

AFCARS ASSESSMENT REVIEW FINDINGS: General Requirements

State: Arizona

AFCARS Reporting Period: October 1, 2008 - March 31, 2009 (2009A)

No.	Requirement	Rating Factor	Findings
Foster Care Population			
45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)/(b)(1) and Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions			
1	<p>Each State's data transmission 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>The State agency shall transmit semi-annually information on each child in foster care during the reporting period (45 CFR 1355.40 (b)(1)).</p> <p>The population to be included in this reporting system includes all children in foster care under the responsibility of the State agency administering or supervising 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 (Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions).</p>	<p>2 3</p>	<p>Organizational Structure: The Division of Children, Youth, and Families is under the Arizona Department of Economic Security. The DCYF is the designated title IV-B/IV-E single State agency. The State is correctly including children that are in the agency's responsibility for placement and care, and who are in out-of-home care, in the AFCARS reporting population.</p> <p><u>Program Code VALCH110 LNs 2294-2315; 1150-1159:</u> The program code extracts distinct child IDs from the removal table where the removal date is before the end of the reporting period and the return date (end date of removal) is both later than the start of the reporting period and later than the removal date.</p> <p>The program code does not exclude removal episodes during the reporting period for which the only placement was a hospital or locked facility. <i>Post-Site Visit Findings: The program code has been modified to exclude records of children whose only placement is a locked facility or a hospital (LNs 11580-11860).</i></p>
2	<p>This includes American Indian children covered under the assurances in section 422(b)(10) of the Act on the same basis as any other child (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p>	4	<p>There are 23 Federally recognized Tribes in Arizona. The State correctly reports Indian children that are in the State agency's responsibility for placement and care.</p>
3	<p>For children in out-of-State placement, the State placing the child and making the foster care payment submits and continually updates the data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p>	4	<p>The State is correctly including children in DCYF's responsibility for placement and care that are placed outside of Arizona. Those children placed in Arizona are correctly not included.</p>
4	<p>This population includes all children supervised by or under the responsibility of another public agency with which the title IV-B/IV-E State agency has an agreement under title IV-E and on whose behalf the</p>	4	<p>The State does have a title IV-E agreement with the Department of Juvenile Corrections and includes these youth in the AFCARS population. The State has draft agreements with the Hopi and Navaho Tribes.</p>

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	State makes title IV-E foster care maintenance payments (Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions).		
Appendix A to Part 1355--Foster Care Data Elements, Section II--Definitions			
5	The reporting system includes all children who have or had been in foster care at least 24 hours.	2	<p><u>Program Code Procedures 30810, 30850 and 30860, LNs 3079-3192, 3267-3299, 3307-3345, and 1347-1362, 1150-1159:</u> The State excludes records in which the removal and discharge date are on the same day. This does not capture all removal episodes that last 24 hours or less. A problem occurs if the start and end date are on two consecutive days but the length of stay in foster care is less than 24 hours. If the child were to later re-enter foster care and the episode is longer than 24 hours, the AFCARS data will reflect two removal episodes instead of one. In order to accurately reflect the total number of removals that meet the AFCARS standards, the State needs to add a clock field to both the removal status and legal status. The program code would use these fields to determine whether the child's removal was for less than 24 hours and exclude all removal episodes that are for 24 hours or less.</p>
6	Foster care does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the State agency.	4	
Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1, AFCARS			
7	Includes youth over the age of 18 if a payment is being made on behalf of the child (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3).	3	<p><u>Frequency Report:</u> There is one record with a year of birth of 1970 (38 year old). There are an additional 143 records reflecting youth over the age of 19. See foster care elements #56 and 58 for additional information.</p> <p>The program code checks for a child with an age greater than 19 years old and then generates an exception report record for this child.</p>
8	Include all children who are in the placement, care, or	3	The State returns children to their home while still under the

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	supervision responsibility of the title IV-B/E agency that are on “trial home visits” (Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 1.3).		agency’s responsibility for placement and care. The State is including these in the reporting population, but not all of the records are being correctly reported as a living arrangement “trial home visit.” (See foster care elements #23 and 41.)
Adoption Reporting Population			
45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)			
9	<p>[D]ata 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.</p> <p>All children adopted 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 to Part 1355--Adoption Data Elements, Section II - Definitions).</p>	4	<p>The State is correctly reporting all adopted children who were placed by the State and who had been in foster care.</p> <p>The information system records and displays information as to where the child was placed for adoption, if the child has identified special needs, who placed the child for adoption and previous adoption information.</p>
10	For a child adopted out-of-State, the State which placed the child submits the data.	4	The State is correctly reporting children that Arizona placed out-of-State and are correctly not reporting children placed in their State by another public agency.
Appendix B to Part 1355--Adoption Data Elements, Section II--Definitions			
11	<p>The State must report on all children who are adopted in the State during the reporting period and in whose adoption the State title IV-B/IV-E agency has had any involvement.</p> <p>All special needs children who were adopted in the State, whether or not they were in the public foster care system prior to their adoption and for whom non-</p>	4	

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	recurring expenses were reimbursed; and All children adopted for whom an adoption assistance payment or service is being provided based on arrangements made by or through the State agency.		
	Reports on all other adoptions are encouraged but are voluntary.		
Technical Requirements			
45 CFR 1355.40, sections (b)(1) and (b)(2); Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts Section A.1.b(5)			
12	The data must be extracted from the data system as of the last day of the reporting period and must be submitted in electronic form as described in appendix C to 45 CFR 1355 and in record layouts as delineated in appendix D to 45 CFR 1355 (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1)) For foster care information, the child-specific data to be transmitted must reflect the data in the information system when the data are extracted (45 CFR 1355.40(b)(2)).	3	<u>Regular Files</u> The State's extraction routine is correctly extracting data that is in the system for the regular report period. <u>Subsequent Files</u> Data submitted in a subsequent file does not accurately reflect the child's situation for the report period being submitted.
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(1) and section (b)(3) (Adoption)			
13	The State agency shall transmit semi-annually information on each child adopted during the reporting period. Adoption data are to be reported during the reporting period 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. For a semi-annual period in which no adoptions have been legalized, States must report such an occurrence.	2	In all three years shown on the Data Profile (2007-2008&2009A), Arizona reported fewer adoptions in the adoption file than in their foster care file. <u>State documentation:</u> "In June 2008 the main driver of the adoptions extract was changed to switch away from using the date of the adoption finalization entered in the Childs legal status table. The new source of the data is a removal that has ended with one of the three adoption end reasons (ADOR, ADOF or ADON). [T]he new driver cursor was built as a five element union. This is necessary since the retrieval of the records require retrieval of the adoptive parents which would have been on the

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			<p>legal status records.”</p> <p><u>Program Code LNs 522-838</u></p> <p>The selection criteria prevent an adoption from being reported in multiple reporting periods, unless the worker or supervisor changes the return date or effective date. It is possible that some adoptions that occur near the end of a reporting period may never be reported, if the corresponding return date or effective date is entered into the system after the extraction is performed.</p> <p>The State needs to identify a method to identify and report all adoptions regardless of when they were entered into the system. There are three possible solutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Resubmit the adoption file on a regular basis. (This is mainly a temporary interim solution.) 2) Add an indicator that marks those records that have been transmitted. The extraction code would be modified to check for adoptions that occurred prior to the end of the report period being submitted that have not been flagged by the indicator. 3) Add a transaction date to the legalization date of the adoption. This date would be used to extract the adoption files.
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(4) and Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts Sections A.2 and B.2			
14	<p>A summary file of the semi-annual data transmission must be submitted and will be used to verify the completeness of the State's detailed submission for the reporting period.</p> <p>The values for these data elements are generated by processing all records in the semi-annual detailed data transmission and computing the summary values for Elements 1 and 3-22. Element 2 is the semi-annual</p>	4	<p>The State’s summary file passes the file format standards.</p>

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	report period ending date. In calculating the age range for the child, the last day of the reporting period is to be used.		
Appendix A, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care Data Elements and Appendix B, 45 CFR 1355 Adoption Data Elements			
15	State uses sequential numbering of the case record number or encrypts the record number.	4	Same encrypted number is used for NCANDS and will be used for NYTD.
Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format			
16	Data file must be in ASCII format.	4	
17	Elements must be comprised of integer (numeric) value(s).	4	
18	All records must be a fixed length.	4	
Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts			
19	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 (Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts Section A.1.b(5)).	3	<p><u>CFSR Data Profile 2007 - 2008 & 2009A, Dropped Records:</u> There were 258 dropped records between 2008B and 2009A, which would represent 3.6% of the reported discharges in that year. Dropped records were not an issue in FY2007 or FY2008.</p> <p><u>Program Code LNs 1150-1159:</u> The State is not using the transaction date as required and this is probably causing the dropped records.</p> <p>The selection of records only requires that the removal occur before the end of the reporting period and that the discharge, if any, occur after the start of the reporting period. The discharge information may never be reported in the AFCARS data file if the data is entered after the reporting period in which it occurred and after the regular file for that period is extracted.</p>
ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995 and Technical Bulletin #13, AFCARS File Extraction			
20	State extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge (foster care element #57) or the date of latest removal (foster care element #21), if the child has not been discharged.	2	<p><u>Program Code LNs 1150-1159:</u> The selection logic in the program code does not use the transaction date of discharge.</p>

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Technical Bulletin #2, File Format			
21	State must use correct file name for transmission.	4	
Data Quality – Conversion			
22	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.	4	
23	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.	4	