

AFCARS ASSESSMENT REVIEW FINDINGS – General Requirements
State: Colorado
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 State of Colorado is a state-supervised, county-administered state.</p> <p>The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) is the title IV-B/E single State agency. Within the Department there are the Divisions of Youth Corrections, Mental Health and Child Welfare.</p> <p>The State includes in its AFCARS reporting population all the children from each of these Divisions that are placed in out-of-home care while in the Department’s responsibility for care and placement.</p>	4
2	<p>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).</p>	<p>Not applicable for juvenile justice and mental health because they are part of the single-state agency.</p> <p>The State has two Federally recognized tribes, Southern Ute and the Mountain Ute. Each Tribe has its own infrastructure for providing child welfare services and there is a Tribal court. The State has an inter-agency agreement with them for title IV-E funds. The Tribal staff provides the local child welfare agency with information that must be entered into Trails. Currently, the Tribes do not have access to Trails. The State indicated that there are probably no more than 25-30 children in this category.</p>	4
3	<p>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)).</p>	<p>If the agency has responsibility for care and placement, then the children are included. Otherwise, Tribal children are only included if they qualify for title IV-E under the section 472 agreement.</p>	4
4	<p>For children in out-of-State placements, the State placing the child submits and continually updates the data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).</p>	<p>The State includes children that it places out-of-State and does not include children placed in Colorado by another State.</p>	4

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5	Includes all children who have been in foster care at least 24 hours (Appendix A - SECTION II).	<p>Currently, the program code compares removal start date to removal end date. If the two dates are on the same day, the record is excluded.</p> <p>There is not a time field associated with the dates of removal. For better accuracy to determine whether a child has been in care for 24 hours or less, the State may want to consider adding time fields to the screen and modifying the extraction code to check these fields to determine length of time in care.</p>	4
6	Does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the State agency (Appendix A - SECTION II).	<p>The State does provide protective supervision for children that have never been removed their homes and for children that have been legally reunified with their families.</p> <p>The State correctly does not include in its AFCARS reporting population those children in these two groups of children.</p>	4
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).	<p>The State correctly does include in its AFCARS reporting population those children that have been returned home while the agency retains responsibility for care and placement.</p>	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 State’s age of majority is 18. In some instances, such as when a child has severe disabilities, the Department can retain responsibility for care and placement through a court order up to the age of 21.</p> <p>The State does claim title IV-E funds on behalf of youth that have turned 18 and are still in school. Once the child turns 19, or graduates, the child is then discharged from the AFCARS reporting population. As long as there is still legal custody over 18, they report to AFCARS.</p>	4
Adoption Population			
9	Data are required to be transmitted by the State on all adopted children who were placed by the State title IV-	The State reports on children who had been in foster care under the responsibility and care of the State child welfare	4

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	<p>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> <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>agency and who were subsequently adopted whether special needs or not and whether subsidies are provided or not.</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>The State does enter into adoption agreements with families adopting through a private agency when the child is determined to be special needs. The State staff indicated that there are probably no more than 75 records per year.</p>	4
11	<p>For children adopted out-of-State, the placing State reports the adoption data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).</p>	<p>The State includes those children that it places out-of-state and does not include children placed for adoption in Colorado by another State.</p>	4
12	<p>Voluntarily reports on all other adoptions. (Appendix B – Section II).</p>	<p>The State staff indicated they will not be reporting adoptions in which they have no involvement.</p>	

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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		
14	The data must be submitted in electronic form as described in Appendix C.		
15	The data must be in record layouts as delineated in Appendix D.		
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.		
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(3)			
17	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.	<p>The State sets a flag to identify whether an adoption has already been submitted.</p> <p>The program code marks those records that have been previously reported to AFCARS so that they are not reported again. If the flag for a record does not exist, then this record is reported.</p>	4
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 record number.	4
Appendix C, 45 CFR 1355 Electronic Data Transmission Format			
19	Data file must be in ASCII format.		4
20	Elements must be comprised of integer (numeric) value(s).	4	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 4	

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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 day of the reporting period (Section A.1.b(5)).	There is an issue related to the timeliness of data entry.	3
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)).		
ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995			
25	State extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge or removal.	Yes.	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.	<p>The State converted all case and client information for the years between 1991 and 2001. There was a legacy system that was mostly for payments. However, it did include removals, service history, entitlement history, addresses, client characteristics, etc. There was some manual conversion of information. For cases that were open at the time of conversion the placement history was converted.</p> <p>Based on the preliminary findings of the case file review there appears to be some incompleteness of data that is due to conversion.</p>	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.	4	4