

<h1 style="font-size: 48px; margin: 0;">ACF</h1> <p style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">Administration for Children and Families</p>	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Administration on Children, Youth and Families	
	1. Log No: ACYF-CB-PI-03-08	2. Issuance Date: November 26, 2003
	3. Originating Office: Children's Bureau	
	4. Key Words: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA); Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003	

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: The State Office, Agency or Organization Designated by the Governor to Apply for a Child Abuse and Neglect State Grant

SUBJECT: Modifications to the CAPTA State Grant Program by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-36)

LEGAL AND RELATED

REFERENCES: Section 106 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, as amended by Public Law 108-36, enacted June 25, 2003 (42 U.S.C. 5106)

PURPOSE: To require States to submit an update to the Annual Progress and Services Report for FY 2003.

INSTRUCTION:

The President signed the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, Public Law 108-36, into law on June 25, 2003. In part, the law reauthorizes and amends the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act through FY 2008.¹ The major changes in the CAPTA State Grant Program are discussed below.

¹ The law amends other provisions of CAPTA including the authority for the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect, research and technical assistance, grants for demonstration programs and projects, Children's Justice Act grants, and Community-Based Grants for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (formerly known as the Community-Based Family Resource and Support Grants). The law also amends the Adoption Opportunities and Abandoned Infants Assistance programs.

Purposes of the State Grants

Public Law 108-36 revises, redesignates and adds several purposes for the CAPTA State Grant. The purposes, as amended, are listed in Attachment A.

States with an existing Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) were required to include information about CAPTA State Grants in the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) submitted to ACF in June 2003 (ACYF-CB-PI-03-05). Due to the recent changes in CAPTA, we are requiring States to submit updates to their APSR in the following areas:

- the program areas selected for improvement from the fourteen areas enumerated in section 106(a)(1) through (14) of CAPTA; and
- the activities that the State intends to implement with its CAPTA State grant funds including any changes in activities planned for FY 2004.

If there is no change to the program areas selected for improvement or activities reported in the June 2003 APSR submission, the State must submit to ACF a simple statement to that effect. Please submit this information by December 31, 2003 to the ACF Regional Office for approval and incorporation into the State's APSR.

Eligibility Requirements

Public Law 108-36 also amends the eligibility requirements for the CAPTA State grant. The eligibility requirements, as amended, are listed in Attachment B. The new eligibility requirements will be included in the State Chief Executive Officer's Assurance Statement for the Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan requested for FYs 2004-2009.

States have until June 25, 2005 (two years after the enactment of Public Law 108-36) to comply with the requirement relating to criminal background checks.² **For all other new or revised eligibility requirements, States are expected to be in compliance by June 25, 2004 (one year after the enactment of Public Law 108-36).** States are urged to begin immediately the policy and legislative deliberations needed to comply with these new eligibility requirements. If there is a specific reason why the State cannot be in compliance by June 25, 2004, please contact the ACF Regional Office.

² See section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

Citizen Review Panel Requirements

Public Law 108-36 revises the citizen review panel requirements by:

- requiring each citizen review panel to examine the *practices* (in addition to policies and procedures) of State and local agencies to evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities (section 106(c)(4)(A));
- requiring each panel to provide for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community (section 106(c)(4)(C)); and
- requiring each panel to make recommendations to the State and public on improving the child protective services system at the State and local levels. The appropriate State agency is to respond to the panel and State and local child protective services agencies in writing no later than six months after the panel recommendations are submitted. The State agency's response must include a description of whether or how the State will incorporate the recommendations of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the State and local CPS systems (section 106(c)(6)).

States are expected to be in compliance with these requirements by June 25, 2004 (one year after the enactment of Public Law 108-36). States are urged to begin immediately the policy and legislative deliberations needed to comply with these new eligibility requirements. If there is a specific reason why the State cannot be in compliance by June 25, 2004, please contact the ACF Regional Office.

INQUIRIES TO: Regional Administrators, ACF Regions I-X

/s/

Joan E. Ohl
Commissioner
Administration on Children, Youth
and Families

Attachment A: Purposes of the CAPTA State Grants

Attachment B: New or Revised Eligibility Requirements

Purposes of the CAPTA State Grants

The amendments revise, redesignate and add several purposes for the CAPTA State Grant, as follows:

- Improving the intake, assessment, screening, and investigation of reports of abuse and neglect (section 106(a)(1));
- Creating and improving the use of multidisciplinary teams and interagency protocols to enhance investigations; and improving legal preparation and representation, including—(i) procedures for appealing and responding to appeals of substantiated reports of abuse and neglect; and (ii) provisions for the appointment of an individual appointed to represent a child in judicial proceedings (section 106(a)(2));
- Improving the case management, *including ongoing case monitoring*¹, and delivery of services *and treatment* provided to children and their families (section 106(a)(3));
- Enhancing the general child protective system by *developing, improving, and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols* (section 106(a)(4));
- *Developing and updating systems of technology that support the program and track reports of child abuse and neglect from intake through final disposition and allow interstate and intrastate information exchange* (section 106(a)(5));
- Developing, strengthening, and facilitating training *including—(A) training regarding research-based strategies to promote collaboration with the families; (B) training regarding the legal duties of such individuals*²; and *(C) personal safety training for caseworkers* (section 106(a)(6));
- *Improving the skills, qualifications, and availability of individuals providing services to children and families, and the supervisors of such individuals, through the child protection system, including improvements in the recruitment and retention of caseworkers* (section 106(a)(7));
- Developing and facilitating training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse or neglect (section 106(a)(8));

¹ Text in italics represents new provisions or changes to an existing provision.

² Individuals referred to are “individuals overseeing and providing services to children and their families through the child protection system.”

- *Developing and facilitating research-based training for individuals mandated to report child abuse or neglect (section 106(a)(9)³);*
- *Developing, implementing, or operating programs to assist in obtaining or coordinating necessary services for families of disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, including—
(A) existing social and health services,
(B) financial assistance, and
(C) services necessary to facilitate adoptive placement of any such infants who have been relinquished for adoption (section 106(a)(10));*
- *Developing and delivering information to educate the public on the role and responsibilities of the child protection system and the nature and basis for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect (section 106(a)(11));*
- *Developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level (section 106(a)(12));*
- *Supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment, including methods for continuity of treatment plan and services as children transition between systems (section 106(a)(13)); and*
- *Supporting and enhancing collaboration among public health agencies, the child protection system, and private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with education systems) and to address the health needs, including mental health needs, of children identified as abused or neglected, including supporting prompt, comprehensive health and developmental evaluations for children who are the subject of substantiated child maltreatment reports (section 106(a)(14)).⁴*

³ There are two purposes related to training mandated reporters as a result of the reauthorization. This appears to be a drafting error.

⁴ The purpose in former section 106(a)(7), to develop, strengthen and support child abuse and neglect prevention, treatment and research programs in the public and private sectors has been deleted. These activities are still an allowable use of CAPTA State grant funds.

New or Revised Eligibility Requirements

States will have to assure through a certification that the State is operating a statewide program relating to child abuse and neglect, or has in effect a State law that includes the following new or revised provisions:

- policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protection service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, including a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition in such infants, except that such notification shall not be construed to— (I) establish a definition under Federal law of what constitutes child abuse; or (II) require prosecution for any illegal action (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ii));
- the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iii));
- procedures for the immediate screening, *risk, and*¹ safety assessment, and prompt investigation of such reports (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iv));
- triage procedures for the appropriate referral of a child not at risk of imminent harm to a community organization or voluntary preventive service (section 106(b)(2)(A)(v));
- provisions to require a State to disclose confidential information to any Federal, State, or local government entity, or any agent of such entity, that has a need for such information in order to carry out its responsibility under law to protect children from abuse and neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ix));
- provisions and procedures for the appointment of a guardian ad litem *who has received training appropriate to the role*, to represent an abused or neglected child in a judicial proceeding (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xiii));
- provisions and procedures to require that a representative of the child protective services agency shall, at the initial time of contact with the individual subject to a child abuse and neglect investigation, advise the individual of the complaints or allegations made against the individual, in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the rights of the reporter (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xviii));

¹ Text in italics represents changes to an existing provision.

- provisions addressing the training of representatives of the child protective services system regarding the legal duties of the representatives, which may consist of various methods of informing such representatives of such duties, in order to protect the legal rights and safety of children and families from the initial time of contact during investigation through treatment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xix));
- provisions and procedures for improving the training, retention and supervision of caseworkers (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xx));
- provisions and procedures for referral of a child under the age of 3 who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect to early intervention services funded under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxi)), and;
- *not later than June 25, 2005 (2 years after the enactment of Public Law 108-36)*, provisions and procedures for requiring criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii)).