

# ACF County Human Services Commissioner 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. ACF is very interested in using feedback from local human services agency leadership to help inform and improve the provision of services for children and families served by our programs.

This survey is intended for [county human services commissioners](#) (a.k.a. Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, or Director). Although the majority of ACF funding is provided to a designated state agency, we recognize that the implementation and innovative practices are also generated at the local level. ACF federal funding provides support for TANF, child welfare/foster care, child care, Head Start, child support, and other human services programs. We know that counties operating in state-administered versus state-supervised, county-administered states may have different challenges and opportunities with implementing federally-funded programs. We are very interested in receiving feedback from local jurisdictions to inform our work with the states.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and all answers will be used for internal planning purposes and to further the proper performance of the functions of the agency. Your responses will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Please take a few moments to answer a few questions about your priorities and challenges, experiences working with ACF and share 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.  
You can return to the survey at any time using your unique emailed link. Access to the survey will expire on  
Date XX/XX/XXXX.*

*Note: An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is XXXX-XXXX and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.*

## County Priorities and Challenges

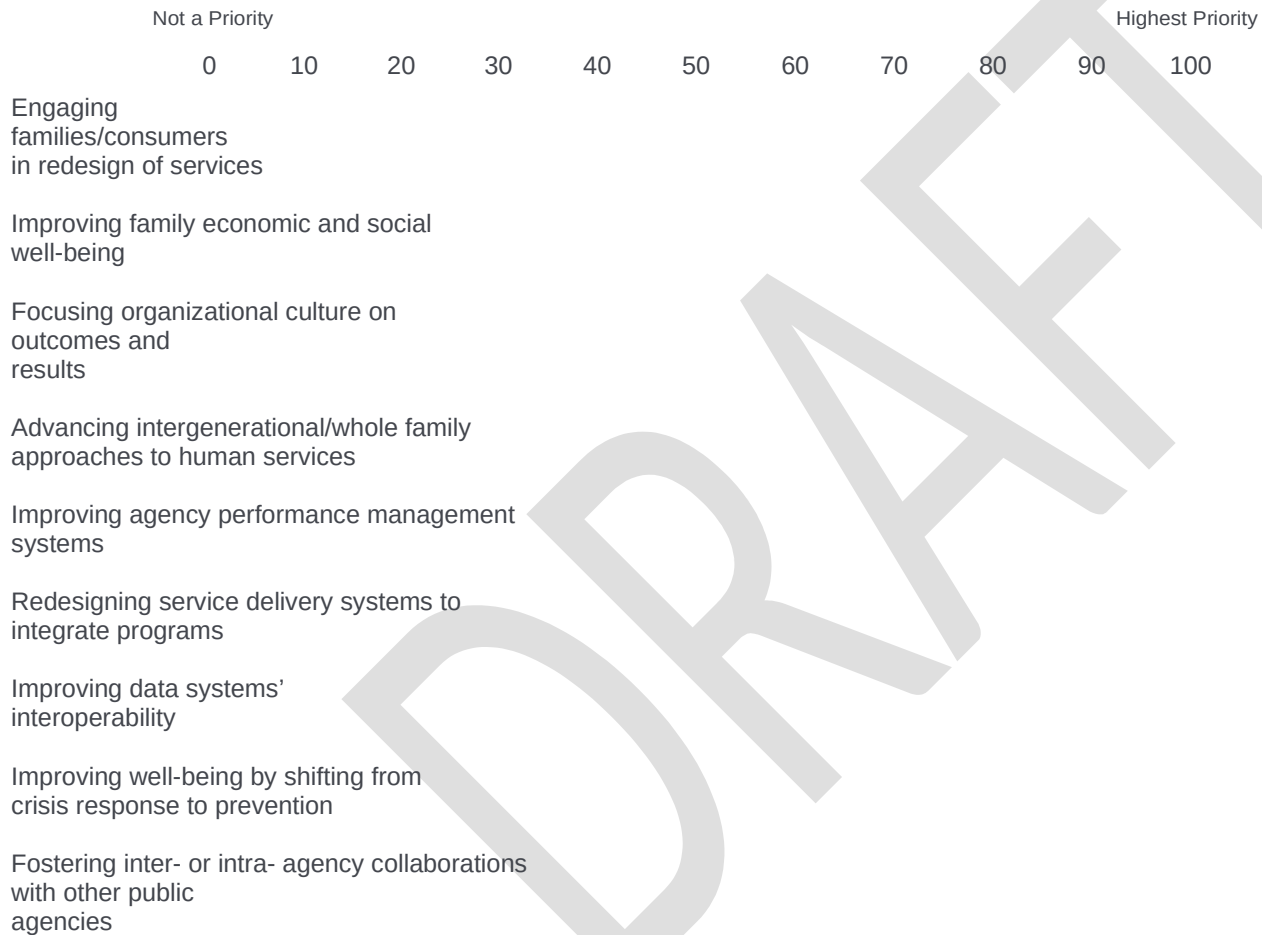
### County Priorities

(1) For each of the following items, move the slider to indicate the strength of your agency's priorities in the next 12 months.

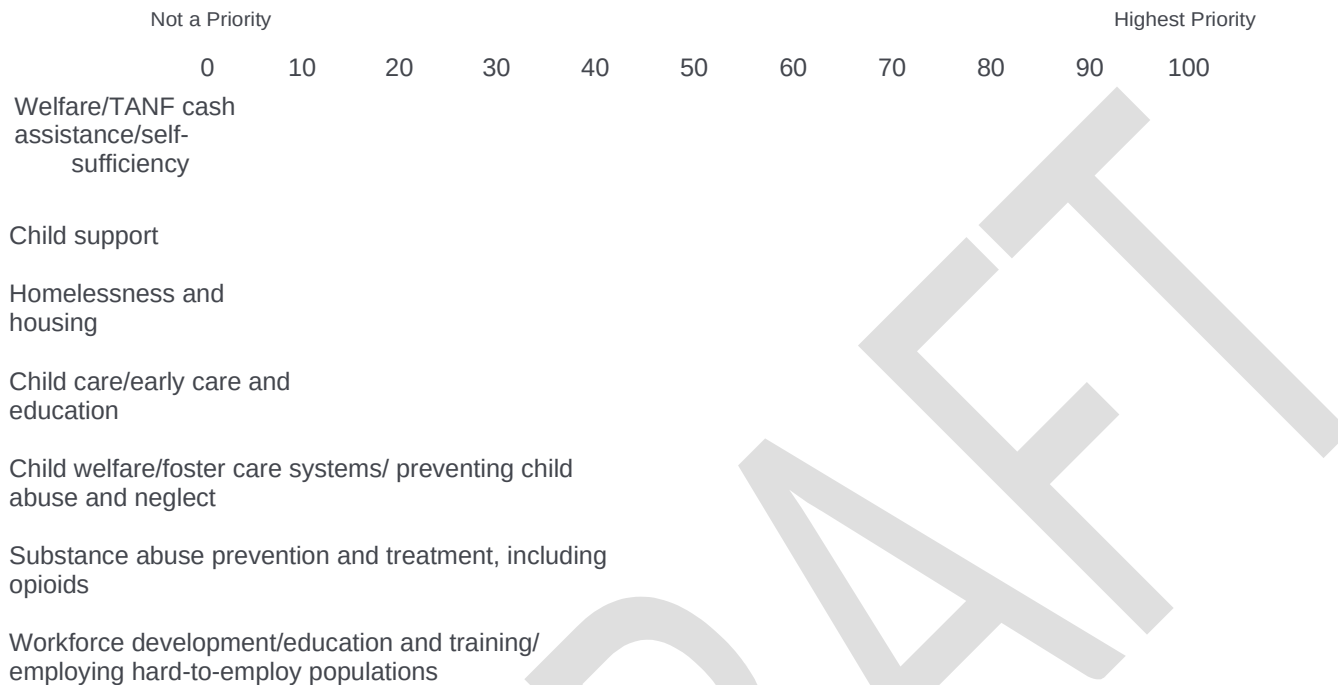
PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BURDEN: The purpose of this information collection is to help inform and improve the provision of services for children and families served by ACF programs. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to 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).

When assessing whether an item is a priority, please focus on where you intend to devote notable organizational and/or financial resources.

## Organizational Efforts



## Programmatic Topics



**(2) Spotlight: Overall Priority**

Aside from more funding, we are interested in better understanding your highest overall priority for the coming year, regardless of whether it is covered by the list above. Please use this space to share further details.

**County Challenges**

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

Not a challenge      Minor challenge      Major challenge

Insufficient collaboration across federal agencies  
serving similar populations

Variation in federal eligibility requirements across programs

Guidance on privacy/confidentiality requirements for sharing  
administrative data

Limits on existing program waiver authority Federal regulations  
and policy guidance

Sufficient technical resources to use data to meet program objectives

Meeting federal, state, or local match and Maintenance of Effort  
requirements for federal funding

Federal reporting, auditing, or monitoring requirements  
State regulations and policy guidance

Other (Specify)

*This question will collect more information about the items you identified as "major challenges."*

**(4) Please click and drag to arrange the items you selected as a "major challenge" in the order of their importance.**

Federal regulations and policy guidance

State 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/confidentiality requirements for sharing administrative data

Now we will collect more information about the items you identified as the **top 3** "major challenges."

### **(5) Toughest Challenges**

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **federal regulations and policy guidance**.

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **state regulations and policy guidance**.

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **variation in federal eligibility requirements across programs**.

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **existing program waiver authority**.

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **state match and Maintenance of Effort**

requirements for federal funding.

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **federal reporting, auditing, or monitoring requirements.**

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **collaboration across federal agencies serving similar populations.**

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **technical resources to use data to meet program objectives.**

Please provide more detail about the challenges you face regarding **privacy and confidentiality requirements for sharing administrative data.**

## **Working Across Programs**

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

- Not at all
- With some difficulty To some extent
- A great deal
- We have not undertaken this effort

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

- Not at all
- With some difficulty To some extent
- A great deal
- We have not undertaken this effort

**(8) Please rate the overall strength of your state agency's interagency collaborations for each of the following health and human services program areas:**

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

- Food Assistance
- Housing/Homelessness
- Early Childhood
- Health/Maternal and Child Health Workforce/Employment/Labor Child Welfare
- Other (Specify)

**(9) 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 drag items to rank the partnerships that would best address the challenges you face and support your priorities.*

- HHS- ACL (Area agency on aging)
- HHS-SAMHSA (Substance abuse and mental health)
- HUD (Housing) USDA-FNS (SNAP)

- Department of Labor (WIOA)
- HHS-CMS (Medicaid)

- HHS-MCHB (Maternal and child health)
- Other (Specify)

## Recommendations for ACF

(10) 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.

Low Priority

High Priority

Convener of state and local key partners and stakeholders

Relationship broker between state and local agencies with other federal agencies on cross-system integration

Facilitator of peer-to-peer learning with state/local counterparts

Messenger/presenter at regional, state, or local meetings

Disseminator of state and local model approaches

Advisor providing federal policy guidance, interpretation, and analysis

Advisor providing individualized technical assistance and consultation

Informal, executive-level thought partner and problem solver

Developer of public- private partnerships, convening philanthropy



and other funders

**(11) We would like information about the topics of interest for technical assistance for local 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.*

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important
Blending/braiding multiple funding streams				
Incorporating the latest research into programs (e.g. child development in child care)				
Using data to improve outcomes				
Data privacy and confidentiality requirements Data interoperability				
Putting hard-to-employ populations to work				
Organizational development and structures				
Best practices/model approaches for service delivery				
Preventing child abuse and neglect				
Other (Specify)				

**(12) 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.*

Items

Ad-hoc, one-on-one in-person meetings

Regularly scheduled in-person one-on-one meetings

Regional peer-to-peer meetings

Virtual meetings/conference calls

Top 3 Most Useful

Grantee meetings and/or national conferences

Newsletters and emails Blogs

Short videos

Other (Specify)

**(13) What tools or resources would you find most useful from ACF?**

*Please drag the three most useful to the box. Click and drag to shuffle the order within the box.*

Items

One-page summaries of ACF programs and priorities

Evidence-based practices reviews

Data and reports to compare your ACF programs to other states

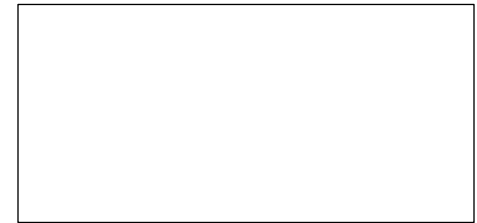
3- to 5-page research, policy,  
or issue briefs

Customer satisfaction survey  
templates

Resources on federal funding opportunities and navigating federal grants

Best practices/case studies or summaries of other states'  
initiatives

Top 3 Most Useful



**(14) 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 about your experiences seeking assistance with ACF programs.

**(15) 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.*

Items

State human services/social services agency  
ACF Regional Office ACF Central Office  
ACF-funded technical assistance provider  
State- or local-contracted technical assistance provider  
Professional association  
(APHSA, NGA, etc)  
Informal professional contacts  
Other (Specify)

Primary Source of Assistance



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

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/do not know

**(16a) How often did you seek assistance from the ACF Regional Office in the last year?**

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

(16b) How satisfied were you with the **timeliness** of assistance you received from the **ACF Regional Office**?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

(16c) Please rate your overall satisfaction with the assistance you received from the **ACF Regional Office**.

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

(16d) Please provide more information about what was most helpful from the **ACF Regional Office**.

(16e) Please provide more information about your concerns with the **ACF Regional Office** and suggestions for improvement.

**(17) Did you seek assistance from the ACF Central Office in the last year?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/don't know

(17a) How satisfied were you with the **timeliness** of assistance you received from the **ACF Central Office**?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied

- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

(17b) Please rate your overall satisfaction with the assistance you received from the **ACF Central Office**.

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

(17c) Please provide more information about what was most helpful from the **ACF Central Office**.

(17d) Please provide more information about your concerns with the **ACF Central Office** and suggestions for improvement.

**18. Did you meet with your region's ACF Regional Administrator or their staff in the past year?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure/don't know

(18a) Please rate your overall satisfaction with your meeting(s) with the **ACF Regional Administrator's Office**.

(18b) Please provide more information about your concerns with the **ACF Regional Administrator's Office** and suggestions for improvement.

## **Respondent Background**

In order to target our follow-up activities, please share some background about you and your agency.

**(6) What is your title?**

- County CEO (Commissioner, Secretary, Executive Director, Director)
- County Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, or direct report to county CEO
- County Senior Director or Program Administrator
- Other (Specify)

**(20) What is your agency's total annual budget?**

- \$500 million or less
- More than \$500 million to \$1 billion
- More than \$1 billion to \$5 billion
- More than \$5 billion to \$10 billion
- More than \$10 billion

**(21) Please estimate how much of your program budget is allocated to contracts with private non-governmental providers or community agencies:**

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76% or more

**(22) How many FTEs does your agency employ?**

- 1-100
- 101-500
- 501-1000
- 1001-5000
- 5001 or more

**(23) Please select the state you currently work in:**

State \_\_\_\_\_(drop down box)

**(24) Which programs does your agency oversee?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- Public assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Workforce development and employment training
- Child welfare, foster care, child protective services, child abuse prevention
- Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Subsidy and child care
- Head Start, Early Head Start, or other early childhood programs
- Home visiting
- Public health, maternal, and child health
- Mental health
- Substance abuse
- Child support
- Domestic violence
- Refugee assistance
- Housing and homelessness
- Developmental disabilities
- Aging
- Adult and juvenile justice
- Community Services Block Grant programming
- Homeless services
- Other (specify)

By clicking "forward" below, your survey will be submitted and final.

Thank you for your time and effort responding to this survey.