AFCARS Assessment Review: Foster Care Data Elements Improvement Plan
State: Washington
Report Period Under Review: April 1, 2002 – September 30, 2002

AFCARS Element	Factor	Finding	Task	Estimate/ Completed Date	State's Comments/Notes ACF's Sign-off Notes
#62 Title IV-D (Child Support)	1	There is no program code to look for title IV-D payments and there is no interface to the Child Support Enforcement system.	Complete the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) Assessment Review action plan item regarding the interface. Until the interface is completed, the State must develop a method to collect and report whether a child support payment was made on behalf of a child during the six-month report period.		
#5 Date of Most Recent Periodic Review (if applicable)	2	The State's program code includes the AFCARS internal consistency check to assess if the child has been in care for nine or more months. The State has some localities that have Citizen Review Boards (CRB).	Remove the internal consistency check from the program code. Extract the date of a periodic review even if it occurred before the child would have been in care for nine months. Modify the program code to check for periodic reviews held by the CRBs. Require that either the CRB or the local case worker enter the date of the review. Implement supervisory oversight to ensure these dates are entered into the system in a timely manner. Error reports can be sent to supervisors on a regular basis listing those children that have been in care for seven months and do not indicate a date of a periodic review.		

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#8 Child's Race a. American Indian or Alaska Native b. Asian c. Black or African American d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander e. White f. Unable to Determine	2	This field is initialized to spaces then reset to "0, does not apply." The code "998, other race not listed" is mapped to "unable to determine."	Modify the program code to not reset this element to zero. Remove this option and include actual other races that individuals identify. If an individual refuses to identify, or does not identify with one of the AFCARS race categories, then the State should have a value that represents "refused to provide race."		
		The program code contains the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1."	Remove the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1." Missing race information must be mapped to blanks.		
		The State's code of "888, question not asked" is mapped to "unable to determine." *Post-site visit analysis: This code is no longer mapped in the program code.*			What happens if the worker selects "question not asked" for the child's race? Will it be mapped to blank? (ACF)
#52 1st Foster Caretaker's Race #54 2nd Foster Caretaker's Race (if applicable)		This field is initialized to spaces then is reset to "0, does not apply." The code "998, other race not listed" is mapped to "unable to determine."	This field should remain initialized to spaces. Remove this option from the selection screen and include actual other races that individuals identify. If an individual refuses to identify, or does not identify with one of the AFCARS race categories, then the State should		

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		have a value that represents "refused to provide race."			
		Based on the case file review, it appears workers may not be entering this data in a timely manner.	Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
		The State's code of "888, question not asked" is mapped to "unable to determine." *Post-site visit analysis: This code is no longer mapped in the program code.*			What happens if the worker selects "question not asked" for the child's race? Will it be mapped to blank? (ACF)
#9 Hispanic/Latino Origin 1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = Unable to Determine	2	The field is initialized to spaces then reset to "3, unable to determine."	Modify the program code to leave this element initialized to spaces.		
		State code "777, can't find" is mapped to AFCARS value "unable to determine."	Map the code "777, can't find" to blank.		
		State maps "none" to "unable to determine."	Map "none" to blank.		
		Based on the case file review, it appears workers may not be entering this data.	Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#53 1st Foster Caretaker's Hispanic or Latino Origin		State code "777, can't find" is mapped to AFCARS value "unable to determine."	Map the code "777, can't find" to blank.		
#55 2nd Foster Caretaker's Hispanic		Based on the case file review, it appears workers may not be	Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that		

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Origin		entering this data.	workers enter this information.		
#10 Has the child been clinically diagnosed as having a disability(ies)? 1=Yes 2=No 3=Not yet Determined	2	There are several screens on CAMIS that collects medical information. There is no screen that contains the question whether the child has been diagnosed with a medical condition with the corresponding AFCARS responses.	Modify the input screen to collect this information as a question with all of the AFCARS responses. Once the screen has been modified, revise the program code to check for each of the responses and map them to the AFCARS values. Assess whether it is more feasible to have one "medical information" screen to collect all the information versus several input screens. The National Resource Center for Information Technology in Child Welfare (NRC-ITCW) has information on how other States have implemented the collection of medical information. As a short-term solution, modify program code to check all input screens for medical information and extract the data.		
#11 Mental Retardation #12 Visually/Hearing Impaired #13 Physically Disabled #14 Emotionally Disturbed #15 Other Diagnosed Condition [0 = Does not apply]	2	The selection list has limited choices. The selection list contains the	Review the AFCARS disability resource list for possible additional options to add to the selection screen. Check workers narrative notes for other medical information that should be included on the selection list. Modify the program code accordingly. Remove or modify the option "other."		

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1 = Applies		option "other." It is not clear if this means "other diagnosed *medical* condition" or an "other *psychological/emotional condition.*" The State may want to consider removing the option "other" and replacing it with more detailed options.			
#16 Has this child ever been adopted? 1 = Yes 2 = No 3 = Unable to Determine	2	The screen was not initially designed with this as a question. State is piloting a new screen to collect this as a question and for workers to select the type of adoption. State asked for clarification on whether this question should include "step-parent" adoptions.	Implement the screen layout submitted to, and approved by, ACF. Modify the program code to extract the responses entered by the caseworkers on the new screen. Modify program code and screen to reflect if the child's previous adoption prior to entering foster care was by a step-parent.		
#17 How old was the child when the adoption was legalized? [0 = Not Applicable] 1 = less than 2 years old 2 = 2-5 years old 3 = 6-12 years old 4 = 13 years or older 5 = Unable to Determine	2	Initialized to spaces, reset to zero, then reset to "unable to determine" if the "episode outcome" is "adoption." If the age at adoption is not known, the program code defaults to "unable to determine." The program code calculates the age at the time of the adoption for element #17 by subtracting the date of birth from the end of the placement date.	Modify program code for this element to remain initialized to space. Remove the default code and map missing data to blank. Implement the screen layout submitted to, and approved by, ACF. Modify the program code to extract the		

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			information entered on the screen.		
#23 Date of Placement in Current Foster Care Setting	2	The program code excludes:" "BA, Birth/Adoptive," "BN, Birth/Adoptive non-custodial," "HO, hospital," "OR, on the run," or missing data as placement s. For the report period under review this was correct. Changes in ACF policy went into effect October 1, 2002 and the State has not made changes to the program code. See case file review findings for discrepancies.	Modify the program code to extract the date that a placement in either a child's "own home" or "runaway" began. Modify how hospitalizations for non-acute care are collected and reported. For a stay that is for reasons other than acute care, record and extract the date the hospitalization began. Map missing data to spaces. Train caseworkers on the how to enter this information and ensure ongoing monitoring of accuracy of the data.		
#24 Number of Previous Placement Settings	2	The program code excludes placements in hospitals that are for non-acute care.	Modify the program code to include in the placement count hospitalizations for non-acute care purposes.		
#25 Manner of Removal From Home for Current placement Episode 1 = Voluntary 2 = Court Ordered 3 = Not Yet Determined	2	Initialized to spaces then reset to "3, not yet determined." The State's code "PC, protective/police" is an option on the input screen but is not mapped into AFCARS. The legal and placement component of CAMIS has problems associated with it and	Remove the re-initialization to "not yet determined." Modify the input screen and separate "Protective custody" and "Policy authority." Map "protective custody" to "court ordered" and "Police authority" to "not yet determined." As the State makes changes with the new GUI screens, provide updates and screen prints to ACF for review and		

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		is being revised using Graphical User Interface (GUI).	comment to ensure AFCARS related information is correctly incorporated. The State may want to contact the NRC-ITCW for assistance and prior review before sending to ACF.		
		Based on the case file review, it was determined the State is incorrectly reporting records where the child initially entered foster care under a voluntary placement agreement and after 180 days the agency obtained a court order to retain custody of the child. The AFCARS reports reflected a "court order" for manner of removal, not a "voluntary placement agreement."	Modify the program code to extract the voluntary placement agreement order that was first in effect, not the change to a court ordered custody authority.		
		See detailed case file findings.	Ensure that workers are entering this information in a timely manner.		
Actions or Conditions Associated With Child's Removal (Indicate all that apply with a ``1''.) #26 Physical Abuse #27 Sexual Abuse #28 Neglect #29 Parent Alcohol Abuse #30 Parent Drug Abuse #31 Child Alcohol	2	For FC elements #26 – 40, the State's input screen has space for only four conditions, and the worker is required to enter only one condition. This information must be "frozen" to reflect only the information known at the time of removal.	Implement the screen layout submitted to, and approved by, ACF. Based on information submitted by the State for the screen changes, this information will be frozen 30 days after the latest removal date or the end of a removal episode, depending which occurs first. Implement this procedure with the implementation of the screen.		

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Abuse #32 Child Drug Abuse #33 Child Disability #34 Child's Behavior Problem #35 Death of Parent #36 Incarceration of Parent #37 Caretaker Inability to Cope Due to Illness or Other Reasons #38 Abandonment #40 Inadequate Housing [0-Does not Apply] 1-Applies		See the detailed case file findings for information regarding underreporting of this information.	Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter all applicable circumstances.		
#41 Current Placement Setting 1 = Pre-Adoptive Home 2 = Foster Family Home-Relative 3 = Foster Family Home-Non-Relative 4 = Group Home 5 = Institution 6 = Supervised Independent Living 7 = Runaway 8 = Trial Home Visit	2	The program code maps "RE, respite" to "foster family home, non-relative." Workers use the placement type "respite" for children placed in foster care under a voluntary placement agreement where respite is a service to the parents as part of in-home family preservation services. The State does not include as a placement stays in a hospital for non-acute care At the end of the routine if a "3"	The program code must check whether the family is also a relative of the child. Develop another placement type for caseworkers to use for children placed in foster care as a respite service. Or if another method is selected by the State to record and/or extract this information, provide the information to ACF. The program code must be modified to extract non-acute hospitalizations as a placement setting. Remove this routine from the program		

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		is in the work field, and #41 is blank, then it sets #41 to "3, FFH, non-relative." This includes all respites.	code. Train workers to enter non-acute hospitalizations as a placement. Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#42 Is Current Placement Out-of-State? 1=Yes 2=No	2	This element is initialized to spaces then reset to zero.	Modify the program code by removing the resetting of this element to zero.		
#44 Caretaker Family Structure 1 = Married Couple 2 = Unmarried Couple 3 = Single Female 4 = Single Male 5 = Unable to Determine	2	Marital status is an updatable field and is not frozen to reflect the caretaker family structure at the time of removal. State maps marital status of "separated" to "single male/female" according to the gender of the individual. Based on the case file findings (see the detailed case file findings), caseworkers are not entering this information into the electronic case file.	Develop, describe to ACF, and implement an approach to ensure that the marital status reported to AFCARS reflects the situation at the time the child was removed. Marital status of "separated" must be mapped to "married." Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#45 1st Primary Caretaker's Birth Year	2	Initialized to "0000."	This information must be initialized to blanks.		

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#46 2nd Primary Caretaker's Birth Year (if applicable)		State believes that there may be a problem with where the information is extracted from based on the case file review. Based on the case file findings (see the detailed case file findings), caseworkers are not entering this information into the electronic case file.	Assess the program code to determine if corrections must be made to accurately extract this data. Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#49 Foster Family Structure 0 = Not Applicable 1 = Married Couple 2 = Unmarried Couple 3 = Single Female 4 = Single Male	2	State maps marital status of "separated" to "single male/female" according the gender of the individual. Based on the case file findings (see the detailed case file findings), caseworkers are not entering this information into the electronic case file.	Marital status of "separated" must be mapped to "married." Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#63 Title XIX (Medicaid)	2	Currently, CAMIS is not interfaced with the Medicaid system (ACES). The screen that the Federal funding unit uses has a field for Medicaid eligible.	Complete the work to interface with ACES. In the short-term, have the staff in the Federal funding unit enter this data for each child, as applicable.		
#64 SSI or other Social Security Act Benefits	2	State believes the number reported as "applies" is an undercount and that the program code needs correcting. Once the interface to ACES is completed, medical information	Assess and determine the cause of the undercount. Provide ACF with the explanation and solution to correct the problem. Complete the interface to ACES.		

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		from Medicaid will be collected.			
#66 Amount of monthly foster care payment (regardless of source)	2	There is no program code written to extract this data. The State submitted revised program code that reflects the addition of this element.	The State must make additional changes to the program code to ensure that it is reporting the amount of the monthly foster care payment (regardless of source, i.e., Federal, State, county, municipality, tribal, and private payments). If title IV-E is paid on behalf of the child the amount indicated should be the total computable amount. If the payment made on behalf of the child is not the same each month, indicate the amount of the last full monthly payment made during the reporting period. If no monthly payment has been made during the period, enter all zeros. This amount should include all payments made on behalf of the child during the month. If no payment was made, use zeros.		
#19 Total Number of Removals from Home	3	See the General Requirements findings regarding children placed in foster care as respite.	Workers must enter the date that a "respite" service for in-home family preservation cases begins as a removal date and the date it ends as a discharge date (for stays longer than 24 hours).		
#20 Date Child was Discharged from last foster care episode (if applicable)	3	Based on the General Requirements finding that children returned home while in the agency's responsibility for care, placement, or supervision are excluded in the population extraction, the accuracy of this data does not reflect the actual	Workers must enter the date that the child is discharged from the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision by the court.		

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		date of discharge from the previous removal episode.			
#21 Date of Latest Removal	3	See the General Requirements findings regarding children placed in foster care for respite services.	Workers must enter the date that children are placed in out of home care for respite purposes.		
#43 Most recent case plan goal

1 = Reunify With Parent(S) Or Principal Caretaker(s)
2 = Live With Relative(s)
3 = Adoption
4 = Long Term Foster Care
5 = Emancipation
6 = Guardianship
7 = Case Plan Goal Not Yet Established | 3 | Based on the case file findings (see the detailed case file findings), caseworkers are not updating this information into the electronic case file. The incorrect records reflected case plan goals that had not been updated to reflect the most recent case plan goal. The majority of the cases were reported to AFCARS with a goal of "reunify." | Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information. | | |
| #47 Mother's Date of TPR

#48 Legal or Putative Father' TPR | 3 | The code "L, legally free" is no longer used and is not an option on the screen for workers to select. Also, there is an edit on the system that prevents the entry of "L."

Based on the results of the case file findings, there were several records with incorrect dates for TPRs. | To make the program code run more efficiently, the routine that looks for "L, legally free" could be removed.

State should analyze the cause of the inaccurate dates for TPR.

Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information. | | |

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#50 1st Foster Caretaker's Birth Year #51 2nd Foster Caretaker's Birth Year	3	Based on the case file findings (see the detailed case file findings), caseworkers are not entering this information into the electronic case file.	Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information.		
#56 Date of Discharge from foster care	3	See the General Requirements findings for children in their own home while under the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision and children placed in out-of-home care for respite purposes. There is a discrepancy between the numbers reported in element #56 and #58.	Workers must enter the date that children are discharged from the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision. See the General Requirements findings for children in their own home while under the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision and children placed in out-of-home care for respite purposes. Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information correctly and timely.		
#58 Reason for Discharge [0 = Not Applicable] 1 = Reunification with Parent(s) or Primary Caretaker(s) 2 = Living with Other Relative(s) 3 = Adoption 4 = Emancipation 5 = Guardianship 6 = Transfer to Another Agency 7 = Runaway	3	See the General Requirements findings for children in their own home while under the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision and children placed in out-of-home care for respite purposes. There is a discrepancy between the numbers reported in element #56 and #58.	Workers must enter the date that children are discharged from the agency's responsibility for care, placement or supervision. Describe how the State will provide monitoring oversight to ensure that workers enter this information correctly and timely.		

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8 = Death of Child					
#59 Title IV-E (Foster Care) #60 Title IVE (Adoption Subsidy)	3	Initialized to zero. Must be initialized to blank. *Post site-visit analysis: The program code has been modified to initialize to spaces.*	ACF will review and monitor this data to determine if it accurately reflects the changes.	End of the 2003B report period.	
#65 None of the Above	3	The accuracy of this data is affected by the reporting of elements #59-64.	ACF will evaluate the responses to this element once the corrections to elements #59 – 64 are implemented.		

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#7 Child's Race a. American Indian or Alaska Native b. Asian c. Black or African American d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander e. White f. Unable to Determine	2	The State's code of "888, question not asked" is mapped to "unable to determine."	Map "question not asked" to blank.		
		The code "998, other race not listed" is mapped to "unable to determine."	Remove this option and include actual other races that individuals identify. If an individual refuses to identify, or does not identify with one of the AFCARS race categories, then the State should have a value that represents "refused to provide race."		
		The program code contains the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1."	Remove the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1." Missing race information must be mapped to blanks.		
#25 Adoptive Mother's Race #27 Adoptive Father's Race a = American Indian or Al. Native b = Asian c = Black or African American d = Native Hawaiian/Pac Islander e = White f = Unable to Determine	2	This field is initialized to zeroes.	Initialize this field to spaces.		
		The State's code of "888, question not asked" is mapped to "unable to determine."	Map "question not asked" to blank.		
		The code "998, other race not listed" is mapped to "unable to determine."	Remove this option and include actual other races that individuals identify. If an individual refuses to identify, or does not identify with one of the AFCARS race categories, then the State should have a value that represents "refused to provide race."		
		The program code contains the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1."	Remove the condition: "if a – e = 0, then f = 1." Missing race information must be mapped to blanks.		

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		The program code checks for an "f" for female and maps the data accordingly. All other information is mapped to the elements for the father's information. This will not pick up data on same sex couples that adopt children.	Map data for males and females separately.

For same sex couples, map the second parent to the AFCARS element for "adoptive father."

Train workers to enter all data on same sex couple information. | | |
| #8 Child Hispanic Origin

1 = Yes
2 = No
3 = Unable to Determine | 2 | This field is initialized to spaces then reset to "3, unable to determine."

State code "777/can't find" is mapped to AFCARS value "unable to determine."

State maps "none" to "unable to determine." | Modify the program code to leave this element initialized to spaces.

Code "777" must be mapped to blank.

Map "none" to blank. | | |
| #26 Adoptive Mother's Hispanic Origin

#28 Adoptive Father's Hispanic Origin

0 = Not Applicable
1 = Yes
2 = No
3 = Unable to Determine | 2 | Element #26 is initialized to zero then reset to "2, no."

Element #27 is initialized to zero then reset to "3."

State code "777, can't find" is mapped to AFCARS value "unable to determine."

State maps "none" to "unable to determine."

The program code checks for an | Initialize elements #26 and #27 to spaces.

Code "777" must be mapped to blank.

Map "none" to blank.

Map data for males and females separately. | | |

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		"f" for female and maps the data accordingly. All other information is mapped to the elements for the father's information. This will not pick up data on same sex couples that adopt children.	For same sex couples, map the second parent to the AFCARS element for "adoptive father." Train workers to enter all data on same sex couple information.		
#9 Has Agency Determined Special Needs 1 = Yes 2 = No	2	Initialized to "no."	Initialize this element to blank.		
#10 Primary Basis for Determining Special Needs 0 = Not Applicable 1 = Racial/Original Background 2 = Age 3 = Membership in a Sibling Group 4 = Medical Conditions or Mental, Physical or Emotional Disabilities 5 = Other	2	Initialized to "zero." The program code selects a primary basis for AFCARS reporting. The program code extracts the first condition that is selected by the worker.	Initialize this element to blank. Redesign the collection of this information. Workers must enter a primary basis for special needs. State needs to ensure that "at risk" conditions are mapped to "other."		
#11 Mental Retardation #12 Visually/Hearing Impaired #13 Physically Disabled #14 Emotionally Disturbed	2	There is an error in the program code and element #12 is not extracted. "Other medical" is not listed as an option on the screen and is not assessed in the program	Correct the error in the program code and extract information for element #12. Add "other medical" as an option on the input screen.		

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#15 Other Diagnosed Condition		code.	Add program code to extract "other medical" to AFCARS. State must re-evaluate use of "other medical' and determine if this option is including conditions that should be mapped to other appropriate AFCARS categories.		
		The program code includes a routine that if the response to element #10 is "medical conditions or mental, physical or emotional disabilities," and there are zeroes in elements 11-14, then the response to element #15 is "applies."	Remove this condition from the program code and map appropriately diagnosed conditions to the corresponding AFCARS condition. If there is no information, leave elements #11-15 blank.		
			Once the changes to the system have been made for foster care elements #10 through 15, revise the program code for adoption data elements #11 – 15 to check for each of the responses and map them to the AFCARS values. As a short-term solution, modify the program code to check all input screens for medical information and extract the data.		
#18 Mother Married at Time of Child's Birth 1 = Yes	2	Initialized to "3, unable to determine." Currently, the State does not	Initialize to blank. Implement the new screen.		

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2 = No 3 = Unable to Determine		collect this information and there is no program code to extract this information. This is being addressed with the new system design changes. *Post site-visit analysis: The State submitted a screen print with this question added to it. This approach is adequate and meets the reporting requirement as a short-term solution.*	Add program code to extract this information. Change the location of the new screen to a point where the information can be recorded during foster care case management (closer to the time the child is removed from his/her home). The State should add this to the changes in the "placement/legal" screen.		
#22 Adoptive Family Structure 1 = Married Couple 2 = Unmarried Couple 3 = Single Female 4 = Single Male	2	1st loop looks in the adoption support record. If one is not found then it goes to the placement setting, assuming that it is the adoption family.	Correct the program code to look for information on the actual adoptive parents and not the child's placement setting. Map individuals that are "separated" to "married." Map same sex couples to "unmarried couple."		
#24 Adoptive Father's Year of Birth	2	The program code checks for an "f, female" and maps the data accordingly. All other information is mapped to the elements for the father's information. This will not pick up data on same sex couples that adopt children. The case file findings indicated	Map data for males and females separately. For same sex couples, map the second parent to the AFCARS element for "adoptive father." Train workers to enter all data on same sex couple information. Further assess the cause for the		

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		inaccurate information.	inaccurate data and make appropriate corrections.		
#29 Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child – Stepparent #30 Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child - Other Relative #31 Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child - Foster Parent #32 Relationship of Adoptive Parent to Child - Other Non-Relative 0 = Does not Apply 1 = Applies	2	Line 4080 in the program code checks for birth mom or dad. #32 - Derived from 29 – 31, if all are zero, then element #32 is "applies" (8310). *Post site-visit analysis: The State submitted revised screen prints with this information added as a field on the screen that is mandatory. The screen allows for a single selection only and must be modified to allow worker to enter all that apply.*	Remove the line in the program code that is checking for birth mom or dad. Remove the program code that derives responses to element #32 from elements #29 – 31. Implement the piloted screen. Modify the screen to allow workers to select more than one relationship. Revise program code to extract data from the new screen.		
#36 Monthly Amount	2	*State submitted a screen print indicating that a field has been added to indicate the "initial subsidy" amount included on the adoption agreement.*	Implement the new screen. Revise program code to extract this information.		
#17 Father's Birth Year	3	Based on the case file analysis, there needs to be further attention given to the accuracy of this data	Develop a method to address the accuracy of this information. Train workers to enter the information into the system.		
#19 Date of Mother's TPR #20 Date of Father's TPR	3	Based on the case file findings there are several inaccuracies in the data.	Assess the cause for the inaccurate data and update ACF. Outline approach State will take to improve the data.		

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#21 Date Adoption Legalized	3	Line 5110 in the program code needs to be moved to an earlier location in the program code. *Post site-visit analysis: This line has been moved to line 1750.*	Assess the data to ensure it reflects the change and is accurate. ACF will analyze subsequent data submissions.		