Glossary

of

Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information Systems (SACWIS)

Terms & Acronyms

**Prepared by the
Division of State Systems
Children's Bureau**

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SACWIS GLOSSARY

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is the Federal Agency responsible for approximately 60 programs that promote the economic and social well-being of children, families, and communities such as providing services and assistance to needy children and families, including TANF, child support enforcement, Head Start, child care, and foster care and adoption assistance.

See DSS for the organizational hierarchy.

Action Transmittal

Action Transmittal is a Federal issuance that conveys program guidance information to grantees of actions they are expected or required to take. They clarify and explain procedures and methods for operationalizing program policies and add details to program regulations or policy guide requirements.

Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF)

Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) is the Federal commission that administers the major Federal programs that support several functions. They are, social services that promote the positive growth and development of children and youth and their families; protective services and shelter for children and youth in at-risk situations; child care for working families and families on public assistance; and adoption for children with special needs.

See DSS for the organizational hierarchy.

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) is the system for collecting data on children in foster care and children who have been adopted who were under the auspices of the State child welfare agency. The system has both State and Federal components.

Alternatives Analysis	In system design, Alternatives Analysis is the planning, solution options are identified and those determined to be viable become candidates for detailed analysis. Candidate solutions are evaluated by compiling and analyzing such factors as lifecycle cost, cost-benefits, risk, technical performance, schedule, system safety management, human factors, etc.
Advance Planning Document (**APD)**	Advance Planning Document (APD) is the procedure by which States obtain approval for Federal Financial Participation (FFP) in the cost of acquiring automatic data processing equipment and services for SACWIS. The APD must be approved by the Division of State Systems (DSS) before system development begins. The APD provides the data required to determine funding levels for the project. See 45 CFR Part 95, Subpart F for further guidance.
Advance Planning Document Update (APDU)	Advance Planning Document Update (APDU) is a regular supplement to an APD submitted by the States to the Federal government that describes on-going systems development. Generally, this document is submitted annually, but it may be submitted more frequently if major changes in the project occur. See IAPDU
American Public Human Services Association (APHSA)	American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) was founded in 1930 as a nonprofit, bipartisan organization of individuals and agencies concerned with human services.
Adoption and Safe Families Act (**ASFA)**	Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) is the Federal child welfare legislation (1997) which focuses on improving the safety of children, promoting adoption and finding other permanent homes for children who need them, and to support families.
Benefiting Program Methodology	Benefiting Program Methodology is a methodology for allocating costs of system expenditures to benefit programs, as opposed to assigning all costs to a primary program. Common costs are assigned to specific programs according to commensurate benefits received. By contrast, primary program methodology assigns common costs exclusively to one program.

Business Process Management (BPM)

Business Process Management (BPM) is the concept of shepherding work items through a multi-step process. The items are identified and tracked as they move through each step, with either specified people or applications processing the information. The process flow is determined by process logic and the applications (or processes) themselves play virtually no role in determining where the messages are sent.

Child Abuse and Neglect (CA/N)

Child Abuse and Neglect (CA/N) is a Federal legislation that identifies the minimum behaviors or acts that define physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, upon which States may base their definitions. CA/N at a minimum is: any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (1974) was reauthorized as Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1996. The Act provides Federal funding to States in support of assessment, prevention, prosecution, investigation, and treatment activities and also provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for demonstration programs and projects. It also sets forth a minimum definition of child abuse and neglect.

Case

In SACWIS, a documented collection of one or more situations and their required casework activities for addressing the protective and/or preventive service needs of children and their respective families.

Children's Bureau (CB)   Children's Bureau is the Federal bureau that is responsible for assisting States in the delivery of child welfare services designed to protect children and strengthen families. The agency provides grants to States, Tribes and communities to operate a range of child welfare services including child protective services (child abuse and neglect) family preservation and support, foster care, adoption and independent living.

See DSS for the organizational hierarchy.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)   Each State will undergo a Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) which is an assessment for compliance with Federal requirements for child protective services, foster care, adoption and family preservation and support services under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The State will be assessed on outcomes for children and families in terms of safety, permanency and child and family well being, and the administration of State programs that directly enhance their capacity to deliver services leading to improved and positive outcomes.

Cost Allocation   Cost Allocation is the method for determining how costs associated with system development are shared across different programs or funding sources. Factors to consider when developing a cost allocation methodology include analyzing system data elements; evaluating the specific functions to be programmed into the system; examining the caseloads of the programs to be served; and projecting the level of effort in the design or programming activity. It is the State's responsibility to develop a methodology using factors that most accurately reflect Federal and State program shares to appropriately and equitably allocate project costs.

All cost allocation methodologies must identify and include all benefiting program areas and their respective funding sources, a percentage of derived benefits that the program area (funding sources) expects to realize from each individual service, and overall program area magnitude (cases, transactions, and expenditures for services).

See Cost Allocation Plan

Cost Allocation Plan	Two types of Cost Allocation Plan are Developmental Cost Allocation Plan and the Operational Cost Allocation Plan. The <u>Developmental Cost Allocation Plan</u> is the methodology by which States allocate system development costs as part of the Advance Planning Document (APD) which is submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The <u>Operational Cost Allocation Plan</u> is the methodology for the allocation of system maintenance costs. This plan is submitted to the DHHS Division of Cost Allocation for review and approval.
	See Cost Allocation
Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)	The Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) is used to demonstrate that the projected benefits are sufficient to warrant the expenditure for the system project. Justification will be based on measurable outcomes and qualitative improvements.
Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)	Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) is an association of nearly 800 public and private nonprofit agencies that assist more than 3.5 million abused and neglected children and their families each year with a range of services.
Data Warehouse	Data Warehouse is a database specifically designed to contain historic snapshots of various operational system data, normally in an aggregated form which is used by data analysts and other end users for analyzing, reporting, tracking, and supporting strategic decisions. Data in a data warehouse is stored in different structures from that stored in transactional systems.
Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC)	Detailed Case Data Component (DCDC) is a compilation of case-level information from States as a part of a voluntary national data collection and Federal reporting of the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). It also includes a Summary Data Component.
	See NCANDS
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the United States (Federal) government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves.
	See DSS for the organizational hierarchy.
Disaster Recovery/ Business	A Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) or a Business Continuity Plan

Continuity Plan	(BCP) describes how an organization plans to deal with potential disasters. A Disaster Recovery Plan consists of the precautions taken so that the effects of a disaster will be minimized, and the organization will be able to either maintain or quickly resume mission-critical functions. Typically, disaster recovery planning involves an analysis of business processes and continuity needs.
Division of State Systems (DSS)	Division of State Systems (DSS) is a Federal agency, formerly the Office of State Systems. DSS oversees Advance Planning Document (APD) approval of SACWIS and other title IV-B and title IV-E system development costs, monitors on-going development through State submitted ADPUs, and conducts monitoring and SACWIS Assessment Reviews.
	The organizational hierarchy of DSS is diagrammed as: DSS/CB/ACYF/ACF/DHHS. This means the Division of State Systems is located within the Children's Bureau (CB). CB (along with the Family and Youth Services Bureau, is located within the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF). ACYF is located within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). ACF is one of the primary agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).
Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF)	Emergency Assistance to Families (EAF) is a Federal funding source used to provide aid, care, and services to deal with crises threatening the family. TANF-funded EAF programs administered through a child welfare information system must be allocated to the State or the TANF program.
Eligibility	Eligibility identifies the funding source and the financial reimbursement level of a payment based on Federal and State criteria.
Feasibility Study	Feasibility Study is an analysis of factors to determine whether an information system will achieve the desired objectives. It is a preliminary study to determine whether it is sufficiently probable that effective and efficient use of automated equipment or systems can be made to warrant a substantial investment of staff, time and money requested and whether the plan is capable of being accomplished successfully.

Federal Financial Participation (FFP)	Federal Financial Participation (FFP) is the Federal government's share of an approved State cost (e.g., the cost of a State's SACWIS development). The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (OBRA 93) provided enhanced Federal Financial Participation (FFP) at the 75 percent rate for statewide automated child welfare information systems to carry out the State's programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. This funding level was available for the period October 1, 1993 through September 30, 1997 for the planning, design, development, and installation of statewide systems. After September 30, 1997 the FFP rate reverted to 50 percent.
Final Rule	A Final Rule is regulation issued to amend the Code of Federal Regulations and it finalizes proposed rules (regulations) previously issued or takes final action without a prior proposed rule.
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) (1996) is a Federal law that establishes standards for the exchange of electronic data for specified administrative and financial transactions, and establishes protocols for protecting the security and confidentiality of electronic health information.
Implementation Advance Planning Document (IAPD)	Implementation Advance Planning Document (IAPD) is a document that is used by States to seek Federal reimbursement for the costs of designing, developing, and implementing a system.
Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC)	Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) is a protocol that defines the conditions under which children from one State may be placed in a safe and suitable home in another State.
Information Memorandum (IM)	Information Memorandum (IM) is a Federal policy document that is used by program and staff offices to communicate with State agencies and grantees on a variety of matters, such as program activities and priorities, progress reports, research findings, regulations, and Federal legislation affecting human service programs. Information memoranda may also provide States with program tools, models, and techniques that States may use.
Information and Technology Solutions Management (ISM)	IT Solutions Management for Human Services (ISM) is an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association. ISM is an association of State, Local and Federal Government Information Systems professionals working in the Health and Human Services areas.

Legacy System	Legacy System is an existing or old computer system used to support a specific program area. The term is used generically to distinguish the existing or old system from the new or planned system.
National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (**NAPCWA**)	National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) is a membership organization that represents administrators of city, county and State public agencies that provide child abuse prevention, family preservation, child protection, foster care, adoption and independent living services to children and families. NAPCWA is an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association.
National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (**NCANDS**)	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) is voluntary national data collection and analysis system that is the repository for data required by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). See DCDC
National Data Analysis System (**NDAS**)	National Data Analysis System (NDAS), is a part of CWLA's National Center for Research, Data, and Technology. It is a comprehensive collection of child welfare data and statistics from States. The data is collected from a variety of sources including NCANDS, AFCARS, and the Urban Institute.
Needs Assessment	Needs Assessment is a systematic evaluation of current system and programmatic operations and projected needs. This evaluation is performed as part of the system development life cycle prior to design, and implementation.
National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)	National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) assists Tribes by helping to strengthen and enhance their capacity to deliver quality child welfare services. NICWA is a partner in the group of agencies forming NRCITCW (see below).
National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology (**NRC-CWDT**)	National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology (NRC-CWDT) provides assistance to State, local and tribal child welfare agencies and the courts in improving outcomes for children and families through the use of information technology. The NRC-CWDT provides technical assistance to States through examining and analyzing the effective use of automation in meeting data reporting requirements with guidance from the Children's Bureau.

Office of Information Systems (OIS)	Office of Information Systems (OIS) is the Federal office within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that receives, processes, and provides feedback on child welfare data, such as AFCARS and NCANDS data, submitted by States.
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is the Federal agency responsible for approving Federal regulations and data collection instruments.
Operations and Maintenance	Operations and Maintenance activities are associated with the on-going support of information systems. This includes the use of supplies, software, hardware, and personnel directly associated with the functioning of the mechanized information system. Some examples of operational activities are: providing routine maintenance; updating commercial software used in the system; updating changes to tables; creating new reports, edits, alerts and data elements; reformatting screens; and/or other minor system changes. Generally, operations and maintenance also includes making changes to existing modules to correct errors to meet original approved specifications.
	See ACYF-CB-PI-01-05, issued April 16, 2001, for more specific guidance and examples.
Planning Advance Planning Document (PAPD)	Planning Advance Planning Document (PAPD) is a document prepared by the State that is used to seek reimbursement for planning costs associated with major system development projects.
Program Improvement Plan (PIP)	States are required to formulate a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas of non-compliance identified during a Child and Family Services Review. States must satisfy the goals of the PIP in a specified timeframe, such as two years.
Policy Interpretation Question (PIQ)	Policy Interpretation Question (PIQ) is an official reply by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to an inquiry submitted by a State agency concerning application of policy. Although questions often arise from a specific practice or situation, the responses are official statements of ACF policy on the issue.

Program Instruction (PI)	Program Instruction (PI) is a Federal issuance that clarifies and explains procedures and methods for operationalizing program policies, adds details to program regulations or policy requirements, and conveys to grantees program guidance or information about actions they are expected or required to take. Program instructions may also be used to transmit State plan preprints, financial reports, program allotment tables, and non-regulatory materials on which comments are solicited, and other kind of materials.
Proof of Concept	Proof of Concept is a demonstration that a business model or concept is feasible.
Requirements Specification	Requirement Specification is identifying and documenting detailed functional and non-functional requirements for an information system.
Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) is a single statewide system that automates the collection of federally mandated child welfare data and provides support for the delivery and management of child welfare services. States receive Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for the development of a system through the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1993.
SACWIS Assessment Review Guide (SARGe)	SACWIS Assessment Review Guide (SARGe) is a document that is used to provide guidance to Federal and State personnel on conducting Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) Assessment Reviews.
SACWIS Assessment Review	After a State's child welfare automated system is operational for a approximately one year, the Division of State Systems (DSS) conducts a SACWIS Assessment Review to assess the system's functionality against the SACWIS functionality requirements and the functionality described in the State's Implementation Advance Planning Document.

System Development Life Cycle (SDLC)

System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) is an approach to develop an information system or software product that is characterized by a linear sequence of steps that progress from start to finish. The SDLC model is one of the oldest systems development models and is still probably the most commonly used. The six general steps are: 1) evaluate existing system; 2) define new system requirements; 3) design system; 4) develop new system; 5) implementation; and, 6) maintain.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is the Federal financial assistance program that replaced the Aid to Families with Dependent Children in 1996. TANF provides assistance and work opportunities to needy families by granting States the federal funds and wide flexibility to develop and implement their own welfare programs. See Title IV-A

Technical Bulletin (TB)

Technical Bulletins (TB) are documents which are issued by Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to supplement the official guidance, providing clarification or additional information to previously released documentation.

Title IV-A

Title IV-A is a reference of the Social Security Act, which establishes a Federal-State Public Assistance Program known as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). TANF is a program of time-limited assistance payments made to eligible families. TANF replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC -- otherwise known as welfare) when the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was signed into law in 1996. The program provides parents with job preparation, work and support services to help them become self-sufficient.

Title IV-B

Title IV-B is a reference of the Social Security Act which is made up of two subparts that address child welfare services and promoting safe and stable families. Sub part 1 - Child Welfare Services program helps State child welfare agencies improve service delivery to children and families with the goal of family preservation. Sub part 2 - Safe and Stable Families program promotes family preservation, reunification, support and adoptions services.

Title IV-D	Title IV-D is a reference of the Social Security Act which established a Federal-State child support enforcement program.
Title IV-E	Title IV-E is a reference of the Social Security Act, which established Federal-State programs for foster care, adoption assistance, and independent living. The foster care program provides financial support to a person, family, or institution that is raising a child or children that is not their own. The adoption assistance program provides financial support to adoptive parents of children with special needs. The independent living program provides States with funds to help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age make the transition to self-sufficiency.
Title XIX	Title XIX is a reference of the Social Security Act, which established a Federal-State health insurance program known as Medicaid.
e**X**tensible **M**arkup **L**anguage (**XML**)	e**X**tensible **M**arkup **L**anguage (XML) is a flexible way to create common information formats and share both the format and the data on the World Wide Web, intranets, and elsewhere. XML can be used by any individual or group of individuals or companies that would like to share information in a consistent way. XML describes the content in terms of what data is being described. An XML file can be processed purely as data by a program, stored with similar data on another computer, or displayed (like an HTML file).