

**ALASKA Title IV-E Foster Care
Eligibility Review
October 1, 2002 through March 31, 2003**

Introduction

The Region X Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted an initial primary review of the State of Alaska's title IVE program in Juneau from September 15 through September 18, 2003. A team of five ACF Regional staff, one ACF Central Office staff, and four Alaska Office of Children Services (OCS) staff completed the onsite review.

The purpose of the title IV-E foster care eligibility review was: (1) to determine if Alaska was in compliance with the child and provider eligibility requirements as outlined in 45 CFR 1356.71 and Section 472 of the Social Security Act, and (2) to validate the basis of Alaska's financial claims to ensure that appropriate payments were made on behalf of eligible children and to eligible homes and institutions.

Scope of the Review

The Alaska title IV-E foster care review encompassed a sample of all of the title IV-E foster care cases that received a foster care maintenance payment during the period of October 1, 2002 through March 31, 2003, the Period under Review (PUR). A statistical sample of 80 cases was drawn from the OCS Provider Payment System for the PUR. The child's files were reviewed for the determination of title IV-E eligibility and the provider's file was reviewed to ensure that the foster home or child care institution in which the child was placed was fully licensed or approved for the PUR.

Of the 80 cases reviewed, seventy-nine (79) cases were determined eligible for title IVE and one (1) case was determined to be in error for part of the PUR. Since the number of error cases was fewer than nine, the ACF has determined Alaska to be in substantial compliance for this initial primary review.

Case Record Summary

Below is a summary of the findings for the case determined to be in error:

- Sample number 25: Title IVE was claimed for foster care for a child placed in a home that was not fully licensed. The provider's license included a Plan of Correction (POC). (42 USC 672(b) and (c), and 45 CFR 1355.20(a)).

Strengths

In the title IVE cases reviewed, the following strengths were noted:

- For cases for which title IVE was claimed, “contrary to the welfare” and “reasonable efforts to prevent” judicial determinations were consistently found in the initial court orders.
- Cases in which IVE was claimed included court orders with the “reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan” judicial determination when required.
- Some court orders included judicial determinations with good case specific findings.
- Eligibility files included good eligibility determination forms.
- Alaska has a good eligibility infrastructure with competent eligibility specialists trained and supported by knowledgeable central office staff.

Areas in Need of Improvement

In the title IVE cases reviewed, the following area needing improvement was noted:

In some cases, Alaska had stopped claiming title IVE for time periods in which timely “reasonable efforts to finalize the permanent plan” judicial determinations had not been obtained. Additional efforts are needed to consistently obtain these determinations in a timely manner.

Payment Issues

1. License Plan of Correction (POC): In addition to Payment #25, which was the only child placed in that residential child care (RCC) facility during the PUR, all subsequent title IVE claims for the period of April 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003 must be reduced.
2. Ineligible Payment: Payments for Sample #17 included a One-Time Request for Special Needs payment for a December 2002 child vacation travel. The form properly classified the vacation travel as non-IVE reimbursable, however, the payment was charged to a title IVE maintenance payment code. Consequently, a decreasing adjustment of \$242 Federal Financial Participation (FFP) must be reported ($\$448.20 \times 0.5399$).

Disallowances

Based upon the results of the review, the State of Alaska has been determined to be in substantial compliance as only one case was determined to be not eligible for funding under title IV-E foster care.

The erroneous payments associated with the error case and the ineligible payments were calculated as follows, and includes all payments claimed on behalf of the child for the entire period of the error (Appendix A).

<u>Sample</u>	<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>Administration</u>	<u>Total</u>
#25	\$157	\$206	\$363
#17	<u>448</u>	<u> </u>	<u>488</u>
Total PUR	\$605	\$206	\$851
FFP	\$327	\$103	\$430