

AFCARS ASSESSMENT REVIEW FINDINGS: General Requirements

State: Missouri

AFCARS Reporting Period: April 1, 2008 - September 30, 2008 (2008B)

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)(8) of the Social Security Act (the Act) (Appendix A – SECTION II).</p>	<p>The Missouri Department of Social Services includes the Children’s Division (CD) and the Division of Youth Services (DYS). In 2004 these agencies merged under the Department of Social Services. The designated IV-B agency is CD and the designated IV-E agency is the Department.</p> <p>The State is currently not including the DYS community based placed youth. However, if CD is given custody of youth, or if they have dual custody with DYS, then the State is reporting these youth in AFCARS. The State must include DYS youth if he/she is placed in a foster care setting that is within the scope of title IV-E.</p> <p><u>Screen:</u> Court Information Screen, Order for Protective Custody There is a legal status field with the options: Care and Custody with CD-Includes Temporary Custody (LS-1); Temporary Custody with Adoptive Parents (LS-2); Supervision Only by CD (LS-3); Care and Custody with Juvenile Court or Other Agency (LS-4); Final Custody Awarded to Adoptive Parents (LS-5); and, Legal Guardianship (LS-9).</p> <p><u>Legal status 3:</u> These are cases in which legal custody is given to a relative and the agency is ordered to provide supervision services. The agency no longer has legal custody and a removal would require a court order. These cases are being reported in AFCARS. They should not be included as the agency no longer has responsibility for placement and care. The child should be reported as discharged and the reason would be “live with relative.”</p> <p><u>Program Code:</u> The program code does not exclude the records of children whose only placement in a removal episode is a hospital or locked facility. If a child’s first placement at the time the agency removes the child or is</p>	2

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		<p>given responsibility for care and placement is a hospital or a locked facility, the child is not to be included in the AFCARS population. If the child never enters a foster care setting, then this child will never be reported to AFCARS. The program code must be modified.</p> <p>The State is incorrectly including the child of a minor parent in foster care (State's value CYAC). These children should only be reported if they are not living with the parent in foster care. Instead, the child of a minor parent is only included in the reporting population if they are in a separate foster care setting from the minor parent. Must only report if the infant is physically removed and placed in a separate foster home. If the infant is reunified with mom, then this is a discharge and reason is reunification.</p> <p><u>Post site-visit modifications</u> The State added a new condition - CO_DB_FUNCTION <> 'PRE.' What does the value "PRE" represent?</p>	
2	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).	Not applicable.	4
3	Includes American Indian children covered under section 422(b)(8) of the Act, on the same basis as any other child (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	There are no Federally recognized Tribes. The State does include American Indian children that are in the agency's responsibility for placement and care.	4
4	For children in out-of-State placements, the State placing the child submits and continually updates the data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(2)).	The State is correctly including children in their responsibility for placement and care that are placed out-of-State. However, there are problems with data entry for those children placed in Missouri by other States' public child welfare agencies. There is a check box that is to be selected. Case workers are not always checking this box.	3
5	Includes all children who have been in foster care at least 24 hours (Appendix A - SECTION II).	The program code does not exclude removal episodes lasting 24 hours or less in duration. The State must modify the extraction code to	2

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		check for removal start and end dates that occurred on the same day and exclude those records from the AFCARS file.	
6	Does not include children who are in their own homes under the responsibility of the State agency (Appendix A - SECTION II).		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’s practice is to end a case (not the custody) after 180 days for those children placed back in their own home while the agency maintains responsibility for placement and care. It is the information system that closes the case. The State team indicated workers have been told in training they do not have to wait 180 days. At any time after a child has been returned home the agency can petition the court to discharge its responsibility for placement and care.</p> <p>The State decided it would be better to continue reporting “THV” cases until the agency is discharged from placement and care by the court. The State indicated the system will be modified to not close a case automatically after 180 days; children will continue to be reported as long as the “AC” function has not been closed.</p> <p>The rating was changed because the tasks required for the changes are in foster care elements #56 and 58.</p>	2 3
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).	The age of majority in Missouri is 18. The State is incorrectly including youth over the age of majority. See foster care element #56 and #58 for action items.	3
Adoption Population			
9	Data 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	The State is correctly including the records of foster care children that were adopted.	4

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	<p>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)). 		
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 indicated they do enter into adoption agreements with families adopting through a private agency and the child is special needs. The system allows them to record information on these children. However, the State is not reporting these cases.</p>	2
11	<p>For children adopted out-of-State, the placing State reports the adoption data (45 CFR 1355.40(a)(3)).</p>	<p>The check box may not have been selected. There were three cases in the adoption sample that were children placed with a family in Missouri by another State's child welfare agency.</p>	3
12	<p>Voluntarily reports on all other adoptions. (Appendix</p>	<p>The State indicated they do not report any other adoptions that occur in</p>	

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	B – Section II).	the State.	
Technical Requirements			
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(2)			
13	For foster care information, the child-specific data to be transmitted must reflect the data in the information system when the data are extracted.	<p>In general, the data are correctly extracted for the current report period (i.e., regular files). However, there are some date elements that do not have a parameter in the extraction code to extract dates prior to the end of the report period. Additional findings are in the respective foster care and adoption data elements.</p> <p>There are issues related to subsequent data files, see item #26.</p>	3
45 CFR 1355.40(b)(3)			
14	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 extraction code checks for a timestamp so that adoptions entered into the system late, and are not reported in the actual report period, are submitted with the next report period’s data.</p> <p>In the Frequency Report one record was identified as missing an adoption legalization date. The selection logic must check that an adoption finalization date is present.</p> <p><i>Post site-visit modifications</i></p> <p>In paragraph 5100-GET-DVN, the State modified the extraction code to check that the legal status record timestamp and the legal status begin date are both within the reporting period. Is it possible that an adoption will never be reported if the date of the timestamp occurs in the reporting period after the date of the legal status?</p> <p>In section 4.3.3.6.2 of the technical specification document (V001) and the extraction code, the court activity history table was added as well as “The child should not be reported in the adoption file if the date adoption legalized is missing.”</p>	2 3

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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
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
19	Inform the Department, in writing, of the method of transfer intended to be used by the State.		
Appendix D, 45 CFR 1355 Foster Care and Adoption Record Layouts			
20	Report the status of all children in foster care as of the last day of the reporting period (Section A.1.b(5)).		4
21	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)).	There is an issue with the method the State is uses to report foster care discharge information. See the findings for foster care elements #56 & 58.	3
ACYF-PI-CB-95-09, Reissued May 23, 1995 Technical Bulletin #13, AFCARS File Extraction			
22	State extracts all records based on the transaction date of discharge or the date of latest removal (foster care element #21), if the child has not been discharged.		4
Technical Bulletin #2, File Format			
23	State must use correct file name for transmission.		4
Data Quality - Conversion			
24	State transferred historical information on open cases. Specifically, it included information on: date of first removal, total number of removals, and whether the	The State converted all cases to FACES. The case management component came online December, 2007. The State still has the resource management and financial management components to	3

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	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.	complete. Round 2 of the eligibility component began October, 2008.	
25	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.	The system has the capacity to record prior case information. The system requires that nearly all prior case information be entered. The system also has the capacity to reflect prior removals that occurred prior to an adoption.	4
Data Quality - Subsequent Submissions			
26	The data must be reflective of the time period being submitted, not new information applying to a different time frame. [Report the status of all children in foster care as of the last day of the reporting period (Section A.1.b(5)).]	The State is incorrectly submitting subsequent files. Also, since there are no dates associated with diagnosed conditions if the information changes and the State re-submits a prior report period, the wrong information may be reported. (See foster care elements #10-15.)	2