

Attachment II.2.A Agency File Instructions

The Agency File contains State agency summary or other data, as required under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act [42 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.] (CAPTA). The data in this file cannot be derived from the case-level data. This attachment explains how the State creates and submits the Agency File to NCANDS.

1.0 Completing the Agency File

The Agency data are submitted to NCANDS via the NCANDS Portal. On the State's private portal site, Agency data is submitted via tabbed data entry screens designed as questionnaires. Data can be saved in multiple sessions and submitted when all data are collected. A State can download the data entered in MS Word format. The State has the ability to resubmit the data file in this same manner, if needed. Furthermore, a State can track the status of their data submission from the time data is first saved until it is finally accepted.

The Agency File contains 24 data elements. Most of the items are required by CAPTA.

1.1.1 Overview of the Agency File

The Agency File consists of the following data areas:

- Identifying Information, including State identification and year of submission;
- State Comments about each Data Element;
- Preventive Service Counts, including a variety of elements containing counts with respect to State Grants, Community-Based Resources, title IV–B Services, title XX Block Grants, and other preventive services;
- Screened-Out Report Counts;
- Average response time in hours;
- Victims reunited in previous five years;
- Victims whose families received family preservation services;
- Out-of-Court Contact Counts;
- Additional Child Fatality Counts; and
- Child Protective Services Workforce Counts.

These areas of information are further described in Attachment II-C, Agency File.

1.2.2 Agency File Record Format

The Agency File collects two types of information: the data values representing the answers to the Agency questions and State supplied comments about the data. The State enters Agency information on the NCANDS Portal. The data is validated on the portal before it is submitted. The State can address the validation errors, if any, before submitting. Once the data have been submitted, both the data values and the comments will be extracted from the Agency File, and placed into

an NCANDS database for analysis. The Agency File has the following characteristics and format:

- There are 24 questions, many of which apply toward satisfying the CAPTA requirements;
- Each question is clearly stated;
- Helpful instructions are provided as callouts for each question or data item;
- Associated with each question is an adjacent empty field, provided for the State to enter the answer to the specific question;
- Following each answer is a State Comment area, provided for the State to enter comments about the answer provided for the specific question;
- All comments are entered as free-form sentences;
- All of the data elements to be entered by the State are numeric counts or totals.

1.2.3 Types of Agency Data Entry

The State submits the data via the NCANDS portal. The Agency data are entered and submitted separately from the Child File.

To submit data and to share State specific information, a State has to navigate to their private site on the NCANDS Portal. A State can only navigate to their site and access to other State sites is blocked. On the private site, Agency data are submitted via tabbed data entry screens designed as questionnaires. Helpful instructions are provided as callouts for each question or data item. Data can be saved in multiple sessions and submitted when all data are collected. A State can download the data entered in MS Word format.

At the time the data is submitted, the portal validates the data entered for errors. The validation is based on pre-defined NCANDS rules. The data submission process is terminated if any errors are found. The errors, if any, are displayed on the screen for review. The State can fix the errors and try to submit again.

The NCANDS Portal also provides the feature to compare to previous years data and the comparison results can be downloaded in MS Excel format. The State has the ability to resubmit the data file in this same manner, if needed. Furthermore, a State can track the status of their data submission from the time data is first saved until it is finally accepted.