

AFCARS ASSESSMENT REVIEW FINDINGS – General Requirements

State: Nevada

Report Period Under Review: April 1, 2005 - September 30, 2005 (2005B)

No.	Requirement	Findings/Notes	Rating Factor
Foster Care Population			
1	<p>Must include all children in foster care for whom the State title IV-B/IV-E agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p> <p>All children in foster care under the responsibility of the State agency administering or supervision the administration of the title IV-B Child and Family Services State plan and the title IV-E State plan; that is, all children who are required to be provided the assurances of section 422(b)(10) of the Social Security Act (the Act) (Appendix A – SECTION II).</p>	<p>Organizational structure: The Department of Health and Human Services contains the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS). The Division is the designated single State title IV-B/IV-E agency. The Division includes child welfare, child mental health, and juvenile justice programs. The State staff indicated they are reporting to AFCARS only those youth who are in DCFS placement and care that are placed out of their homes. Children receiving juvenile justice or mental health services while in DCFS placement and care responsibility are not included in the AFCARS report.</p> <p>There are some juvenile justice youth that exit the correctional facility and go to a group home. However, legal responsibility remains with the parents. These youth are not to be included in AFCARS. However, there are times when DCFS is given custody of these youth. The court order language varies across court jurisdictions. In the example provided by the State during the on-site review, the language gave custody to DCFS. The staff indicated that some courts would state the custody is with juvenile services. The staff indicated they are not providing the protections under section 422(b)(10) of the Act to these youth.</p> <p>Youth that either directly enter a community based placement (foster home, group home, etc.) or are placed in such a setting after leaving a correctional (locked) facility, and are under the custody of DCFS, must be reported in AFCARS and be provided the 422(b)(10) protections. This includes those youth whose court orders state that juvenile justice services have custody of the child. Those youth that remain in the legal custody of their parents after leaving a locked facility and are placed in a group home, etc., are not to be included in AFCARS.</p>	2

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		In regard to children’s mental health, most of the placements are made by the parents. There are group home type care facilities and these are reimbursed under Medicaid. The State indicated it would be unlikely to have mental health children in DCFS’ custody. The State staff indicated that they never take custody in order to place a child in a mental health facility.	
2	All children supervised by or under the responsibility of another public agency with which the title IV-B/E agency has an agreement under title IV-E and on whose behalf the State makes title IV-E foster care maintenance payments (Appendix A - SECTION II).	The State is including children that are in the joint care and custody of juvenile justice and child welfare in the AFCARS reporting population. Nevada does not have title IV-E agreements with any other agencies or Tribes.	4
3	Includes American Indian children covered under section 422(b)(10) of the Act, on the same basis as any other child (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	The State includes American Indian children covered under section 422(b)(10) of the Act, on the same basis as any other child (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	4
4	For children in out-of-State placements, the State placing the child submits and continually updates the data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	The State includes those children in out-of-State placements. The State correctly does not include children placed in Nevada by another public agency.	4
5	Includes all children who have been in foster care at least 24 hours (Appendix A - SECTION II).	The State excludes those records in which the removal and discharge date are on the same day. However, both the removal status and legal status screens contain fields for the case worker to enter a time. The program code does not check these fields to determine whether the child’s removal was for less than 24 hours. The program code must be modified to check these fields. <i>Post site-visit findings: The program code was changed to check the time fields on the screen and to calculate whether the child was in foster care for more than 24 hours. (See line 126 of CFS728SI_AFCARS_EXT_FC.)</i>	2 3
6	Does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the State agency (Appendix A - SECTION II).	Children who have not been removed from home are correctly excluded from the population.	4

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7	Include all children who are in the placement, care, or supervision responsibility of the title IV-B/E agency that are on “trial home visits” (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3, AFCARS Reporting Population).	Nevada has a statute that requires all children placed back home to remain under the placement and care responsibility of DCFS. This “trial home visit” can last no more than 180 days. The agency may request, or the judge may order, an extension. The staff indicated that most of the cases are dismissed at the six month point. The State correctly includes these children in the AFCARS reporting population.	4
8	Includes youth over the age of 18 if a payment is being made on behalf of the child (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1, AFCARS).	<p>The age of majority in Nevada is 18. The State does claim title IV-E for youth up to their 19th birthday if the child is eligible.</p> <p>Also, the State may maintain legal custody of youth over the age of 18 if the person has severe disabilities.</p> <p>The State needs to ensure that youth that are still in the agency’s responsibility for care and placement over the age of 18 and those receiving title IV-E funds are the only youth over the age of 18 included in the AFCARS population. Otherwise, once a child is 18, legal status or the removal status, needs to be dated the child’s 18th birthday and the appropriate outcome needs to be reported for foster care element #58.</p> <p><i>Post site-visit findings: The State implemented three new legal status codes to account for the voluntary status of youth over the age of 18. The caseworker enters a discharge date and reason, and then opens the case for voluntary services.</i></p>	2 3
Adoption Population			
9	Data are required to be transmitted by the State on all adopted children who were placed by the State title IV-B/IV-E agency, and on all adopted children for whom the State agency is providing adoption assistance (either ongoing or for nonrecurring expenses), care or services directly or by contract or agreement with other private or public agencies. (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).	<p>The State is correctly including foster care adoptions.</p> <p>When an adoption is finalized, the court often does not dismiss care, custody and control until a later date, often two weeks or more. In one case that was reviewed, the worker waited until the next six month review to inform the court that the adoption had occurred, and at this point the State dismissed care, custody and</p>	4

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	<p>Report on all children adopted in the State during the reporting period and in whose adoption the State title IV-B/IV-E agency has had any involvement. All adoptions after 10/1/94 that meet the criteria below must be reported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who had been in foster care under the responsibility and care of the State child welfare agency and who were subsequently adopted whether special needs or not and whether subsidies are provided or not (Appendix B – Section II, paragraph (a)). 	<p>control. Also, if it takes several months to receive the adoption decree from another state, custody isn't dismissed until the hearing in Nevada occurs. Case management activities aren't occurring anymore; the worker is essentially waiting for the paperwork so that the case can be closed.</p> <p>The program code checks the court order effective end date.</p>	
10	<p>Report on all children adopted in the State during the reporting period and in whose adoption the State title IV-B/IV-E agency has had any involvement. All adoptions after 10/1/94 that meet the criteria below must be reported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All special needs children, whether or not they were in the public foster care system prior to their adoption and for whom non-recurring expenses were reimbursed. • Children adopted for whom an adoption assistance payment or service is being provided based on arrangements with the State agency. (Appendix B – Section II, paragraphs (b) and (c)). 	<p>There is no apparent check for private adoptions in the program code. However, if an adoption application is entered and approved in UNITY, private agency adoptions should be extracted. The program code checks for State agency involvement by looking at adoption elements #34 and #35. The check for #35 should include these adoption cases.</p> <p>The State staff indicated that modifications need to be made to the screens because the information for these children is difficult to enter into the system.</p> <p>In the initial selection logic of the program code, the values for “another State” and U.S. Territory are excluded. However, the program code for adoption element #33 does include a check for “another State.”</p> <p>The State needs to ensure that there is no agency involvement with these cases. There may be a possibility a private agency in another country or State is handling an adoption that is taking place in Nevada, and the child is a special needs child and Nevada has entered into an adoption agreement with the adoptive family. The State should remove this exclusion from the code and monitor the data.</p>	3 2
11	For children adopted out-of-State, the placing State reports	The State includes in its AFCARS report those children placed	3

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	the adoption data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).	in another State for adoption. There is an issue with the date of the finalization entered into the system. See adoption element #21 and foster care element #56.	4
12	Voluntarily reports on all other adoptions. (Appendix B – Section II).	The State is not submitting information on private adoptions with which the State has no involvement.	
Technical Requirements			
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)			
13	The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period	The program code checks for dates of occurrences to ensure that the information occurred prior to the end of the report period and does not pick up information that occurs after the end of the report period. To transmit a subsequent file, the dates of the report period can be set and are used to identify information that occurred for that report period. The system has a user window to be used by the system administrator to set up the AFCARS file. When the window is opened, the period that the system thinks the user is looking for is pre-filled, but the date range parameter can be changed to any report period. The State can also run AFCARS reports on a monthly basis, or other time periods for QA purposes. There is a log of dates created when a file is run.	4
14	The data must be submitted in electronic form as described in Appendix C.		4
15	The data must be in record layouts as delineated in Appendix D.	The State submits the file in the correct record layout.	4
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(2)			
16	For foster care information, the child-specific data to be transmitted must reflect the data in the information system when the data are extracted.	The data submitted reflects the report period for which it is extracted for; histories are kept and point-in-time information is submitted for resubmissions	4
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(3)			
17	Adoption data are to be reported during the reporting period	The program code is only checking for an adoption date that	2

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	in which the adoption is legalized or, at the State’s option, in the following reporting period if the adoption is legalized within the last 60 days of the reporting period.	<p>occurs within the report period being reported. If an adoption legalization date is entered after the data are extracted and submitted, those cases are not extracted when the next report period is submitted. Therefore, these adoptions never get reported unless the State does a subsequent submission at some later date. The staff indicated they can add a check for the modified date (transaction date).</p> <p>Efforts were made to ensure that all adoptions were being reported. The State was advised that 2005a and 2005b files can be resubmitted until May 15 for Adoption Incentive Payment purposes.</p> <p><i>Post site-visit findings: The program code was modified to check for a “transaction” date to ensure all adoptions are reported. (See lines 33 - 58 of CFS728S2.)</i></p>	3
Appendix A, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care Data Elements and Appendix B, 45 CFR 1355 Adoption Data Elements			
18	State uses sequential numbering of the case record number or encrypts the record number.	The State encrypts the child’s person number. The encryption key was recently changed because the old encryption routine was causing duplications. The State resubmitted data files from 2003A through 2005B with the new encryption routine.	4
Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format			
19	Data file must be in ASCII format.	The State submits the file in ASCII.	4
20	Elements must be comprised of integer (numeric) value(s).		4
21	All records must be a fixed length.		4
22	Inform the Department, in writing, of the method of transfer intended to be used by the State.		4
Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts			
23	Report the status of all children in foster care as of the last		4

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	day of the reporting period (Section A.1.b(5)).		
24	Provide data for all children who were discharged from foster care at any time during the reporting period, or in the previous reporting period, if not previously reported (Section A.1.b(5)).	The State did have a problem with dropped records and modified the extraction routine.	4
ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995			
25	State extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge or removal.	The State is extracting the foster care file based on transaction dates.	4
Technical Bulletin #2, File Format			
26	State uses correct file name for transmission.	Yes.	4
Data Quality - Conversion			
27	State transferred historical information on open cases. Specifically, it included information on: date of first removal, total number of removals, and whether the child's mother was married at the time of the child's birth. If the case was open at the time of conversion, information on the number of placement settings was included.	Two counties, Washoe and Clark, did have an information system they were using prior to Unity. Washoe and Clark county converted all open and closed cases. The rest of the counties had to convert from paper files. A paper form went to these staff to convert open cases. The form had a minimal amount of information for workers to collect in order for a case to be established in UNITY There is an issue with the number of placements for converted cases. See foster care findings for placement count (element #24).	3
28	The information system has the capability of recording historical information. This should apply to both open cases in which historical information must be entered, and for closed cases that re-open after conversion and must be entered into the system.	There is a screen that allows the entry of the first ever removal, the number of removals, and date of discharge.	3 4