

IMPROVEMENT PLAN INSTRUCTIONS

The Improvement Plan is the working document for recording progress on each task by the State, comments, and the Children's Bureau's response. It is to reflect the history of the improvement plan phase with all related notes, approvals, questions, etc. An electronic copy of the document will be e-mailed to the State once it has received the hard copy of the report.

The State is to provide its initial estimated completion dates for each task within 30 days of receiving the report. The document is then to be emailed to the Federal review team.

In the foster care and adoption data element matrices, the data elements have been organized by rating factors, with data elements receiving a "1" listed first. Elements that received a "4" are not included on the corrective action work plans. However, the State should review the findings document (see Tab A). The data element may contain notes that the State may want to consider in order to more efficiently collect the AFCARS data. Additionally, elements that are related are grouped together in one row, since a change in one element will result in a change to the related elements. In the case where both a system problem (factor #2) and a possible worker entry problem (factor #3) exist, the lower rating factor will be given to the data element. If the system error is corrected, but the worker entry problem still exists, the element will be re-evaluated and given a "3" by the Federal Regional Office. In order for the element to be determined to be in compliance, it must meet the criteria in factor #4.

Each task is numbered. Dates and any comments are to be numbered according to the corresponding task. If a date changes, do not delete it. Instead, use the strike-through function and type in the new date.

The Improvement Plan contains five columns:

Element/Requirement: This column lists every AFCARS adoption and foster care data element, and general requirement with a rating factor of a 1, 2, or 3.

Rating Factor: This is the final rating factor based on the findings for the data element/general requirements.

Findings: This column includes the findings that need corrections.

Tasks: This column includes the actions that must be taken in order to bring the data element/general requirement into compliance with the AFCARS requirements. Some task items may include suggestions for changes and are, therefore, optional items for the State to consider implementing. Each task is numbered.

Estimated/Completed Date: This column is to be used by the State to list the dates by which it intends to complete each action item, and is updated by the State to reflect the actual completion date. The corresponding task number should be included with the date. The State should use "strikethrough" of the old dates when updating information. Once ACF has reviewed changes

