FOSTER CARE AND SERVICE PROVIDER MANAGEMENT   v1.0

Definition

Foster Care Management

To ensure that a child or youth in foster care is in a safe and stable placement, title IV-E agencies need to collect relevant data in the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). This data includes but is not limited to information on foster care providers to confirm background checks, training, safety standards, and approvals are complete. Collecting and maintaining this information in the CCWIS also ensures that federal IV-E funds are expended for allowable title IV-E administrative costs and foster care maintenance payments (FCMP). Foster care providers include foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes (45 CFR § 1355.20).

A CCWIS should support the agency's diligent recruitment. Requirements at section 422(b)(7) of the Social Security Act (the Act), requires title IV-E agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for the diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive families who represent the diversity, both ethnicity and race, for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Service Provider Management

Title IV-E agencies increasingly need information on the availability, effectiveness, and cost of services that reduce risk, strengthen families, and prevent the need for out-of-home placement. By collecting and maintaining service provider information in a CCWIS, the title IV-E agency can evaluate options and make informed decisions when creating a case plan and/or assessing systemic service needs. A CCWIS should support efforts to provide children and family members with services that address their respective needs, strengthen their family, and meet prevention and/or case plan goals. Some examples of services include, but are not limited to, substance abuse and mental health treatment, individual and family counseling, nutrition education, domestic violence support, employment stability, and independent living trainings.

Instructions

The self-assessment tool format is documented below. The Element # refers to the section number assigned to this module which will align with the respective section this self-assessment tool. The CAR document will be utilized to help score and record how well the CCWIS meets compliance with the federal regulations that describe CCWIS.

Section	Element #
Overview	E.A.xx
Self-Assessment – Part One – *Program Goals*	E.B1.xx
Self-Assessment – Part Two – *Foundational Requirements*	E.B2.xx
Resources – Functional Process Factors, Data Elements, & Additional Considerations	E.Cx.xx

CCWIS self-assessment tools assist title IV-E agency staff with voluntary documentation of CCWIS project progress as the agency plans, develops, and deploys system functions. Agencies may use the self-assessment tools to determine what features will support federal and state or tribal child welfare program needs and document ongoing CCWIS progress. The data and information provided to ACF by the IV-E agency in the CCWIS self-assessment tools will help inform the agency's CAR process conducted by ACF under 45 CFR part 95, subpart F and § 1355.55.

The Children's Bureau will continue to pilot and utilize the self-assessment tools voluntarily with agencies to document "lessons learned" and provide agencies with opportunities to provide feedback regarding the utility of the tools. At this time, agencies may utilize tools they determine useful to document project processes, such as evaluating progress in developing the CCWIS, sharing information in an Advance Planning Document (APD), or sharing information in regular monitoring calls and other technical assistance activities. Agencies are encouraged to engage CCWIS users (users) as part of their ongoing self-assessment process to ensure the CCWIS is user-friendly and meets program and policy expectations.

Agencies may wish to attach self-assessment tools, screenshots, state or tribal policy, and other documentation to APD documents to describe project progress. The tools may also be used as part of the agency's ongoing project management practices and stored, as desired, by the project team. If a required feature is not yet in production, the agency may document an expected completion date and/or reference the planned timeframe from the most recent APD update. ACF designed the tools to help clarify potential program and technology needs and document project progress towards CCWIS compliance. Agencies are encouraged to utilize standard version control practices to reduce redundancy and promote efficiencies.

A title IV-E agency may use this self-assessment tool to collect information on the users and external systems associated with a CCWIS foster care and service provider management function and any features incorporated in this function. Agencies may cross-reference information if it is already contained in an APD or project artifact. *If a question is not applicable to your foster home and provider management function, indicate "N/A" and provide the reason why it is not applicable.*

E.A.01 Date this assessment was completed.

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E.A.02 Provide a brief description of the implementation approach, status, and target dates for the function(s) and/or external system(s). *Specific implementation plans are documented in the APD and the agency may reference the APD(s), or document information, here.*

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E.A.03 If the function supports programs beyond the child welfare program (such as Juvenile Justice or Adult Services), please identify the other program area(s) below.

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E.A.04 Does the function contain or exchange data with a resource directory for service and/or placement providers? If so, please describe the directory, including information about who keeps the information current and if the providers in the directory are local, available statewide, or within a tribal title IV-E agency service area. Include a list of service types in the resource directory, such as prevention, post-adoption, placement, treatment, and independent living, etc.

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E.A.05 Is this function or external system(s) accessed by users who are not employees of the agency (or counties in a county-administered system), such as private providers, staff of other state or tribal agencies, court staff, or contractors? *Please identify external user groups that will access this function, including Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs). Please add more rows, as needed.*

User Group	Purpose of Use

E.A.06   Do title IV-E staff, or external users, of the CCWIS use any system(s) external to CCWIS to collect information used in this function? If so, what external system(s) are used and what data from that system is shared with the CCWIS? *External systems can include commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products, publicly available portals, and applications for mobile devices. Please add more rows, as needed.*

External System/Portal/App	Data Shared

E.A.07   Are there any additional comments you would like to provide as background to this function?

Part One – Program Goals

The Program Goals section of this self-assessment tool describes critical program needs CCWIS must support, as defined at 45 CFR § 1355.52 (a) (1). These program needs apply whether staff enter data directly into the CCWIS or data are imported through a data exchange. Agencies should continually assess changing policy and practice needs to ensure CCWIS aligns with program priorities and remains relevant to support program outcomes. The program goals noted below are common child welfare program needs or are required by policy or federal law.

In this section, the title IV-E agency may document components, factors, and design elements of the function(s) or exchanges that support the program goals of the foster home and service provider management function. We encourage agencies to simplify their responses by referencing submitted documentation, such as APDs or attach screen shots, system documentation, training materials, survey data, and agency policy or procedures. To ensure the CCWIS is supporting program goals, engagement with end users during all states of the system development life cycle is critical. Likewise, continuous user feedback is often necessary to ensure the system is responsive to program changes after implementation.

In the **Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goals** column, include information such as:
- how the CCWIS supports agency policies and practices;
- feedback from end users;
- how the module was designed to be user-friendly and streamline work;
- data the CCWIS maintains to support the goal;
- reports the CCWIS provides; and
- components, factors, and design elements of the function(s), or exchanges, that support the goal.

If the agency has additional program goals by this function, please include them below and add new rows, as needed.

If a question is not applicable to the foster care and service provider management function, indicate "N/A" and explain why it is not applicable. For example, 'other functions in the CCWIS may address the program goals.'

#	Program Goal	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goal
E.B1.01	Provide consistent, timely, and accurate information to help workers manage the recruitment and approval process for foster care providers.	

#	Program Goal	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goal
E.B1.02	Support the diligent recruitment requirements of the Multiethnic Placement Act, the diligent recruitment plans and efforts in the Annual Progress Services Report, and for states, the Child and Family Services Review Performance Improvement Plan.	
E.B1.03	Provide complete foster care provider history in a timely and accurate manner. This includes statewide access to real-time information about foster care providers.	
E.B1.04	Allow workers to collect placement information to support federal and state or tribal programs, such as title IV-E and title IV-B.	
E.B1.05	Allow the agency to issue timely and accurate FCMPs in a financial function, if applicable.	
E.B1.06	Improve the quality of information the worker has to manage the case and offers timely and appropriate services to support the family.	

Part Two – Foundational Requirements

Foundational Requirements identify conditions to comply with CCWIS Project requirements at 45 CFR § 1355.52. These apply whether staff enter data directly into the CCWIS or data are imported through a data exchange.

> In this section, the title IV-E agency may document components, factors, and design elements of the function(s) or exchanges that support CCWIS foundational requirements. We encourage agencies to simplify their responses by referencing submitted documentation such as APDs or attached screen shots, system documentation, training materials, survey data, and agency policy or procedures.
>
> In the **Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Foundational Requirement** column, include information such as:
> - feedback from end users;
> - how the module was designed to be user-friendly and streamline work;
> - data the CCWIS maintains;
> - reports the CCWIS generates or contributes to;
> - user-interfaces features; and
> - automated processes and other design features.
>
> *If a question is not applicable to the foster care and service provider management function, indicate "N/A" and explain why it is not applicable. For example, other functions in the CCWIS may address the relevant foundational requirements.*

#	Foundational Requirement	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support Foundational Requirements
E.B2.01	Support federal and state or tribal program goals, outcomes, and reporting requirements.	
E.B2.02	Maintain data to support federal audits, reviews, and other monitoring activities, <u>including</u> title IV-E eligibility reviews and required federal reporting.	
E.B2.03	Data is consistently and uniformly collected by CCWIS, exchanged with	

#	Foundational Requirement	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support Foundational Requirements
	external systems, and, if applicable, CWCA systems.	
E.B2.04	Data is not created by default or inappropriately assigned.	
E.B2.05	Automated functions exist to prevent, to the extent practicable, the need to re-enter data already captured or exchanged with the CCWIS.	
E.B2.06	Data is exchanged and maintained under confidentiality requirements in section 471(a)(8) of the Act, 45 CFR 205.50, and 42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(viii) through (x) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, if applicable, and other applicable federal and state or tribal laws.	
E.B2.07	For states, data is included that supports specific measures taken to comply with the requirements in section 422(b)(9) of the Act regarding the state's compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act.	

RESOURCES

The Functional Process Factors, Data Elements, and Additional Considerations below are examples, not an exhaustive list of functional needs, the title IV-E agencies may consider in developing a foster home and provider management function. Title IV-E agencies are encouraged to collect data required to support child welfare program outcomes, needs of respective users, and CCWIS and program regulations.

Resource 1: Functional Process Factors

Resource 2: Data Elements

Resource 3: Additional Considerations

Resource 1 – Functional Process Factors

Functional Process Factors identify useful *processes* to achieve an efficient, economical, and effective CCWIS, as defined at 45 CFR § 1355.52. A title IV-E agency is not required to have all the functional process factors listed below in the CCWIS. Function descriptions are based on historical perspectives and typical program needs gathered from previous reviews to promote the successful execution of adoption program goals. The functional process factors will evolve and title IV-E agencies may, as needed, include additional factors. Title IV-E agencies are encouraged to assess local program needs, federal and agency policies, and user-centric design as it develops, maintains, and enhances the CCWIS adoption functions to support positive program outcomes.

#	Functional Process Factors
E.C1.01	Facilitates approval of a foster care provider at key intervals to reduce recruitment and licensing barriers. For example, the system provides alerts to notify users there is missing information from the initial application or that the annual training requirements need to be completed.
E.C1.02	Tracks flow of inquiries through the process of conducting background checks, safety standards, and approvals.
E.C1.03	Provides timely (as defined by the agency) access to foster care provider availability based upon the child's needs.
E.C1.04	Includes calendar-based notices or reminders related to license expiration or renewal dates.
E.C1.05	The system generates reconciliation and evaluation reports of placement data, as needed, and supports the generation of documents, notices, and reports related to providers.
E.C1.06	Tracks placements to ensure that foster youth in congregate care facilities are in a setting appropriate for the child's level of care, including specialized homes that meet their needs.
E.C1.07	Supports bi-directional exchange with CWCA(s).
E.C1.08	Supports the generation of documents, management reports, other alerts, bulletins, and notices related to resource availability.
E.C1.09	Supports community partnerships by allowing feedback, communication, and shared information.
E.C1.10	Incorporates provider preferences like age, gender, service needs, etc. when searching for available foster care providers.
E.C1.11	Track and report any updates from the abuse and neglect registry on active foster parents.
E.C1.12	Documents and maintains records of any licensing-related appeals and outcomes under the agency's established appeals process.

Resource 2 – Data Elements

The Data Elements section identifies examples of useful *data elements* to achieve an efficient, economical, and effective CCWIS as defined at 45 CFR § 1355.52. Data elements evolve and title IV-E agencies may include additional elements to support local program needs.

#	Data Elements
E.C2.01	Information collected through foster and pre-adoptive inquiries from prospective families, such as: • Date of inquiry; • Location; • Contact information; and • Interest type.
E.C2.02	Data on initial and ongoing training activities for foster care providers: • Registration and completion dates; • List of trainings with completion status; • Training hours; • Certificates; and • Training Costs (title IV-E training).
E.C2.03	Data used for reports, investigative notes, and findings of licensing violations.
E.C2.04	Documents and stores data on foster care, pre-adoptive, and kinship applications, including all supplemental materials/data, such as: • Completed references; • Background checks; • Medical checks and/or exams; and • Any required state or tribal documentation.
E.C2.05	Documents and maintains demographic data as licensed, such as: • Age ranges; • Gender; • Bed capacity; • Special needs; and • Additional information required by the title IV-E agency.
E.C2.06	Data needed to capture narrative case notes and case contacts the IV-E agency needs to incorporate into the IV-E agency's official case record.
E.C2.07	If the agency has implemented a resource directory, information required to utilize, locate, approve, license, and/or certify service providers, such as: • Name of business/non-profit; • Contact information and hours of operation; • Type(s) of service; and • Cost.
E.C2.8	Information to support reporting and/or claims processing in a financial function (if applicable for your title IV-E agency), such as: • Participant(s);

#	Data Elements
	• Dates of placement in foster care; • Type(s) of foster care providers utilized; and • Federal financial participation claimed for FCMPs and allowable administrative costs.

Resource 3 – Additional Considerations

The Additional Considerations section describes useful features agencies may wish to incorporate into the CCWIS design/features.

#	Additional Considerations
E.C3.01	Supports automated exchange with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and/or law enforcement for criminal background checks.
E.C3.02	Processes contracts and contract changes and supports the creation, processing, monitoring, and modification of contracts.
E.C3.03	Supports the ability of foster care providers and caseworkers to monitor the status of licensure activities.
E.C3.04	Provides information and tools in multiple languages based upon needs of the target population.
E.C3.05	Provides a public facing website that supports general and targeted recruitment activities, including contact information.
E.C3.06	Provides online support to include help, frequently asked questions (FAQ), and/or chat.
E.C3.07	Provides online access to families who wish to complete an application to be licensed as a foster, pre-adoptive, or kinship provider.
E.C3.08	Tracks foster and pre-adoptive provider recruitment events and participation rates.
E.C3.09	Provides easy access to resource materials and services to support foster, kinship, and adoptive families.
E.C3.10	Provides easy and secure access for foster care providers to upload documents, such as training certificates, photos, receipts, supporting case paperwork, etc.
E.C3.11	Provides an up-to-date directory of services and contact information.
E.C3.12	Allows secure communication between the foster care provider and prospective foster care providers with the assigned worker.
E.C3.13	Provides easy and secure access for foster care providers to review case and visitation plans, read and update medical history, find upcoming court dates, and look up assigned worker and/or supervisor contact information.
E.C3.14	Generates alerts based on pre-determined licensing and approval milestones.
E.C3.15	Establishes a resource directory to allow for matching foster youth with foster care providers that meet the youth's needs.
E.C3.16	Supports electronic referrals and enrollment with service providers.
E.C3.17	Generates appointment/calendar reminders.
E.C3.18	Provides records management to support the licensing and relicensing of foster care providers used by the title IV-E agency or a data exchange with a separate information system supporting these functions.
E.C3.19	Incorporates a youth's case plan goals when searching for providers.

| E.C3.20 | System uses automated functions to recommend placements with relatives and siblings before allowing an alternative placement option to be chosen. |
| E.C3.21 | Generate alerts for assigned workers and CWCAs when critical incidents involve a foster home assigned to them or their agency. |

We encourage agencies to add examples of additional considerations from their foster home and provider management function they wish to highlight.

#	Agency-Submitted Additional Considerations