

# ACF State Human Services Commissioner Customer Feedback Survey 2020

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is a division of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). We promote the economic and social well-being of children, families, individuals and communities with leadership and resources for compassionate, effective delivery of human services. ACF administers more than 60 programs with a **budget of more than \$53 billion**, making it the second-largest agency in HHS. ACF is comprised of **19 offices** including the **Office of Regional Operations**, which represents 10 regional offices around the country.

This survey is intended for **state human services commissioners** (a.k.a. Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, or Director). ACF is very interested in using feedback from state human services agency leadership to help inform and improve the provision of services for children and families served by our programs. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and all answers will be used for internal planning purposes.

Please take a few minutes to answer these questions about your agency's priorities, your experiences working with ACF, and your suggestions for improvement. This survey should take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

Your data are automatically saved each time you press the blue "next" arrow at the bottom of a page. Until you have completed the survey, you can return at any time using your unique emailed link. Access to the survey will expire on **[60 days from sending]**.

## STATE PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

### STATE PRIORITIES

(1) For each of the following items, move the slider to indicate the strength of your agency's priorities in the next 12 months. *When assessing whether an item is a "priority," please focus on where you intend to devote notable organizational and/or financial resources.*

[All items are on a temperature scale, presented as a table. Labels of "low priority" and "high priority" are visible to the respondent. Throughout the survey, items in long lists like these are presented in random order to minimize ordering bias]

### Organizational Efforts

- Advancing intergenerational/whole family approaches to human services
- Engaging families/consumers in redesign of services
- Focusing organizational culture on outcomes and results

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: The purpose of this information collection is to help inform and improve the provision of services for children and families served by ACF programs. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per respondent, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a voluntary collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # is 0970-0401 and the expiration date is 05/31/2021. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact Lauren Antelo, Office of Regional Operations, [lauren.antelo@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:lauren.antelo@acf.hhs.gov).

- Improving families' social and economic well-being
- Improving agency performance management systems
- Improving well-being by shifting from crisis response to prevention
- Improving data systems' interoperability
- Fostering inter-/ or intra-agency collaborations with other public agencies
- Redesigning service delivery systems to integrate programs
  - Systems integration of human services, behavioral health, and health care
  - Systems integration of human services with housing
  - Systems integration of aging services with human services, behavioral health and health, or housing

**Programmatic Topics**

- Child welfare/foster care systems/preventing child abuse and neglect
- Child care/early care and education
- Welfare/TANF cash assistance/self-sufficiency
- Workforce development/education and training/employing hard-to-employ populations
- Child support
- Substance abuse prevention and treatment, including opioids
- Homelessness and housing

**(2) Spotlight: Overall Priority**

Without addressing the need for more funding, we are interested in better understanding your most important overall priority for the coming year, regardless of whether it is covered by the list above. Please use this space to share further details.

**STATE CHALLENGES**

(3) Based on your experience administering ACF programs, and the recognition that no new resources may be available, please share information about the **challenges you face** in effectively serving children and families.

- Federal regulations and policy guidance
- Variation in federal eligibility requirements across programs
- Limits on existing program waiver authority
- Meeting state match and Maintenance of Effort requirements for federal funding
- Federal reporting, auditing, or monitoring requirements
- Insufficient collaboration across federal agencies serving similar populations
- Sufficient technical resources to use data to meet program objectives
- Guidance on privacy and confidentiality requirements for sharing administrative data
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: After respondent identifies the major challenges, they will be asked to rank the most important challenges.

(4) This question will collect more information about the items you identified as “major challenges”. Please click and drag to arrange the items you selected as a “major challenge,” in the order of their importance.

**(5) Toughest Challenges**

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding: [pipe text; display separate text boxes for items ranked 1-3 in Question 4]

**WORKING ACROSS PROGRAMS**

(6) From your experience administering ACF programs, are you able to **braid or align existing funding streams** and resources to support innovation and effectiveness?

- a. Not at all
- b. With some difficulty
- c. To some extent
- d. A great deal
- e. We have not undertaken this effort.

(7) From your experience administering ACF programs, are you able to **align data and/or data systems** to support innovation and effectiveness?

- a. Not at all
- b. With some difficulty
- c. To some extent
- d. A great deal
- e. We have not undertaken this effort.

Please rate the overall strength of your state agency’s interagency collaborations across several health and human services programs.

- Workforce/Employment/Labor
- Early childhood
- Food Assistance
- Health/Maternal and child health
- Housing/homelessness
- Child welfare
- Other (specify)

Respondent will provide rating for each program listed with the following response options:

- a. Poor
- b. Fair
- c. Good
- d. Very Good
- e. Excellent

(8) We know that it can be challenging to interact with multiple federal agencies at the state or local level. Which agencies should ACF prioritize for interagency partnerships in the next twelve months? *Please rank the partnerships that would best address the challenges you face and support your priorities.*

Agency	Rank
USDA-FNS (SNAP)	
HHS-CMS (Medicaid)	
HHS-SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health)	
HHS-MCHB (maternal and child health)	
Department of Labor (WIOA)	
HUD (Housing)	
HHS-Administration for Community Living (area agency on aging)	
Other agency (specify _____)	

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACF

(9) What **potential role(s) for ACF** would most help you achieve your agency priorities in the coming year? *Please use the slider to indicate the importance of each role specified.*

[All items on a temperature scale, presented as a table. Labels of “low priority” and “high priority” visible to respondent]

- Relationship broker with other federal agencies on cross-systems integration
- Convener of key partners and stakeholders
- Informal executive-level thought partner and problem solver
- Advisor providing federal policy guidance, interpretation, and analysis
- Developer of public-private partnerships, convening philanthropy and other funders
- Messenger/presenter at regional, state, or local meetings
- Disseminator of state and local model approaches
- Facilitator of peer-to-peer learning with state/local counterparts
- Advisor providing individualized technical assistance and consultation

(10) We would like information about the **topics of interest for technical assistance** to state executive leaders (as opposed to direct service staff, supervisors, or other middle managers). *Please rate your level of interest in receiving technical assistance for each topic. [Response categories: Not at all important; Slightly important; Important; Very Important]*

- Best practices/model approaches for service delivery
- Incorporating the latest research into programs (e.g. child development in child care)
- Preventing child abuse and neglect
- Blending/braiding multiple funding streams
- Data privacy and confidentiality requirements
- Data interoperability
- Using data to improve outcomes
- Organizational development and structures
- Other (specify)

(11) What is your preferred form of communication with ACF? *Please drag the three most useful to the box. Click and drag to shuffle the order within the box.*

- a. Ad-hoc, one-on-one in-person meetings
- b. Regularly scheduled in-person one-on-one meetings
- c. Regional peer-to-peer meetings
- d. Virtual meetings/ conference calls
- e. Grantee meetings and/or national conferences
- f. Newsletters and emails
- g. Blogs
- h. Short videos
- i. Other (specify)

(12) What tools or resources would you find helpful from ACF? *Please drag the three most useful to the box. Click and drag to shuffle the order within the box.*

- a. Data and reports to compare your ACF programs to other states
- b. One-page summaries of ACF programs and priorities
- c. 3- to 5-page research, policy, or issue briefs
- d. Best practices/case studies or program summaries regarding other state's initiatives
- e. Resources on federal funding opportunities and navigating federal grants
- f. Evidence-based practices reviews
- g. Customer satisfaction survey templates

(13) We welcome other suggestions for how ACF can foster more efficient and effective services and reduce barriers for state and local human services agencies. Please use the space below.

## WORKING WITH ACF AND REGIONAL OFFICES

Now we would like to hear from you about your experiences seeking assistance with ACF programs.

(14) When an issue regarding ACF-funded programs requires you to seek assistance, where do you turn as your primary source of assistance? *Please drag one answer to the box.*

- ACF Central Office
- ACF Regional Office
- ACF-funded technical assistance provider
- State-contracted technical assistance provider
- Professional association (APHSA, NGA, etc)
- Informal professional contacts
- Other (specify)

(15) Did you seek assistance from the **ACF Regional Office** in the last year?

- Yes [If yes, ask items a-c]
- No
- Not sure/Do not know

(a) How often did you seek assistance from the **ACF Regional Office** last year?

- 1-2 times
- 3-5 times
- 6-11 times
- Monthly or more
- Not sure/ Don't know

(b) How satisfied were you with the timeliness of assistance you received from the **ACF Regional Office**?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

(c) Please rate your overall satisfaction with the assistance you received from the **ACF Regional Office**?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied

- Very dissatisfied

(c\_explain):

[if very satisfied]Please provide more information about what was most helpful? [if very dissatisfied]

Please provide more information about your concerns and suggestions for improvement.

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