ADOPTION   v1.0

Introduction

Adoption is the method provided by state law or for a tribal title IV-E agency, tribal law, which establishes the legal relationship of parent and child between persons not so related by birth, with the same mutual rights and obligations that exist between children and their birth parents. This relationship can only be termed "adoption" after the legal process is complete.[1] The primary goal of the title IV-E adoption assistance program is to provide financial support to families who adopt difficult-to-place children from the public child welfare system. These are children who otherwise would grow up in foster care systems if a suitable adoptive parent could not be found.

Collecting information on adoption activities in the CCWIS enables the title IV-E agency to comply with federal reporting requirements, make accurate eligibility determinations, supports the title IV-E agency's diligent recruitment plan, and allows the title IV-E agency to make timely decisions about adoptive placements.

Tool Format

This self-assessment tool is divided into sections as outlined on the chart below. Every question and additional consideration has a unique *Element #* for easy reference. Please refer to the instructions in Technical Bulletin #7 or contact your federal analyst if you have questions about the tool or a specific element.

Section	Element #
Overview	D.A.xx
Self-Assessment – Part 1 – *Program Goals*	D.B1.xx
Self-Assessment – Part 2 – *Foundational Requirements*	D.B2.xx
Resources and Additional Considerations	D.Cx.xx

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[1] 45 CFR §1355.20(a)

A title IV-E agency may use this self-assessment tool to collect information on the users and external systems associated with a CCWIS adoption function and any adoption 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 the adoption function, indicate "NA" and provide the reason why it is not applicable.*

D.A.01 Date this assessment was completed.

D.A.02 Provide a brief description of the implementation approach, status, and target dates for the adoption functions 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.*

D.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.

D.A.04 Is this function or external system(s) accessed by users who are not employees of your 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 have access to this function, including Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs). Please add more rows, as needed.*

User Group	Purpose of Use

D.A.05 Do title IV-E agency staff or external users 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	Data Shared

D.A.06 Are there any additional comments you would like to provide as background to this function?

Part 1 – Program Goals

The Program Goals section of this self-assessment tool describes the 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 an 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 goals noted below are required by policy or federal law, or are common child welfare program needs.

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 adoption function. We encourage agencies to simplify their responses by referencing submitted documentation, such as APDs or attach screenshots, 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 stages 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;
- screenshots or references to demonstrations;
- feedback from end users;
- references to relevant policy, procedures, and workflows;
- examples of dashboards, reports, and/or outcome tracking;
- data sharing agreements and/or CWCA contract language;
- training materials and/or user manuals;
- how the module was designed to be user friendly and streamline work;
- data CCWIS maintains to support the goal; and
- components, factors, and design elements of the function(s), or exchanges, that support the goal.

Evidence should be succinct. Information and documents collected for this self-assessment can be reused for other purposes, such as other self-assessment tools, state or tribal audits, risk assessments, continuous operations planning, and contracts. We encourage agency technology and program teams to work collaboratively when completing the tool. If a question is not applicable to the adoption function, indicate "NA" and explain why it is not applicable. For example, other functions in the CCWIS may address the program goals.

A sample response is provided for the first two goals. If the title IV-E agency has additional program goals, please include them below and add new rows, as needed.

#	Program Goal	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goal
D.B1.01	Provide consistent, timely, and accurate information in a streamlined manner to support workers in their efforts to achieve the permanency goal of adoption.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Reports comparing legacy data to CCWIS post-implementation data.* • *Examples of functionality the agency wants to highlight.* *Sample Response:* *The State of Nirvana has built an adoption module with a workflow that mirrors Policy #1.01 (pages 3-4 attached). We have updated our training materials (see attached) to reflect the new functionality and have conducted trainings for 65% of existing workers and 100% of all new workers hired since 7/1/2021. Compared to our legacy system, the CCWIS provides a simplified UX that allows users to access and link foster case records without having to navigate multiple tabs (see attached for screen shots of the new adoption screen). We will cover these new screens during the demonstration scheduled for 1/1/2022.* *CCWIS data were established demonstrating cases are transferred to the adoption worker on average within 14 days of the court hearing establishing adoption as a goal, compared to 28 days in the legacy system – or – CCWIS data were established demonstrating adoption cases are transferring timely each month (a monthly average of 98% in the CCWIS vs 75% in the legacy).* *CCWIS data were established over the last 12 months showing the number of missing adoption data elements when transferring a case has decreased by 25%, as compared to the legacy system.* *User feedback from the 33 frontline workers involved in UAT has been positive. Users have identified the search tool, genogram, and ability to link siblings as the most useful new functions. Requests for future changes include shorter loading times and improved dashboards. Our next release, scheduled for 7/1/2022, will add new functionality to the dashboard and we are conducting a root cause analysis for the slow loading times.*
D.B1.02	Support the delivery of pre- and post-adoption services to support the well-being of the child.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Reports comparing legacy data to CCWIS post-implementation data.*

#	Program Goal	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goal
		• *Examples of functionality the agency wants to highlight.* *Sample Response:* *The CCWIS allows users to migrate existing services from the foster care plan to ensure seamless delivery once the child enters the adoptive placement. The adoption plan is pre-populated with information from the foster case to save time, reduce duplication, and improve data quality. See attached screenshots of the adoption case plan.* *For new services, or those only eligible to adoptive placements, the user is prompted automatically if the child and/or families meets eligibility criteria noted in Policy #1.02 (pages 5-6 attached). For example, one-time funding for legal fees to finalize the adoption. This process will be highlighted on 1/1/2022 during the demonstration.* *The system supports text messaging which older youth in foster care or pre-adoptive placements may utilize to identify service needs. The system supports Natural Language Processing and text data are analyzed monthly. Data over the past six months indicate a continued increase (45 from 15) in youth requesting assistance and accessing mental health services.*
D.B1.03	Provide case history, including family connections and health records, in a timely and accurate manner.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *A screenshot of a genogram or family connection report.* • *Example of an electronic health record.* • *Data elements received in a data exchange that includes medical treatment and history.* • *CCWIS data demonstrating health information is updated regularly. For example, agency target is x% of records updated every three months and the agency met the target each quarter of the analysis period.*
D.B1.04	Link the child's historical data to a child's new adoption case and provide an audit trail of adoption activities to support the confidentiality and documentation of efforts to ensure well-being, safety, and permanency for the child.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *System demonstration showing how an adoptive youth's pre-adoptive name and information is kept confidential through all data exchanges, particularly the Medicaid interface.* • *System documentation describing requirements for how historical information and adoptive information are stored so they maintain confidentiality but support linking for longitudinal analysis of adoption finalization and/or adoption disruption.* • *Policy information that explains who has access to what information once an adoption case*

#	Program Goal	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Program Goal
		has been created. • *Reference the Security Self-Assessment Tool if information is already documented there.*
D.B1.05	Support efforts to comply with adoption components of the agency's title IV-E and IV-B plans, any diligent recruitment plans, and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Example of a CCWIS-generated diligent recruitment plan.* • *Adoption data are consistently reported in the agency's Statewide Assessment (CFSR), AFCARS, and other reports.*
D.B1.06	As defined in state or tribal law, provide adoptees and adoptive parents with information about the birth family, including medical history and family history, as well as photos, such as a Life Book.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *If applicable, screenshots of an app or portal used by external users to retrieve and/or upload these documents and/or information.* • *Examples of a report and/or documentation that could be shared with an adoptive family.* • *Data showing completion of life book information is occurring timely.*
D.B1.07	Support the documentation of special needs, reasonable efforts to achieve the permanency plan, and the specific factors, or conditions that make the child difficult to place.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Recent AFCARS data.* • *Agency quality assurance monitoring demonstrates achievement of reasonable efforts to achieve permanency rose from x to x over x period of time.*

Part 2 – 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 attach 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:
- how the CCWIS supports agency policies and practices;
- screenshots;
- feedback from end users;
- references to relevant policy, procedures, and workflows;
- examples of dashboards, reports, and/or outcome tracking;
- data sharing agreements and/or CWCA contract language;
- training materials and/or user manuals;
- how the module was designed to be user friendly and streamline work;
- data CCWIS maintains to support the goal; and
- components, factors, and design elements of the function(s), or exchanges, that support the goal.

Evidence should be succinct and relevant to the goal at hand. Information and documents collected for this self-assessment can be reused for other purposes, such as other self-assessment tools, state or tribal audits, risk assessments, continuous operations planning, and contracts. We encourage agency technology and program teams to work collaboratively when completing the tool. *A sample response is provided for the first two goals.*

If a question is not applicable to the adoption function, indicate "NA" 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 the Foundational Requirement
D.B2.01	Support the federal and state or tribal practice model.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Relevant sections of the practice model.* *Sample Response:* *Our practice model (pages 4-5 attached) sets an expectation that adoptive families have the information to support children and emphasizes that families and children are best served when adoption efforts are needs-based rather than service driven. The CCWIS allows workers and families to have access (complete, accurate, and timely) to the most critical case information to ensure there is timely communication, reduced waiting periods for services, improved outcomes, and reliable data. When polled 3 months post-implementation, 92% of users report that the CCWIS helps facilitate the creation of adoption plans and allows families to feel more included in the decision making.* *During the demonstration on 1/1/2022, we will show you how adoptive families can submit updates, request services, and access case/child data through our portal.*
D.B2.02	Support federal and state or tribal program goals, outcomes, and reporting requirements.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Relevant sections of agency plans (such as the CFSP) that address federal, and state or tribal goals.* • *AFCARS adoption file data quality reports.* • *Agency-prioritized outcomes. For example, the agency has identified timely permanency as a priority goal for the 2021-23 biennium. The goal is to decrease time to permanency from x to x days. The user dashboard has been modified to focus on this goal, along with the other data priorities identified in our CFSP. As an example, we have demonstrated an x% decrease in the time needed to place older youth since real-time individualized permanency data became on the caseworker's personal caseload dashboard.*
D.B2.03	Maintain data to support federal audits, reviews, and other monitoring activities, including title IV-E eligibility reviews.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Data dictionary.* • *Results of recent internal or federal reviews.* • *Completion of automated enhancements to support related CFSR PIP goals.*
D.B2.04	Data is consistently and uniformly collected by CCWIS, exchanged with	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:*

#	Foundational Requirement	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Foundational Requirement
	external systems, and, if applicable, CWCA systems.	• *Data-sharing agreements, or contract language, that addresses data exchanges.* • *Reference the CCWIS Design or Data Exchange Self-Assessment Tools if information is already documented there.*
D.B2.05	Automated functions exist to prevent the need to re-enter data already captured or exchanged with the CCWIS.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Data that demonstrates a reduction in the % of duplicate data entry as compared to the legacy system.* • *List of features/functions, such as search tools and data exchanges, that support the prevention of duplicate data.* • *Business process and/or workflows.*
D.B2.06	Data is not created by default or inappropriately assigned.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Data dictionary or similar document that demonstrates there is no default text in AFCARS adoption data elements.*
D.B2.07	Data is exchanged and maintained in accordance with confidentiality requirements in section 471(a)(8) of the Social Security Act (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.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Reference the Security and Data Exchange Self-Assessment Tools if information is already documented there.* • *How the system enforces confidentiality of pre-adoption information for all data exchanges.* • *Testing routines to ensure pre-adopt information is not released unintentionally through data exchanges, reporting environments, or to individuals without authorized access.*
D.B2.08	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.	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Rollup of data that demonstrates compliance with ICWA requirements.* • *Data sharing and/or working agreements with tribes.*
D.B2.09	Track timeframes and milestones that reflect the title IV-E agency's governing laws, policies, and practices regarding	*In addition to examples included in the instructions, you may include other evidence, such as:* • *Dashboard reports. For example, decreased court continuances in achieving permanency over x*

#	Foundational Requirement	Evidence the Module & Exchanges Support the Foundational Requirement
	timely permanency. For example, court milestones, required family partnership meetings, etc.	*period or increased attachment/loss counseling services for youth preparing for adoption over x period.*

C. Resources and Additional Considerations

The Functional Process Factors, Data Elements, and Additional Considerations below are examples, not an exhaustive list of functional requirements, that title IV-E agencies may consider in developing an adoption 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. *If the agency is including these functional process factors, data elements, and additional considerations in the CCWIS, please write "Yes" in the "Included in Agency's CCWIS?" column.*

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 they develop, maintain, and enhance the CCWIS adoption functions to support positive program outcomes.

#	Included in Agency's CCWIS?	Functional Process Factors
D.C1.01		Adoption functions are available 24 hours a day.
D.C1.02		Remote, or web, connectivity for users.
D.C1.03		Provides person and/or case search that allows quick and user-friendly access and usability of historical data.
D.C1.04		Supports the confidentiality of all information in the CCWIS, such as the link between name and adoption ID, the pre-adoptive name, and Medicaid number. Also supports the confidentiality and linking of these data elements when data is exchanged with external systems, such as finance and Medicaid.
D.C1.05		Includes automated functions that support and track supervisory reviews and feedback.
D.C1.06		Provides support for the integrity of information as reported and allows for auditable changes/updates.
D.C1.07		Allows approved users to link a child's historical data to a child's new adoption case.
D.C1.08		Provides ability to connect sibling records of children who are available for adoption.
D.C1.09		Assigns a unique Adoption ID to each Child or links to existing ID if the person is already documented in the system.
D.C1.10		Provides electronic support for adoption work related to the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.
D.C1.11		Allows documentation of the reasons contributing to successful, or unsuccessful, adoptions and placements.
D.C1.12		Provides automated and/or electronic support for determining initial and ongoing eligibility for title IV-E adoption assistance.
D.C1.13		Provides the ability to track both title IV-E and non-federal adoption assistance subsidy payments and non-recurring adoption expenses.
D.C1.14		Provides notice or documents notice of adoption tax credits to adopting parents.

#	Included in Agency's CCWIS?	Functional Process Factors
D.C1.15		Provides ability to track timeframes that reflect the title IV-E agency's governing laws, policies, and practices regarding the timing of key case events and activities.
D.C1.16		Maintain cases that remain open for adoption or guardianship subsidy.
D.C1.17		Generates required hardcopy documents, if used by the courts, such as applications for adoption and copies of birth certificates.
D.C1.18		Provides the ability to document the results of criminal background checks of the adoptive family members.
D.C1.19		Imports or tracks the decisions and/or outcomes of court-related factors, such as timeliness of hearings, involvement of judges and guardians, etc., that are likely to result in timely permanency decisions.
D.C1.20		Provides electronic support for Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA).
D.C1.21		Provides the ability to alert, or notify, staff of casework activities per the federal, state, and local child welfare policies.
D.C1.22		Tracks previous adoptions and disruptions/dissolutions.
D.C1.23		Tracks and documents outcomes of annual reviews.

C. Resources and Additional Considerations

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.

#	Included in Agency's CCWIS?	Data Elements
D.C2.01		All federal and IV-E agency data elements required for program administration, federal and agency reporting, and audits typically captured during adoption-related activities. An example of a federal report includes AFCARS.
D.C2.02		Carries data forward to other functions to support: • Administration; • Adoption Assistance; • Recruitment & Matching; and • Provider Management.
D.C2.03		All demographic and contact information required by state or tribal law and policy.
D.C2.04		All information to support recruitment and placement with an adoptive family.
D.C2.05		Information needed to determine the special needs criteria of a child.
D.C2.06		Information to support an exchange with an interstate case processing system, such as the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE).
D.C2.07		Information to support an exchange with ICAMA.
D.C2.08		Information needed to determine initial and ongoing eligibility for title IV-E adoption assistance.
D.C2.09		Information to track monthly subsidy payments (either in this function or a separate financial function).
D.C2.10		Information to ensure youth are appropriately assessed for service needs, subsidy, and Medicaid eligibility.
D.C2.11		Current and historical medical, dental, mental health, and educational status.
D.C2.12		Information needed to report on efforts to achieve permanency. Examples include timeliness of court hearings, termination of parental rights determinations, placement disruptions, service needs, etc.
D.C2.13		Information needed to track and submit annual reviews.

C. Resources and Additional Considerations

Resource 3 – Additional Considerations

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

#	Included in Agency's CCWIS?	Additional Considerations
D.C3.01		Access via mobile device (e.g., phone or tablet) application.
D.C3.02		Provides online support to include the agency's adoption policy or practice guidance documents, Help, FAQ, and/or chat.
D.C3.03		Provides comprehensive and accurate lists of children available for adoption to support the listing on adoption exchanges.
D.C3.04		Ensures easy access to contact information for all known relatives.
D.C3.05		Allows adoptive parents and children (if age appropriate) to access photos and electronic life books for the child, either through a portal or some other secure communication tool.
D.C3.06		Automated functions to match prospective adoptive parents with children.
D.C3.07		Provides exchange with a market segmentation tool to identify prospective families and communities for recruitment.
D.C3.08		Exchange with a graphical information system (GIS) mapping tool to support recruitment efforts.

We encourage agencies to add examples of additional considerations from their adoption function they wish to highlight.

#	Agency-Submitted Additional Considerations