

## Appendix I

### Program Improvement Plan Content Checklist

This Program Improvement Plan (PIP) content checklist is used by Children’s Bureau Regional Offices and State child welfare agencies to evaluate the content of completed PIPs. Each item in the checklist is either required PIP content or a general guideline for PIP preparation.

<b>State:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	<b>Completed</b>
<p><b>1. All basic PIP components are present.</b></p> <p>The PIP consists of four components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A general information section with key contact information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A written workplan detailing the work to be undertaken</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> An agreement form that is used to indicate PIP approval by the Children’s Bureau Regional Office and the State</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A PIP Matrix that summarizes the components of the PIP and permits tracking of progress and completion dates through quarterly status reports</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>2. All applicable outcomes are addressed.</b></p> <p>For each outcome found not to be in substantial conformity, the PIP includes measurable goals of improvement, action steps, and timeframes for achieving the goals and completing the action steps (45 CFR §1355.35[a][1][iii]). The PIP addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All items (reviewed on site) that contributed to an outcome being found not in substantial conformity, as noted in the Final Report</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All data indicators that did not meet the associated national standard and contributed to an outcome being found not in substantial conformity, as noted in the Final Report</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The amount of reasonable progress to be achieved for each outcome found not in substantial conformity</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>3. All applicable systemic factors are addressed.</b></p> <p>For each item noted in the Final Report as contributing to a systemic factor being found not in substantial conformity, the PIP includes measurable goals of improvement, action steps, and timeframes for achieving the goals and completing the action steps.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>4. Major issues identified in the Final Report are addressed.</b></p> <p>The major issues discussed in the Final Report that are related to outcomes and systemic factors being found not in substantial conformity are addressed under the State’s action steps. It is helpful if the action steps build on the State strengths identified through the Statewide Assessment and onsite review.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>5. The timeframes for addressing safety issues in the PIP are within the guidelines of 45 CFR §1355.35(d)(2); safety issues are addressed first.</b></p> <p>Items and outcomes that affect child safety are addressed first, followed by those most out of substantial conformity. These items and outcomes are addressed through both short-term goals, to minimize the negative effects on children and families immediately, and long-term goals, to achieve lasting reforms. The priority level assigned to these issues is reflected in the PIP timeframes, rather than in the order in which the issues appear in the PIP.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Safety-related timeframes are addressed first.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No timeframes exceed 2 years.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>6. The PIP’s goals are realistic and achievable.</b></p> <p>The provisions of the PIP focus on areas in which the goals are achievable within the PIP timeframes. Baselines for quantitative and qualitative measures have been established.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>7. The percentage of improvement established for each applicable data indicator is reasonable.</b></p> <p>The PIP includes specific percentages of improvement (goals) to be achieved for each data indicator that does not meet the national standards (45 CFR §1355.35[a][1][iv]). The amount to be achieved is significant enough to move the State toward conformity with the national standards in a reasonable period. The Children’s Bureau prepares an updated data profile at the time of PIP development that may be used in projecting a reasonable amount of improvement.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>8. The focus is on action rather than on further study and planning.</b></p> <p>The PIP has a primary focus on measurable changes in the outcomes and systemic factors subject to review. The PIP includes specific action steps that will lead to those changes by addressing practice issues and implementing systemic change. It also uses the findings of the Final Report and the Statewide Assessment as the basis for specific action steps.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>9. Improvements in the day-to-day practice of child welfare are addressed.</b></p> <p>The PIP identifies where improvements need to be made to ensure that casework practice supports timely and positive outcomes for children and families, rather than focusing strictly on new policies and procedures. PIP strategies affecting front-line practice are guided by the principles of family-centered practice, community-based services, individualizing services that address the unique needs of children and families, and strengthening parents' capacity to protect and provide for their children. In some situations, the PIP focuses on the revision of State policies and procedures to strengthen the focus on these principles. In other situations in which the State has adequate policies, the PIP focuses on making practice consistent with those policies.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>10. The individual(s) responsible for each action step is identified.</b></p> <p>The PIP identifies the individual(s) responsible for undertaking each action step to ensure successful completion of the PIP. This individual(s) should be the person truly responsible for this area in the organization rather than a project coordinator. In addition, there is a realistic division of responsibilities, such as by assigning different individuals to be responsible for different PIP action steps.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>11. Action steps are statewide and include key stakeholders.</b></p> <p>The PIP specifies the geographic areas of the State in which the action steps will be undertaken and explains how the plan will lead to positive outcomes and adequate functioning of the systemic factors statewide.</p> <p>The PIP also addresses improvements in the largest metropolitan subdivision, as needed. Key stakeholders, such as the courts, and health and educational entities, and tribal representatives, are included appropriately.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p><b>12. The technical assistance (TA) resources that will be used are identified.</b></p> <p>The PIP describes the State’s plan for accessing TA resources to support program improvements for each outcome and systemic factor found to be out of substantial conformity (45 CFR §1355.35[a][1][vii]). The specific role of each TA resource is clear and is based on input from the TA resource named. Rather than including references to consulting with a particular Children’s Bureau-funded National Resource Center (NRC), for example, the PIP specifies clear action steps that involve and are endorsed by the NRC.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>13. The monitoring and measurement of PIP implementation are described.</b></p> <p>The PIP includes a clear approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative measures, for monitoring and measuring plan implementation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Benchmarks of progress and evidence that goals have been achieved (45 CFR §1355.35[a][1][v]). Where the PIP indicates that improvements will occur, it describes specific amounts of improvement so that the Children’s Bureau Regional Office and State have a basis for measuring the success of the State’s efforts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A description of how the State will monitor progress (when and where it will monitor progress [for example, which counties], and whether the State will integrate program improvement efforts into an existing quality assurance system or use separate case record reviews to monitor progress, and at what points).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If a State uses a qualitative review process to evaluate progress, detailed information on the case record review process, such as how many cases will be reviewed and how the data will be summarized and reported.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion of the largest metropolitan area in any case record reviews that the State conducts.</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>14. A description of the evaluation process to be conducted by the State and the Children’s Bureau Regional Office is included.</b></p> <p>The PIP includes a description of how PIP progress will be evaluated by the State and reported to the Children’s Bureau Regional Office (45 CFR §1355.35[e][1]), including a schedule for submitting progress reports.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

## **Additional Notes on PIP Review**