionality, and a discussion of the benefits of the FCR for interstate case processing. The objective of this section is to provide a more detailed overview of the FPLS that will assist IV-D agencies in understanding the FPLS. This section focuses on the FCR requirements and functionality.

Part 2, “System Integration Strategies”, discusses strategies for integrating FCR functionality within State systems. This section also discusses case management, system processing of FCR data, and CSENet support of FCR interstate data. The objective of this section is to provide the IV-D agencies with information that assists the programmatic/policy staff and the technical staff in understanding the scope and volume of data that is involved in the FCR and State Case Registry (SCR) interface, and to offer suggestions on managing the processing of this data.

Part 3, “Data Transmission Method”, provides detailed information on the method of data transmission to and from the FCR. The objective of this section is to provide detailed information for successful transmission of data to the FCR and successful receipt of data from the FCR.

Part 4, “FCR Transactions”, describes the FCR transactions that the State transmits to the FCR and the transactions that are returned from the FCR. This section discusses the
transaction layouts and data elements and provides examples of FCR transactions. The objective of this section is to provide IV-D agency technical staff with an overview of the transactions that are involved in the FCR/SCR interface. This section provides information regarding the record layouts, although the layouts are not included in this section. Appendix G (input records) and Appendix H (output records) contain the actual transaction record layouts.

**Part 5**, “FCR Transaction Procedures”, discusses the processing that takes place that affects FCR transactions. This section contains detailed information on the common processes of the FCR, the Social Security Number (SSN) identification and verification and the Acknowledgement and Error/Warning Responses. The objective of this section is to provide IV-D agency technical staff with the appropriate information regarding the responses that are returned from the FCR. This section discusses the Error/Warning Responses. Appendix J, “Error Messages,” contains the actual error codes.

**Part 6**, “FCR Transaction-Specific Information”, provides detailed information regarding each FCR transaction, including the State action that initiates the SCR-to-FCR transaction, FCR-to-SCR return transaction and the recommended response the SCR should take upon receipt of FCR information. The objective of this section is to provide the appropriate information to IV-D agency technical staff for programming of the FCR/SCR interface, as well as to provide IV-D agency programmatic/policy staff with guidance concerning the required actions.

**Part 7**, “OCSE FCR Functions”, describes the functions that the FCR performs specifically for the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). It also outlines the off-line process a State uses to request information from OCSE. The objective of this section is to provide IV-D agencies with an understanding of the OCSE-only functions and how the State can request information from OCSE.

**Part 8**, “Management Information”, provides detailed information regarding the Management Information (MI) reports available to the States and OCSE. The objective of this section is to provide an overview of the reports to assist the States in effectively using the data.

**Part 9**, “System Access, Security and Privacy”, discusses data access, privacy issues and system security. The objective of this section is to provide IV-D agencies with guidance on who may access FCR and SCR data, and to review IV-D privacy and system security requirements.

**Part 10**, “Additional FCR Functions”, describes significant new functionality that has been added to the FCR since it was implemented, such as FCR SSA Death Master File Processing, the FCR Data Inconsistency File, SSA’s State Verification and Exchange System (SVES), and the FPLS functions that are performed for the data match with Multistate Financial Institutions. This section includes a description of the Multistate Financial Institution Data Match (MSFIDM) process and the interface with the Federal Offset Program. The objective of this section is to provide the appropriate information to IV-D agencies’ technical staff for programming the FCR/SCR interface for the data that is returned from these additional processes.
The Appendices include numerous sections that outline requirements of the FCR, describe codes and detailed record layouts, and present other information to assist States in interfacing with the FCR.

Certain portions of this Guide contain information that is likely to be more helpful to the technical staff than to administrative, programmatic or operational staff. The following list highlights those sections and how they might be helpful.

Appendix A, “Acronyms List”, presents all FCR abbreviations used in this document.

Appendix B, “List of Organizations”, presents all agencies and organizations that constitute the FPLS project team.

Appendix C, “Glossary of Terms”, presents an alphabetical list of FCR technical terms and their meanings.

Appendix D, “Technical Support”, provides States with technical support for the development and implementation of the interface needed to comply with State requirements for the FCR.

Appendix E, “Data Dictionary”, contains full descriptions of every field on the FCR’s input and output transaction records.

Appendix F, “State and Territory Abbreviations and FIPS Codes”, presents all State and Territory abbreviations and Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS Codes) for all States and territories.

Appendix G, “FCR Input Transaction Layouts”, presents separate input transaction records for each of the possible input actions.

Appendix H, “FCR Output Transaction Layouts”, presents separate output transaction records for each of the possible output actions.

Appendix I, “Transaction Timeframes”, presents forms and the requirements for the options provided by the FCR to the States to assist in FCR-to-SCR processing.

Appendix J, “Error Messages”, presents all error and warning codes, including the title of each error and a brief description.

Appendix K, “SCR/FCR Transactions and Responses”, presents ten charts, numbered K-1 through K-10, each of which summarizes the SCR and FCR transactions and responses associated with each of the ten transactions described in Sections 6.1 through 6.10. For each chart, four separate aspects of the transaction are described.

Appendix L, “FCR Options for Data Received”, presents descriptions of the options that are available to States to received additional information or suppress unwanted information in the response records that are returned to submitters.
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