

February 13, 2024

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 24-03

The purpose of this All County Letter is to disseminate information regarding the policies, procedures, and requirements related to implementing Round Four of the Child and Family Services Qualitative Case Reviews in California.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

February 13, 2024

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 24-03

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY PROBATION OFFICERS
ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES
ALL FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES
ALL COUNTY CHILD WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: **INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES
CASE REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION**

REFERENCE: [ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-40-14](#); [ALL COUNTY LETTER \(ACL\) NO.14-84](#), [ACL 15-34](#), [ACL NO. 15-77](#); [COUNTY FISCAL LETTER \(CFL\) NO.14/15-37](#), [CFL NO. 14/15-39](#), [CFL NO. 21/22-23](#) AND [CFL NO. 23/24-31](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to disseminate information regarding procedures and requirements, including the policies and procedures, related to implementing Round Four of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Qualitative Case Reviews in California.

BACKGROUND

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) actively promotes the immense value qualitative case reviews add to state and county child welfare and probation Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes. Integration of qualitative case reviews with statistical outcome data analysis allows for a deeper, more specific understanding of county and statewide practices, policies, and procedures from the perspectives of various case participants, including case-carrying social workers and probation officers, Tribes and tribal representatives, parents, caregivers, and youth.

All County Information Notice ([ACIN No. I-40-14](#)) outlined the benefits of developing qualitative case reviews for the purpose of examining practices and ensuring conformity with Title IV-E and Title IV-B requirements. On October 10, 2014, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released the CFSR [Technical Bulletin #8](#) issuing the final federal regulations for the third round of the CFSR calling for states to utilize information from their CQI and case review processes to track performance improvements and set the baseline for Round Three Program Improvement Plans. Based upon that guidance, the CDSS implemented statewide qualitative case reviews conducted by counties to meet the case review requirements for Round Three of the CFSR. The [ACL No. 15-34](#) and [ACL No. 15-77](#) provided direction for the implementation of the statewide case review system including staffing, training, reporting, and data requirements, and the CFSR Case Reviews Policy and Procedures Manual.

On August 6, 2021, the ACF released [CFSR Technical Bulletin #13](#) issuing the final federal regulations for the fourth round of the CFSR, which called for states to continue to utilize their CQI and case review processes to track performance improvements. The CDSS will continue to use the statewide CFSR case review process that was first implemented in 2015 to meet the case review requirements for Round Four of the CFSR. This ACL provides guidance to counties for the implementation of the CFSR case review including the attached Child Welfare Services Case Review Policies and Procedures Manual. The CDSS will release a County Fiscal Letter (CFL) following this ACL with detailed Child Welfare Services Case Review allocation information and claiming instructions for counties.

IMPLEMENTATION

Since implementing CFSR Case Reviews in 2015, the CDSS has actively engaged counties in Teaming Behaviors to build partnerships in line with the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM). The CDSS has been an active partner with the county case review staff as they have built their case review teams and implemented case review. Beginning in 2018, counties who complete 20 or fewer cases per year have the option to contract back with the CDSS to complete their case reviews and/or conduct Quality Assurance (QA) on their completed case reviews. In September of 2022, all counties submitted Improvement and Sustainability plans to the CDSS detailing their strengths, areas of challenges, and their solutions and goals moving forward in order to complete their required case reviews and accurately rate each case using the Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI). It is the responsibility of each county to monitor, review, and update the Improvement and Sustainability Plan on an ongoing basis in partnership with the CDSS. For the template of the Improvement and Sustainability Plan, refer to Appendix B within the attached Policies and Procedures Manual.

All cases must be reviewed according to criteria described in the attached Policies and Procedures Manual. All case reviews are to be completed using the most recent version of the OSRI published by the ACF. Additionally, all cases will be entered into the Online Monitoring System (OMS) and submitted to the CDSS through Salesforce by certified case reviewers and quality assurance staff.

The number of cases a county is required to review is based on the combined caseload size of the county probation agency and child welfare agency (including both in-home and out-of-home cases). Appendix H within the attached Policies and Procedures Manual shows the breakdown of how many cases must be reviewed by each county. These numbers are based on total cases available for sampling as of March 1, 2023, and are not subject to change until Round Five of the CFSR.

- Counties with 0 to 99 cases will complete approximately eight case reviews annually.
- Counties with 100 cases to 299 cases will complete approximately 20 case reviews annually.
- Counties with 300 cases to 999 cases will complete approximately 48 case reviews annually.
- Counties with over 1000 cases will complete approximately 100 case reviews annually.

Cases will be reviewed by counties on a continuous, quarterly basis. For example, if 100 cases are to be reviewed annually, one-fourth of the cases (25 cases) will be assigned by the CDSS to be reviewed each quarter. A sample of randomly selected county probation agency and child welfare agency including both in-home and out-of-home cases will be provided to counties on a quarterly basis by the CDSS.

To implement CFSR case review, each county must have county case review staff and designate at least one individual as the dedicated QA staff. County case review staff and county QA staff must be employees of the county and cannot be outside contractors. An individual may not concurrently be a case reviewer and a QA staff.

County case review staff are responsible for completing all aspects of the case review from start to finish. The entire continuum of child welfare, from investigation through adoption, including differential/alternative response, is subject to review. Case information is obtained through reviews of Child Welfare Services/Case Management System records, hard case file reviews, and via interviews with key case participants, including but not limited to case-carrying social workers and probation officers, parents, caregivers, youth, and tribal representatives when applicable. County QA staff are responsible for maintaining a quality assurance process for their case reviews to maintain the integrity of the review. The QA staff is expected to complete quality assurance on all county case reviews within the quarterly deadlines established by the CDSS. The CDSS staff will conduct a second level of quality assurance on a select subset of cases reviewed in each county.

Additionally, ACF staff will conduct a third level of quality assurance on a subset of cases identified as federal cases. Refer to the Case Review Process section of the attached Policies and Procedures Manual for further information and guidance on the case review process and the roles of the county case review staff.

In implementing CFSR Case Reviews, county case reviewers cannot review cases for which they had any oversight responsibility, supervision or case decision making. Likewise, an individual in the QA role cannot participate in QA on cases for which they had any oversight responsibility, supervision, or case decision making. For the complete CFSR case review conflict of interest policy, please see the subsection titled Case Reviewer/Quality Assurance Staff Conflict of Interest in the attached Policies and Procedures Manual.

TRAINING

All case review staff and QA staff are required to be certified to complete CFSR Case Reviews in California. Case review staff and QA staff will become certified by the CDSS upon satisfactory completion of the approved curriculum as outlined in the Initial Training and Certification section of the attached Policies and Procedures Manual. As explained in detail in the attached manual, staff are required to complete a four-step process in the order indicated below to become a certified case reviewer.

1. Complete an online temporary certification on the CFSR E-Learning Academy website. Instructions to complete the online certification are within Appendix L in the attached Policies and Procedures Manual.
2. Attend a four-day case review training.
3. Participate in three coaching calls that follow the four-day training.
4. Complete a mock case review and receive a satisfactory score on the mock case review.

A QA staff is required to complete the steps above to become a certified case reviewer and complete two additional steps to be a certified Quality Assurance staff.

1. Complete the online QA modules on the CFSR E-Learning Academy website. Instructions to complete the online certification are within Appendix L in the attached Policies and Procedures Manual.
2. Attend a two-day quality assurance training.

The four-day CFSR Case Review training and the two-day QA training are offered quarterly. While the four-day and two-day trainings are intensive and content heavy, they are intended to create a learning-centered environment and facilitate ICPM Engagement Behaviors. The trainings are interactive for participants to build upon their skills and enhance learning. Each of the four Regional Training

Academies are responsible for conducting the case review training and the QA training in a particular quarter. Although different regions are responsible for conducting these trainings, any county may join a training cohort in any region to accommodate their needs. The quarterly training schedule for both trainings is provided in the Initial Training and Certification section of the attached Policies and Procedures Manual.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

The CFSR Case Review Section strives to communicate in an open, honest, clear, and respectful manner in line with the ICPM Foundational Behaviors. As a result, attached to this ACL is the Child Welfare Services Case Review Policies and Procedures Manual, which is provided to county partners in order to provide a singular resource of the county's role, responsibilities, and expectations regarding the CFSR Case Reviews. Periodic updates may be made to the manual and distributed by the CDSS via email to all certified case reviewers and QA staff informing them of the revision. In addition to the manual, the ACF maintains a web page with helpful information regarding the case reviews including Frequently Asked Questions, OSRI Item-Level Clarification, Reviewer Briefs, etc. This page is located at: <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov>.

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the CFSR Case Review Section in the Performance and Program Improvement Bureau at (916) 651-8099 or at cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

ANGIE SCHWARTZ
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

Attachments

Child Welfare Services Case Review Policies and Procedures Manual

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION

January 2024



Table of Contents

<u>Child Welfare Service Case Reviews</u>	1
<u>Case Sampling</u>	2
<u>Improvement and Sustainability Plan</u>	3
<u>County Case Reviewer Staff Roles</u>	3
<u>County Quality Assurance Staff Roles</u>	4
<u>CDSS Second-Level Quality Assurance</u>	4
<u>Secondary Oversight</u>	5
<u>Case Review Process</u>	5
<u>Case Participant Interviews</u>	5
<u>Reviewing Case Records and Key Timeframes</u>	9
<u>Onsite Review Instrument and Online Management System</u>	9
<u>Quality Assurance Process</u>	10
<u>Inquiries</u>	10
<u>Salesforce</u>	11
<u>Override Procedure</u>	12
<u>Case Finalization Process</u>	12
<u>Additional Guidance When Conducting Case Reviews</u>	13
<u>How to Submit Case Related Questions to the CDSS via Email</u>	13
<u>Case Reviewer/Quality Assurance Staff Conflict of Interest</u>	13
<u>Collaboration Between Counties</u>	14
<u>Transfer Between Counties</u>	14
<u>Collaboration With Tribes</u>	15
<u>Safety and Oversight Concerns</u>	15
<u>Counties Contracting Back With CDSS</u>	16
<u>Face Sheet Dates</u>	16
<u>Onboarding New Case Review and Quality Assurance Staff</u>	16
<u>Training and Certification</u>	16

<u>Online Temporary Certification Process</u>	17
<u>Four-Day In-Person Training and Certification</u>	17
<u>Quality Assurance Training</u>	18
<u>Ongoing Training and Supplemental Learning Opportunities</u>	18
<u>CDSS’s Role in the Case Review Process</u>	19
<u>CDSS Specialists</u>	19
<u>Webinars</u>	19
<u>Utilizing Case Review Data</u>	19
<u>Appendix A: Organizational Chart</u>	20
<u>Appendix B: Documents Located on the CFSR Website</u>	21
<u>Appendix C: Required Case Reviews by County</u>	22
<u>Appendix D: Online Temporary Certification Training Instructions</u>	23
<u>Appendix E: Onboarding New Case Review Quality Assurance Staff</u>	35
<u>Appendix F: Face Sheet Date Screen Shots</u>	38
<u>Appendix G: Inquiry Instructions and Inquiry Form</u>	43
<u>Appendix H: List of Quality Assurance Staff Responsibilities</u>	48

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CASE REVIEWS

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) are a federal-state collaborative effort designed to ensure that quality services are provided to children and families through state child welfare systems. These reviews of child welfare systems identify strengths and challenges in practice for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being, as well as systemic factor functioning.¹ Similarly, California administers the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), which is a state and county collaborative effort designed to ensure that quality services are provided to children and families throughout the California child welfare and probation system. The CFSR case reviews contribute data to both the CFSR and the C-CFSR processes. The reviews focus on outcomes for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. The CFSR case reviews inform the State's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process and the State's Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

The CFSR case reviews were initially completed by The Administration of Children and Families (ACF).² In California, the federal reviewers reviewed cases in Los Angeles, the state's largest county, and two additional counties. These reviews took place in 2002 and 2007 and it was anticipated that the data gathered would be a representation of how California was performing as a whole. However, due to the varying sizes and demographics of the 58 counties in California, it did not appear that the data represented a true picture of child welfare practice. As a result, California implemented a county-by-county case review process in 2015. By having each county review their own cases and by reviewing cases from every county, each county adds to the larger picture and contributes to the overall data for the state.

Qualitative case reviews are an important way to gather data about the "how" and "why" questions associated with CQI. The case review process consists of the gathering of information from various sources (i.e., interviews, electronic and hard file reviews, other databases) to obtain data on the quality of the services provided to children and families by child welfare agencies throughout the state. This case-level data compliments the quantitative data obtained through systems such as the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP), Safe Measures, and Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) Business Objects reports. To attain this data, California uses the ACF's Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) for review of all cases. State and county case review staff conduct a qualitative review of a predetermined number of cases each quarter. The required number of cases for each county is determined by the overall child welfare and juvenile probation caseloads for that county. See [Appendix \(C\)](#) for the number of cases to be reviewed annually per county.

¹ <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/resources/round-4-resources/cfsr-round-4-process/cfsr-round-4-procedures-manual>

² <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/fact-sheet/childrens-bureau-program-assessment-child-and-family-services-reviews-and-title-iv-e>

Case Sampling

The cases selected to be reviewed must be a representation of the full continuum of the child welfare caseload from investigation through permanency. These cases are inclusive of those identified as differential response and juvenile probation cases, and cases in which children are home on trial home visits. In addition to the requirements noted above regarding case selection, there are also several sampling criteria that are implemented to satisfy the requirements of the ACF for approval of the State's ongoing review process.

As the CDSS transitioned from Round 3 of the CFSR to Round 4, there were several considerations to determine how many cases annually will be reviewed by each county. The CDSS pulled quarterly case count data for all 58 counties for 2019 (Q1-Q4) and 2022 (Q1-Q4) using the same eligibility criteria that is used to determine which cases are eligible for review during the case review case sampling process. Comparing these two years, pre-pandemic and post-pandemic, as well as case review county completion data, the CDSS noted trends in several counties with declining numbers of eligible cases for review and counties unable to complete their CFSR Round 3 assigned quarterly case reviews. Due to these factors, the CDSS decided to limit the assigned number of cases reviewed each quarter to as close to 3 percent of each county's total available cases to review (as of 2022) as possible. Furthermore, to ensure that any one county is not overrepresented in the case review data, tiers were restructured so that large counties receive a maximum of 25 cases to review per quarter, medium counties receive a maximum 12 cases to review per quarter, small counties receive a maximum 5 cases to review per quarter, and very small counties receive less than 5 cases to review per quarter.

To adhere to the Federal Sampling Criteria requirements, during the Federal CFSR California will submit 160 cases randomly selected from California's 58 counties beginning in October 2023, with 80 cases submitted for Federal Fiscal Year 2023-24 Quarter One and 80 cases submitted for Federal Fiscal Year 2023-24 Quarter Two. The sample will contain a randomized number of in-home cases and foster care cases taken from the most recent complete Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) file(s) available. These cases will be identified on the county quarterly case sample list as CFSR cases. All other cases identified on the county list are referred to as CQI cases. After the completion of the Federal Review, the state will enter into a PIP. During that period, there will be cases designated on the county quarterly case sample list to monitor the progress of the state's performance. These cases will be identified on the list as PIP cases and should be prioritized just as CFSR cases were during the Federal CFSR.

The quarterly case sample is located on a county's case list that is in the Reports tab of the Salesforce database. All cases on the case list that are in an "active" status are cases that are to be reviewed. The number of cases reviewed by a county each quarter is located on the Required Case Reviews by County document in [Appendix \(C\)](#). When

the initial case list is sent to the counties, all cases labeled “Sample” are active cases that should be reviewed during the quarter. Following the active sample cases are inactive oversample cases. These cases only become active reviewable cases if they are activated during the inquiry process as a case replacing a currently active case that is not reviewable. Reviewers may not selectively choose which cases to complete. If questions arise regarding the order in which to complete cases, please contact CDSS through the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov). All cases are to be completed before the end of the quarter and submitted as complete in OMS. See the section titled Case Finalization Process on [page 12](#) for details on the case completion process. The CDSS encourages counties to develop and maintain a tracking system for case reviews that ensures the workflow and completion of the quarter’s list.

Improvement and Sustainability Plan

The improvement and sustainability plan is developed by counties to evaluate and monitor the successes and challenges of sustaining a functioning CFSR case review process. They are a way to maintain CQI by utilizing the open, clear, and data-driven feedback provided while implementing the CFSR case review. This plan is designed to serve as a road map to ensure the county’s engagement in the CFSR case reviews. The use of improvement and sustainability plans is an opportunity for the counties to assess the ongoing progress and status of their CFSR case review process. Counties will be working with their CDSS Specialist to review and monitor the status of their case review process as outlined in their sustainability and improvement plan. Counties will update their plans as needed in collaboration with their CDSS Specialist based on the recommendations, best practices and lessons learned during the monitoring of the plan.

County Case Reviewer Staff Roles

County case reviewers are responsible for completing all aspects of the case review from start to finish. The reviewers gather and reconcile the information needed to answer the relevant questions using the instructions within, and supplemental resources to, the OSRI and with the support and guidance of the Quality Assurance (QA) team. This includes the case record review, conducting interviews, and completing the OSRI in the Online Monitoring System (OMS) according to training standards. Throughout the process, case reviewers gather documentation to support the ratings given for each individual item in the tool. Upon completion of a case review, reviewers are expected to follow their county’s security, retention, and destruction policies for case review material as they would for any case record. An individual in the case reviewer role may not concurrently perform QA within or outside of the county, nor can a staff alternate between the reviewer and QA roles across quarters. If a staff is transitioning from the permanent role of a case reviewer to a QA staff or vice versa, this change must happen at the start of a new quarter so that the individual does not serve in both roles within a given quarter.

There may be instances during the case review when reviewers will need assistance on

how to reconcile inconsistencies in information gathered from interviews and case documentation or how to rate a particular item or subitem. When a case reviewer has a question related to their case, the first point of contact is to staff it with their county QA staff. If further clarification is needed, the reviewer and/or county QA staff can reach out to the CDSS via the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) and copy their CDSS Case Review Specialist. Their CDSS Case Review Specialist will provide a response via email, video chat, or phone. If the CDSS Case Review Specialist assigned to the county is unavailable, another Case Review Specialist or Case Review Manager will provide technical assistance in their absence. The CDSS tracks these case questions and integrates information and guidance into CDSS technical assistance webinars and/or other statewide communication.

County Quality Assurance Staff Roles

The QA staff have an active role in all phases of the case review, from the preparation of the case through the completion of the OSRI by answering questions about the proper application of the instrument, working with reviewers on clarifying issues, and assisting reviewers in reconciling information to determine appropriate case ratings.³ As indicated in the above section, an individual in the QA role may not concurrently perform case review work within or outside of the county.

Quality Assurance is completed on every case review to ensure that both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of every case review rated accurately. The QA staff will write all their QA notes in the OMS and provide coaching to the reviewer if questions arise, or clarification is needed regarding the required changes. Additionally, the QA's role is to review feedback from CDSS during 2nd level QA and any other informal or formal TA provided by CDSS on the OSRI. The tasks of the QA staff also include but are not limited to accessing and reviewing the case list in the Salesforce database⁴, and performing QA on case reviews completed by county staff. It is also the QA staff's responsibility to ensure that all case reviews at their county are completed within the quarterly deadlines established by CDSS. See the section titled "Case Finalization Process" on [page 12](#) for details on the quarterly deadlines. A complete list of the responsibilities of the QA staff is included in [Appendix \(H\)](#).

The *Child and Family Services Reviews OSRI Quality Assurance Guide* is included in [Appendix \(B\)](#) for further guidance on the QA process. The OMS is described under the Case Review Process section on [page 9](#).

The CDSS Second-Level Quality Assurance

³ <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/resources/round-4-resources/cfsr-round-4-process/cfsr-round-4-procedures-manual>

⁴ <https://dss.force.com/ChildWelfare>

Once case reviews are submitted as complete by the county QA staff, CDSS conducts second-level QA on all CFSR/PIP cases and a subset of the CQI cases. During this process, CDSS provides feedback to the reviewer and the QA staff on the accuracy of the ratings in the OSRI and the level of detail provided in the rationale statements to justify the ratings.

Secondary Oversight Provided by the Administration for Children and Families

The final step in the QA process during the CFSR Federal Review is the provision of secondary oversight. Once a review has received second-level QA by CDSS, ACF selects a subset of those cases to provide secondary oversight. This will occur on CFSR and PIP cases only. The purpose of providing secondary oversight is to ensure consistency of the reviews across the state. The ACF focuses on the accuracy of ratings, changed ratings, resolution of disputed ratings, challenging areas of the OSRI, and national consistency.⁵

CASE REVIEW PROCESS

Case Participant Interviews

Interviews of key participants are a requirement of the overall case review process. The following individuals related to a case must be interviewed:

- The child(ren).
 - School age and/or at an age when the child is assessed to be developmentally appropriate to participate in an interview. The reviewer is to use their professional judgement based on case documentation and conversation with other key participants to determine if the child is verbal and able to engage in a case review interview. Analyzing the case documentation should include an assessment of how the child communicated with the case worker throughout the Period Under Review (PUR).
 - For foster care cases: The target child must be interviewed.
 - For in-home cases: All children in the family home must be interviewed.
- The child(ren)'s parent(s) (regardless of the status as biological, presumed, or alleged - specifically with regards to the fathers).
- The child's foster parent(s), pre-adoptive parent(s), or other caregiver(s), such as a relative caregiver, if the child is in foster care.
- Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP)⁶ staff (who are familiar with and have regular contact with the child) if the child is in an STRTP setting during the PUR.

⁵ <https://www.cfsportal.acf.hhs.gov/resources/round-4-resources/cfsr-round-4-process/cfsr-round-4-procedures-manual>

⁶ Short Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTP) were previously referred to as Group Homes.
CDSS CFSR Case Review

- The family's caseworker. When the caseworker has left the agency, or is not available for interview, it is necessary to schedule interviews with the supervisor who was responsible for the caseworker assigned to the family. All caseworkers assigned to the case during the PUR will be interviewed.
- If appropriate based on circumstances of the case, reviewers are encouraged to secure interviews with Tribal Representatives, Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers and/or providers who have case specific knowledge to inform the ratings for well-being (Health, Mental Health, and Education).

Potential exclusions to conducting an interview:

- Preschool-age children who are assessed by the reviewer to not be developmentally appropriate to interview. The reviewer is to use their professional judgement based on case documentation and conversation with other key participants to determine if the child is verbal and able to engage in a case review interview. Analyzing the case documentation should include an assessment of how the child communicated with the case worker throughout the PUR.
- School-age children who are assessed by the reviewer to not be developmentally appropriate to participate in an interview.
- The parent(s) cannot be located as determined by concerted efforts made by the case reviewer to contact the parents.
- Parent(s) living outside of the United States whom, despite the agency's demonstrated efforts, it is determined are not accessible by phone or video.
- There is a safety or risk concern in contacting any party for an interview.
- Any party is unable to consent to an interview due to physical or mental health incapacity.
- Any party refuses to participate in an interview and the agency can document attempts to engage them.
- Any party is advised by an attorney not to participate due to a pending criminal or civil matter.
- A party involved in a pending criminal or civil matter before the agency, of their legal representative, who believes they could be negatively affected by participation.

Unacceptable exclusions to conducting an interview:

- An age cut-off that does not take into account a child's developmental capacity, e.g., a policy of not interviewing children under the age of 12.
- A party who refuses to participate in an interview, but the agency did not attempt to engage the individual beyond a letter.
- A party who has not been located and the agency has not made attempts to locate the individual.
- A party speaks a language other than English.

Concerted efforts to secure key participant interviews are essential. These efforts include but are not limited to: contacting the participant via letter, phone call, text and/or e-mail to set up an in-person interview, phone interview, or video call; contacting the assigned case worker for assistance in obtaining current contact information for the participant or to reach out to the participant regarding the case review process; and contacting known family members to obtain contact information for the participant. Reviewers may also search inmate databases to ascertain if the key participant is incarcerated. For efforts to obtain key participant interviews to be considered concerted, the reviewer must make a minimum of three attempts to contact the key participant, and if possible, use three different methods from those mentioned above. The CDSS expects county case review and QA staff to follow their county protocol in relation to individual health and safety throughout the interview and case review process.

If the reviewer is unable to contact a key participant after concerted efforts have been made, the reviewer can look to obtain the perspective of the key participant from another source. For instance, the reviewer may be able to gain a parent's perspective from a relative who is familiar with the case and was in regular contact with the parent during the PUR, the parent's attorney, or a parent partner. The reviewer may obtain the perspective of the target child by way of the child's attorney, caregiver (if the child has been with the caregiver since birth), or a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) worker who was regularly visiting with the target child during the PUR. A retention inquiry is required via the Salesforce database if the reviewer is unable to interview more than one key participant but is able to obtain their perspective from another source. In the inquiry, the reviewer is to provide information as to whom the alternate source is and how the person qualifies to speak on behalf of the key participant. A retention inquiry is also required if the reviewer is unable to interview one or more key participants and is unable to obtain their perspectives from another source but based on the case circumstances, the reviewer and QA determine that the lack of the interview will not impact the quality and accuracy of the review. When an alternate source provides a key participant's perspective, in the OSRI Case Summary, explain who the source was that provided the information and how they are qualified to speak on behalf of the key participant.

Parents/Caregivers

Parents/caregivers for the purpose of the CFSR case reviews include biological parents (including presumed and alleged fathers), legal guardians, and adoptive parents.

There are times based on the case circumstances that parent(s) will not meet the applicability criteria to be rated in any item in the tool. In these situations, the parent(s) not meeting the applicability criteria across all items will not need to be interviewed. These situations include:

- The parent(s) has had their parental rights terminated prior to the PUR. This information is the same for children under a plan of guardianship, whereas

- the guardianship was terminated prior to the PUR.
- It has been assessed and documented in case records and court documentation that it was not in the child's best interests to involve a parent in case planning (this is separate from the assessment of appropriateness for visitation).
- The parent(s) indicate that they do not want to be involved in the child's life during the entire PUR.

Foster Parents

Foster parents include related or non-related caregivers who have been given responsibility for care of the child by the agency while the child is under the placement, care, responsibility, and supervision of the agency. This includes pre-adoptive parents if the adoption has not been finalized and extended family in the case of an Indian child. If there are multiple foster parents during the PUR, all foster parents should be included for interviews.

Arranging Interviews

The Protocol for initiating participant interviews is determined by each County. The CDSS has template letters and flyers available on the case review webpage⁷ for engaging key participants in the process and providing preliminary information in advance of the interviews. In the event counties are not able to access the webpage, counties can send an e-mail to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) to request copies of the templates. Counties should use these templates to ensure appropriate messaging. If counties choose to develop their own material for this purpose, it must be provided to and approved by CDSS to ensure proper messaging.

When scheduling interviews with key case participants, reviewers should keep in mind that there are often multiple parents and/or caregivers who should be included in the review process. Ensuring that all the relevant participants of the case are available for interviews is critical for a successful review process. When interviewing children, the reviewer must assess the appropriateness of participating in an interview based on the child's development.

Due to the necessity of key participant interviews to complete the case review, it is recommended that the interviews be scheduled early in the case review process. Reviewing the case with sufficient detail to be well-prepared for interviews with key participants, including the most recent court report, should provide enough information to interview the first couple of key participants needed to secure review of the case. Then, it is recommended to do a thorough review of the case file and all case documentation while completing the remainder of the interviews.

In-person, face-to-face interviews are preferred and are likely to yield richer information;

⁷<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-welfare-program-improvement/cfsr-case-reviews/instructions-and-resources>

however, telephone/virtual interviews may occur in the event an in-person visit is not possible. If possible, interviews with parents, foster parents, and children should be conducted in their homes, group homes, or foster homes. Service providers may be interviewed wherever is most convenient for them and the reviewers. In the case of an Indian target child, tribal service providers should be provided cultural supports when appropriate. When travel arrangements and the schedules of reviewers preclude travel to those locations, or when persons to be interviewed prefer not to have reviewers in their homes or offices, the county may arrange to hold the interviews in a central location.

For further guidance on conducting case participant interviews, please refer to [Appendix \(B\)](#).

Reviewing Case Records and Key Timeframes

For each case in the sample, county case review staff are expected to conduct a thorough review of the relevant CWS/CMS records and hard copy file to familiarize themselves with details of the case. Staff should use this process as an opportunity to develop appropriate lines of inquiry for interviews or other data gathering. Other records that exist should also be incorporated into the case record review including but not limited to probation case management systems, WebSDM, open and closed adoption files, Resource Family Approval (RFA) files, and other databases that counties may use to store case information. Staff should focus on reviewing case information that occurred during the PUR, which is a timeframe designated by the date the review period begins until the date the case review is completed, or the case is closed, whichever occurs first. However, it is expected that the reviewer may need to review some information from outside of the PUR to ensure case activities were conducted timely (i.e., date target child started mental health counseling, date of last medical/dental appointment, reason for decrease in visitation, date of removal, date permanency goal established, etc.).

The timeframe for completing a case review may vary depending on case circumstances. It takes an average of 16 to 24 hours to review the case files, and schedule and conduct interviews. It may take an additional six to eight hours to complete the tool and document the narratives. Again, this timeframe should allow enough time to engage key participants, conduct interviews and complete the OSRI in the OMS. Once the case file review and interviews are completed, the reviewer should immediately begin inputting the review in the OMS to submit for QA. As the reviewer begins to input the review in OMS, an end date will automatically populate in the tool, thus ending the PUR. Typically, once a reviewer begins working on a case (i.e., reviewing CWS/CMS, scheduling interviews, etc.), the review should be completed within two weeks. The QA staff should begin the formal QA process as soon as possible and submit the case to CDSS for second-level QA within two weeks of the date that the case was completed by the reviewer. This timeframe is established to assist in completing case reviews timely, on a flow basis, and to avoid leaving a case review

open for a long period of time in which case circumstance may change.

Onsite Review Instrument and Online Management System

Case reviewers complete their reviews using the Online Management System (OMS) which contains an electronic version of the Federal Child and Family Services Review's OSRI. Case reviewers gain access to the OMS by completing the temporary case reviewer certification process. For instructions on how to become temporarily certified please refer to [Appendix \(D\)](#) for the "How to Become Temporarily Certified" document. The OMS is the only way to submit CFSR Case Reviews: paper copies or other review instruments are not valid for the state's CFSR case review purposes. For a printed version of the OSRI, please refer to [Appendix \(B\)](#). For an overview of the OMS, please refer to [Appendix \(C\)](#).

Quality Assurance Process

A critical piece of CFSR case review is ensuring that the data is accurate, complete, and consistent. One way this is achieved is through a QA process. This occurs at both the county and the state level. Staff who will be completing the QA process will need to be certified as a case reviewer and QA. Each county is responsible for designating a QA staff person. The QA process takes place throughout the entire process of a case review.

Informal QA occurs early in the case process. During this time, the case reviewer is discussing the case with the QA staff through conversations, emails, or at team meetings. It is the responsibility of the QA Staff to assist the case reviewer through feedback and coaching to complete an accurate review. Once reviewers have completed a case record review, conducted interviews, completed the case rating on the OSRI in OMS and submitted the case for QA, then the QA staff begins their formal QA process as soon as possible. The formal QA process is when the QA Staff reads the entire OSRI in OMS and provides the case reviewer with feedback regarding changes and revisions that may be needed. The QA staff are to use the designated sections (QA Notes) in the OMS to document and track their feedback to the case reviewer after conducting QA. After the QA inputs their QA notes into the QA notes section of the case on OMS, they will return the case back to the reviewer in OMS for the reviewer to make the necessary changes. After the reviewer makes the required changes, they will submit the case to their QA in OMS, the QA will then review the changes and if complete, the QA will resolve the QA notes either through case consultation or through the OMS system. Once all QA notes are resolved, the QA will submit the case as complete in OMS and submit the case for second-level QA in Salesforce. In OMS, please ensure that the case is marked as "Case Complete". You will NOT mark the case as "Approved and Final". For further guidance on the specifics of using the OMS, please see the CFSR OMS Manual located under the "Help" tab at the top right of the screen when logged into OMS.

Inquiries

An inquiry is the way in which the county informs the CDSS that a case on the case sample is unable to be reviewed and that they are requesting an elimination and to be assigned a new case. There are 14 reasons for which an inquiry needs to be submitted: 13 reasons a case may not be reviewable, and an inquiry is needed for elimination, and one reason for retaining a case for review. Please see [Appendix \(G\)](#) for the Inquiry Instructions and Inquiry form which outlines all the reasons for elimination and retention.

Inquiries are submitted to the CDSS via the Salesforce database. Cases may NOT be eliminated without approval from CDSS through submitting a case inquiry within Salesforce. The Inquiry Instructions detail what information to include within the inquiry submission for each inquiry criteria. An inquiry should be submitted as soon as the county knows that a case needs to be eliminated. Some elimination criteria lend themselves to being eliminated as soon as the case circumstances are looked up in CWS/CMS. The CDSS encourages case review teams to review their initial case list upon receiving it for any cases that qualify for elimination and submit those elimination requests. For other cases, it is not known until later in the quarter that a case needs to be eliminated (for example, eliminating due to being unable to reach key participants).

After the inquiry has been submitted via Salesforce, CDSS reviews the inquiry and approves or denies the inquiry based upon the information provided. An email is sent to the person who submitted the inquiry with the outcome. If an elimination is approved or a retention is denied, a replacement case is assigned to the county. The case list that the county receives at the beginning of the quarter has a case “oversample,” which is where the replacement cases are pulled from. The first available case on the oversample with the same case type (in-home or out-of-home) is selected as the replacement. This case is to be reviewed in place of the case that was eliminated. If an elimination is denied or a retention is approved, the original case is reviewed and no replacement case is provided.

Salesforce

The Salesforce database is a platform used by the counties to receive the county case lists quarterly, submit completed cases to CDSS, and submit inquiries on cases that need to be eliminated or retained. To have access to the case list, the county QA staff or designated representative must have access to the Salesforce database. To gain access to Salesforce, the county must send an email to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) and copy their assigned CDSS County Specialist requesting access to the database. The request must include: the name of the staff person, county, e-mail address, telephone number, and the staff person’s title. Each county is provided with two Salesforce licenses for staff to have access to the Salesforce database. In turn, each county is only allowed to have up to two staff persons with access to the Salesforce database. However, counties that contract back

with the state are only allowed to have one staff person with Salesforce access. See [page 15](#) for the section titled Counties Contracting Back for more information about counties contracting back with CDSS.

The CDSS expects that the primary Salesforce user is the county's primary QA. The county has discretion over who is selected as the secondary/back-up Salesforce user to make best use of their second allotted Salesforce license. If a county wishes to add an additional staff person and they have reached their allocated number of users, the county must request to remove a user to maintain the maximum number of users with access to the Salesforce database. Once the request is processed, the identified staff person will receive an e-mail directing them to set up their password within 24 hours and a copy of the Salesforce instructions.

Override Procedure

The OSRI has the option to override a rating; however, this function is rarely used. The QA Guide outlines when the override function can be used, which is primarily in a subset of short-term foster care cases. If a reviewer believes that an override is required, the case reviewer will explain in the rationale statement why the item should not be rated as indicated, stating that an override is being requested and providing what the rating should be and why. The Case Reviewer will notify the County QA that an override is being requested using their internal county procedure when the case is submitted for County QA. The County QA will review the item and the reason the reviewer is requesting the override. If the County QA disagrees with the need for the override, the County QA will provide coaching and instruction to the case reviewer on how to appropriately rate the item. If the County QA agrees that the override is needed, upon finishing their QA, the case will be submitted as complete in OMS and sent for second-level QA in Salesforce like any other case. Additionally, an email will be sent to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) and copy their CDSS Case Review Specialist providing the initials of the child's case in which the override is being requested and the reason for the request. The CDSS will review the item in OMS and override the item if approved or request the county to rate the item and provide coaching on how to do so if the override is not approved.

Case Finalization Procedure

Throughout the quarter, cases must be submitted for first- and second-level QA on a flow basis. When a case is complete through county QA, the case is marked as "case complete" in OMS and is submitted for second-level QA in Salesforce. All cases are to be completely reviewed and marked as "data entry complete", "QA in progress" or "case complete" in OMS by the last date of the quarter. The first two weeks of the subsequent quarter are a grace period for any QA that needs to be completed on cases submitted at the end of the quarter. All cases must be in a "case complete" status in OMS and submitted for second-level QA in Salesforce by the 15th day of the subsequent quarter. Non-CFSR/PIP cases in OMS that are not in the case complete status and submitted in

Salesforce by this deadline will be eliminated by CDSS during the approval and finalization process. Data from eliminated cases is removed from OMS and unable to be recovered. The CDSS will approve and finalize cases in OMS between the 16th day and the 45th day of the subsequent quarter. The CDSS will de-identify all cases on the 45th day after the end of the quarter. An annual case finalization calendar is provided by CDSS at the beginning of every calendar year. Note: These deadlines are subject to change for cases designated as a federal CFSR case or a PIP case. Any changes in deadlines for those designated cases will be identified for the counties upon receiving the quarterly sample. All CFSR or PIP designated cases are to be prioritized as the first cases reviewed in the quarter.

If the end of the quarter is approaching and a county knows that they will not be able to meet the case submission deadlines, the county may request an extension in writing for that particular case. Extension requests are due by the beginning of the last month of the quarter and are considered by the CDSS case review management team on a case-by-case basis. Email the extension request to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) and copy your CDSS Case Review Specialist. Provide the following information in the email:

1. The child's initials of the case(s) that are being requested.
2. The date that the case(s) will be complete by the reviewer and the date it will be complete through the QA process and submitted to the CDSS.
3. The reason the extension is being requested, including explaining the barriers that led to the inability to complete the case by the deadline.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE WHEN CONDUCTING CASE REVIEWS

How to Submit Case Related Questions to the CDSS via Email

When submitting case related questions to CDSS in writing, it is important to include all the detail that is necessary for the CDSS to understand the circumstances of the case and all factors that will contribute to determining the rating. E-mails submitted to CDSS without the information below will be returned to the reviewer/QA staff to submit the required additional information.

In the e-mail, please ensure to include the following:

- Period Under Review (PUR) and Quarter.
- Case summary or bullet points of important information.
- Specific questions reflecting information requested.
- Additional information needing clarification.
- Include the reviewer/QA's thoughts regarding the answers to the questions in order for the CDSS specialist to determine where assistance is needed and to provide pointed technical assistance.
- Include what frequently asked questions, case review resources, etc. were reviewed prior to contacting CDSS and how the information gathered provided clarification or more questions regarding the original question.

- Do not include any identifying information including but not limited to the child's name, parents' names, etc.

Case Reviewer/Quality Assurance Staff Conflict of Interest

Case reviewers or QA staff cannot participate in case reviews for cases which they had any oversight responsibility, supervision, consultation, or case decision making. A conflict of interest also arises in cases where the county staff knows the family personally (i.e., outside of a professional relationship). Case review and QA staff should also not have oversight over the programs that are being reviewed. Cases that represent a potential conflict of interest should be reassigned to another case reviewer or QA staff person within the county. Reviewers/QA are prohibited from concurrently performing case review or QA activities in addition to any investigative, case carrying, or supervisory role at the county child welfare or probation agency. It is best practice to have back-up reviewers and QA staff within the county when conflict of interest arises who can complete these reviews/QAs. It is important to note that cases that are marked "Sensitive" in the CWS/CMS are part of the reviewable cases. County QA staff should routinely address whether any conflict-of-interest concerns exist with case review staff on all cases reviewed. Likewise, CDSS will ensure the policy and procedures regarding conflict of interest through routine oversight/consultation with county agencies.

In some instances, it may not be possible to reassign the case review within the county. When this occurs, the county staff will need to seek assistance in securing another county to review and/or conduct QA for the case in question. Counties may enter into an informal agreement or establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to complete these tasks. A county cannot begin reviewing another county's cases or providing QA until the informal agreement is confirmed and/or a MOU is signed by both parties and a copy is provided to CDSS via e-mail at cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov and copy their Case Review Specialist. At the time of providing CDSS a copy, the county must also provide the names of individuals from both counties who need OMS and/or Salesforce access to the other county's site.

Collaboration Between Counties

Situations may arise that necessitate close collaboration between counties. Examples of these situations include:

- When a case has transferred to another county during the PUR.
- When the review of sensitive cases or conflicts of interest cannot be resolved within the county.
- When counties are unable to complete their case reviews and/or QA of cases.

When circumstances like those identified above occur, counties are encouraged to contact the QA staff in the other county to collaborate on completing the case review. If necessary, the county may also ask CDSS for assistance in identifying the QA within

the identified county to assist in making contact regarding case reviews. Refer to information above in the conflict-of-interest section regarding MOUs as appropriate.

Transfer Between Counties

If a county is assigned a case to review that had subsequently been transferred to another county or was transferred from another county during the PUR, the county who is assigned the review on their case list is responsible for completing the case review. The county assigned the review should contact the case review team of the transferred county to obtain any case file information that is not available through CWS/CMS and obtain any needed information about the case workers who will be interviewed.

If the county that was assigned the review never had jurisdiction of the case throughout the entire PUR, please submit a case inquiry via the Salesforce database.⁸ For this inquiry, you will select the “other” category for case elimination indicating that the case was under the jurisdiction of another county for the entire PUR. Please ensure enough detail is added to explain the case circumstances including the dates that each county had jurisdiction. Also include detail of any nuances in CWS/CMS that would explain why the case would have been pulled for review in your county and the steps taken to correct any data entry issues. The inquiry will be reviewed by CDSS who will respond with next steps for the county.

Collaboration With Tribes

To improve Tribal engagement and compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), counties can use the case review process to identify strengths and areas needing improvement with regards to communication and collaboration with Tribes. When cases are identified as ICWA, case reviewers are to interview the Tribal representatives to assess the agency’s level of engagement with the Tribe during the PUR.

Safety and Oversight Concerns

Safety Concerns: All case review staff are mandated reporters, and as such must follow the legal and ethical obligation associated with this responsibility. Any immediate safety issues that emerge during the review process, including but not limited to new allegations of abuse/neglect, must be reported to the county hotline. No instances of new allegations may bypass the required intake process. If a safety concern is identified during the case review process, it will be within the PUR and will be reflected in the tool if it is an accepted report. If a safety concern is identified during the formal QA process or is reported and not accepted during the PUR, upon submitting this case to CDSS through Salesforce, the QA will send an email to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) acknowledging the identified safety concern and the action taken.

⁸ <https://dss.force.com/ChildWelfare>

Oversight Concerns: If a concern arises from an oversight in a case, such as a medical oversight, dental oversight, etc. that does not rise to the level of a reportable safety concern or new allegation but does rise to the level of concern for the well-being of the child, the case reviewer should raise the concern with their QA Staff. Oversight concerns are not immediate safety concerns but could result in a concern in the future if it is not addressed. For example, a child has braces and has not been seen by an orthodontist or a dentist in the 14-month PUR. The QA staff will report the concern to the appropriate management within the county and ask for follow-up of the outcome. The QA staff will make note of the outcome (i.e., scheduling of an appointment). Upon submitting this case to CDSS through Salesforce, the QA will send an email to the Case Review Inbox (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) acknowledging the identified oversight concern and the outcome. The concern itself will be within the OSRI as part of the case ratings; however, identification of this oversight concern and the follow up will not be documented in the OSRI.

Counties Contracting Back with CDSS

If a county is identified to complete 20 or fewer cases per year, the county has the option to contract back with CDSS to complete their case reviews and/or conduct QA on their completed case reviews. If a county meets those qualifications and are interested in contracting back with the state, they are to reach out to the CSFR Case Review Section via the inbox at cws.casereviews@dss.ca.gov and copy their Case Review Specialist. Up and until a contract is executed with CDSS, it is the counties responsibility to ensure cases are reviewed and quality assured. Continued communication between county and CDSS teams during this process is essential.

NOTE: The CDSS is not currently accepting new contracts for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023/2024.

Face Sheet Dates

When completing the face sheet on the OSRI, it is important that all counties utilize the correct dates as referenced in CWS/CMS. To ensure consistency of dates across the counties, screenshots of where to obtain the correct dates in CWS/CMS are in [Appendix \(F\)](#). If the dates entered in CWS/CMS are not consistent with the information gleaned from the review process, contact your Case Review Specialist to staff next steps and appropriate data clean up that may be required.

Onboarding New Case Review and Quality Assurance Staff

The CDSS is aware of the time and training that it takes to onboard new case reviewers and QA staff. To support counties with this process, CDSS is providing best practice recommendations for onboarding new case reviewers and QA staff. For an overview of the recommended process, please refer to [Appendix \(E\)](#).

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

The California CFSR Case Review process requires reviewers and QA staff to undergo training specific to conducting qualitative case reviews. To assure reviews and subsequent data collection are consistent, and to ensure inter-rater reliability, all staff who conduct reviews and perform QA must be certified as reviewers. To become a certified case reviewer, an individual must successfully complete all components of the case review certification process. These steps must be completed in the order identified below.

Online Temporary Certification Process

The CDSS will utilize an online certification process that will allow case review staff to be temporarily certified to conduct case reviews for up to six months from date of completion. The online temporary certification process is used when case review staff are newly hired, and the four-day in-person training offered through any of the Regional Training Academies (RTAs) is not immediately available. The online certification training is also a required prerequisite for attending the four-day in-person training and the QA training.

To complete the online temporary certification, the reviewer must follow the steps identified in the “How to Become Temporarily Certified” document in [Appendix \(D\)](#). Within six months of completing the online temporary certification process, the case review staff must complete a four-day training and complete the process to become a certified case reviewer. Case review staff temporarily certified through the online temporary certification process will be removed from the OMS if successful completion of the four-day in-person training is not completed within six months of becoming temporarily certified.

Four-Day In-Person Training and Certification

The case review certification process includes attending a four-day in-person CFSR Case Review training, attending three coaching calls following the in-person training, and receiving a passing score on a test case. The case reviewer must complete the four-day in-person training and three coaching calls before the test case can be administered. If a case reviewer cannot attend all 4-days of a training and the three coaching calls, the case reviewer should sign up for the next training that is offered. If a case reviewer misses any component of the case review certification process due to unexpected or emergency circumstances, they must contact CDSS and the RTA for information on how to proceed.

As outlined below, the test case is to be completed within two weeks from the date that the test case was provided to the participant via email. If a reviewer is not able to complete the test case due to planned vacations or sick leave, they should notify CDSS

prior to the test being administered to make alternate arrangements. If a reviewer is not able to complete the test due to an unforeseen event, they must contact CDSS to request an extension. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Failure to request an extension and/or complete the test case will result in restarting the case review certification process from the beginning (including reattending the four-day in-person training). Test cases are expected to be completed individually so that each reviewer's knowledge can be assessed. By receiving a passing score on the test case, the reviewer becomes a certified case reviewer in the State of California. If a reviewer does not pass the test case, the reviewer will need to complete the four-day training and three coaching calls again and complete the test case with a passing score.

Case review trainings are offered quarterly by the RTAs. Staff may attend the four-day in-person training session in any region, as they are not limited to attending trainings in their assigned region. The RTA responsible for providing the training rotates according to a set quarterly schedule as outlined below. The date and location of the training is determined by the RTA hosting the training.

RTA Four-Day Training Schedule	Quarter
Northern California Training Academy	July-Sept
Public Child Welfare Training Academy (Southern)	Oct-Dec
Bay Area Academy	Jan-Mar
Central California Training Academy	Apr-June

Quality Assurance Training

A QA training is required for all staff who will be the designated QA in the county, although case review staff may attend as well. The QA training is a two-day training that focuses on the QA process and will develop the skills of the participants to conduct QA on case reviews. All QA staff are to register for the next available QA training once they are hired or are aware that they will be transferring to the QA role and have completed all the prerequisites. The prerequisites to attending the QA training are to have attended the four-day training, passed the associated test case, and completed the QA training on the CFSR E-Learning Portal. The QA training is offered quarterly by each RTA. The location and RTA responsible for providing the training rotates according to a set quarterly schedule as outlined below. The date and location of the training is determined by the RTA hosting the training.

RTA QA Training Schedule	Quarter
Bay Area Academy	July-Sept
Central California Training Academy	Oct-Dec
Northern California Training Academy	Jan-Mar
Public Child Welfare Training Academy (Southern)	Apr-June

Ongoing Training and Supplemental Learning Opportunities

Each quarter the RTAs offer supplemental learning opportunities for case reviewers and QA staff to address case review questions. Case reviewers and QA staff are expected to attend at least one supplemental learning session per year. These sessions will provide the opportunity for staff to maintain case review skills and help avoid moving away from the fidelity of the tool that occurs naturally. Additionally, reviewers and QA staff will have an opportunity to review and discuss new procedures and item-level clarifications. Specifically, the sessions will cover updates to case review procedures as provided by CDSS and/or the ACF and clarification of OSRI instructions and items.

The CDSS'S ROLE IN THE CASE REVIEW PROCESS

The CDSS Specialists

The CDSS Specialists are assigned counties within the State to serve as the point of contact and to provide technical assistance. In working with the counties, CDSS specialist facilitates monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly calls with each of their counties. During these calls, the Specialist provides updates on the case review process, receives county updates with regards to case review staffing, reviews progress on completing case reviews, and provides technical assistance on questions related to case review, including but not limited to the Policies and Procedures and OSRI item- and case-specific questions. The CDSS Case Review Specialists are also available to assist the counties in understanding the case review data, provide guidance on how to run case review reports, and making connections with other counties as needed. Additionally, CDSS Specialists will check in with the county QA to review and monitor the progress of the county's improvement and sustainability plan.

Webinars

In addition to the trainings offered by the RTA, CDSS provides webinars to inform case review staff of updates, to provide clarification, guidance, and additional training on items in the OSRI and to address ongoing challenges with completing the OSRI that were identified by case review specialists during the QA process.

UTILIZING CASE REVIEW DATA

The case review process provides rich data regarding a county's child welfare practice. This information can be used to identify areas in which the county is performing well with regards to service delivery and areas where the county is experiencing challenges meeting the needs of the children and families. Within the OMS there is a list of reports that counties can use to review data that has been entered into the OMS.

[illegible]

The two CFSR Case Review Units are housed in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Section, in the Performance and Program Improvement Bureau (PPIB), in the Children's Services Quality Management Branch (CSQMB), in the Child and Family Services Division (CFSD), in the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

APPENDIX B

Documents Located on the CFSR Website

To find Case Review related documents on the CFSR Website:

- Navigate to the [CFSR Website](#).
- Click on Resources
- Click on CFSR Round 4 Resources
- Click on CFSR Round 4 Instruments, Tools, and Guides
- Click on Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and Guidance
- Navigate to the appropriate document:
 - On Site Review Instrument (OSRI)
 - Child and Family Services Review OSRI Quality Assurance Guide
 - Case Participant Interview Guides

APPENDIX C

Required Case Reviews by County

Note: Annual cases to be reviewed is effective July 1, 2023. The full time equivalent (FTE) changes will go into effect at a later date.

COUNTY	FTEs	Annual Cases to be Reviewed	COUNTY	FTEs	Annual Cases to be Reviewed
Alameda	6	100	Orange	6	100
Alpine	1	1	Placer	2	20
Amador	1	8	Plumas	1	8
Butte	3.5	48	Riverside	6	100
Calaveras	1	8	Sacramento	6	100
Colusa	1	8	San Benito	1	8
Contra Costa	3.5	48	San Bernardino	6	100
Del Norte	2	20	San Diego	6	100
El Dorado	2	20	San Francisco	3.5	48
Fresno	6	100	San Joaquin	6	100
Glenn	1	8	San Luis Obispo	2	20
Humboldt	3.5	48	San Mateo	2	20
Imperial	3.5	48	Santa Barbara	3.5	48
Inyo	1	8	Santa Clara	6	100
Kern	6	100	Santa Cruz	2	20
Kings	3.5	48	Shasta	3.5	48
Lake	1	8	Sierra	1	1
Lassen	1	8	Siskiyou	2	20
Los Angeles	6	100	Solano	3.5	48
Madera	2	20	Sonoma	3.5	48
Marin	2	20	Stanislaus	3.5	48
Mariposa	1	3	Sutter	2	20
Mendocino	2	20	Tehama	2	20
Merced	3.5	48	Trinity	1	8
Modoc	1	3	Tulare	6	100
Mono	1	4	Tuolumne	2	20
Monterey	2	20	Ventura	3.5	48
Napa	2	20	Yolo	3.5	48
Nevada	1	8	Yuba	2	20

APPENDIX D

How to Become Online Temporary Certified as a CFSR Case Reviewer (updated 4/7/2023)

Purpose: This document outlines the steps to become temporarily certified as a case reviewer by completing the CFSR E-Training Platform. By becoming temporarily certified, you will be authorized to review cases for up to 6 months before becoming certified by attending a 4-day case review training and passing the associated test. Additionally, it is necessary to complete the CFSR E-Training Platform and be temporarily certified as a prerequisite to attend the 4-day case review training.

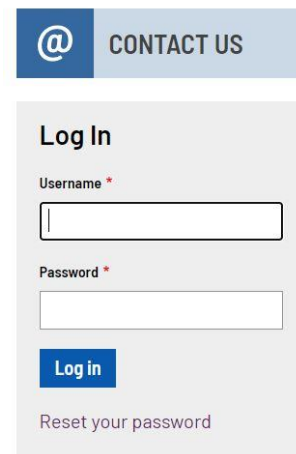
Step 1: Create an account obtain access to the E-Learning Academy (ELA). Go to <http://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/contact-us>. Scroll down to the section that says, “Technical questions about the CFSR Information Portal and OMS” and follow the instructions to request a portal account. These instructions are to email the CWRP Help Desk at cwrp-helpdesk@cfsrportal.org with the following information:

1. Full name
2. Job title
3. Agency email

(Note: This process contacts JBS to create an account through the CFSR information portal. JBS International, Inc.'s Child Welfare Reviews Project (CWRP) provides support to the Children's Bureau in administering the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs). The CWRP developed and maintains the CFSR Information Portal. Once you request an account, you will receive an email **the following week** (regardless of what day you send the email) with your account information so that you can proceed to step 2.

Step 2: Once you have received your email with your account information, you will be able to login to the CFSR portal and access the E-Learning Academy.

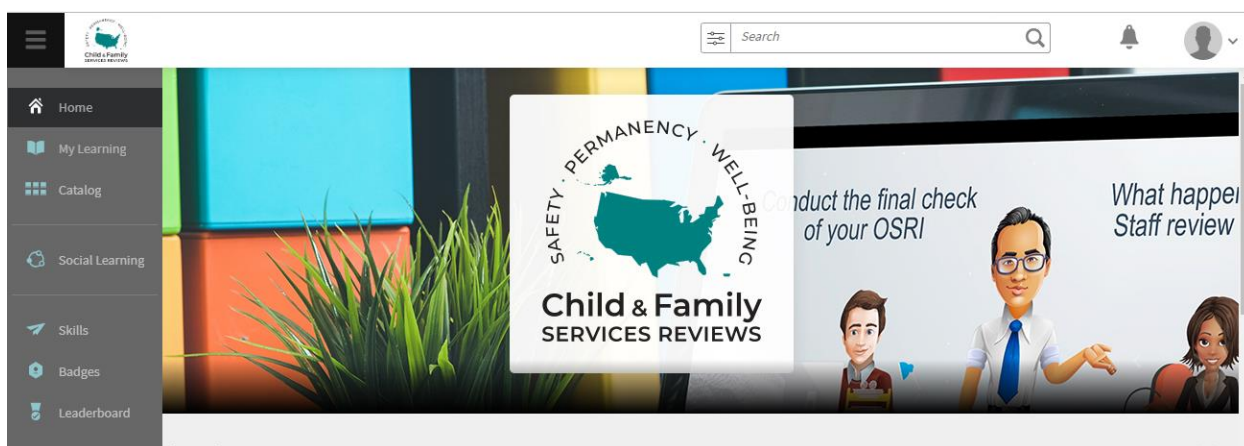
Navigate to the CFSR portal: <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/>. Scroll down the screen and look on the right column of the screen for the “Log In” box (pictured on the right). Log In to the site.



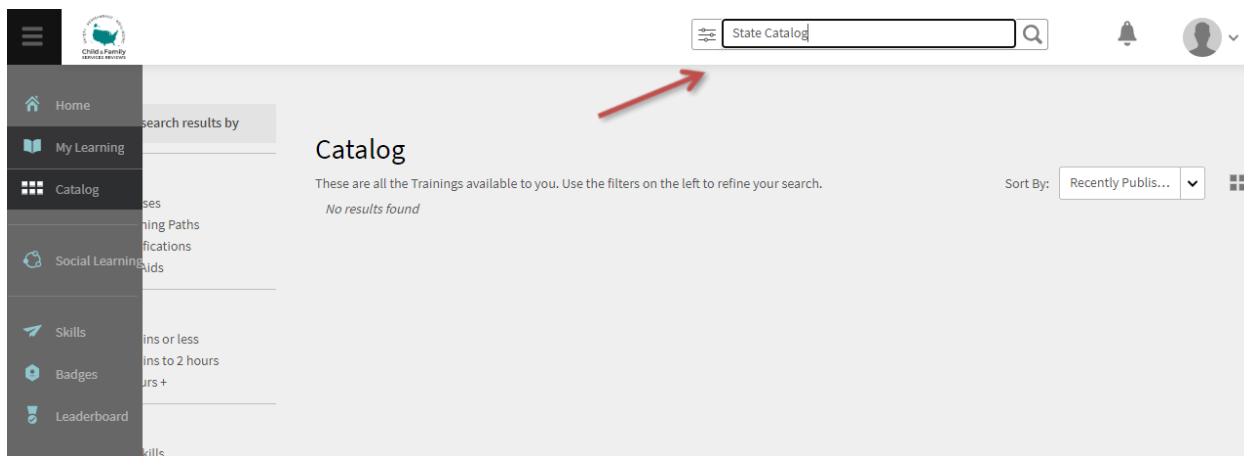
Step 3: On the home page, scroll down until you see the line of icons below. Click on the E-LEARNING icon.



Step 4: This is the E-Learning Academy home page. Be sure to click on the **Round 4 E-Learning Academy** link and log in. This will direct you to the Adobe Learning Manager home screen.

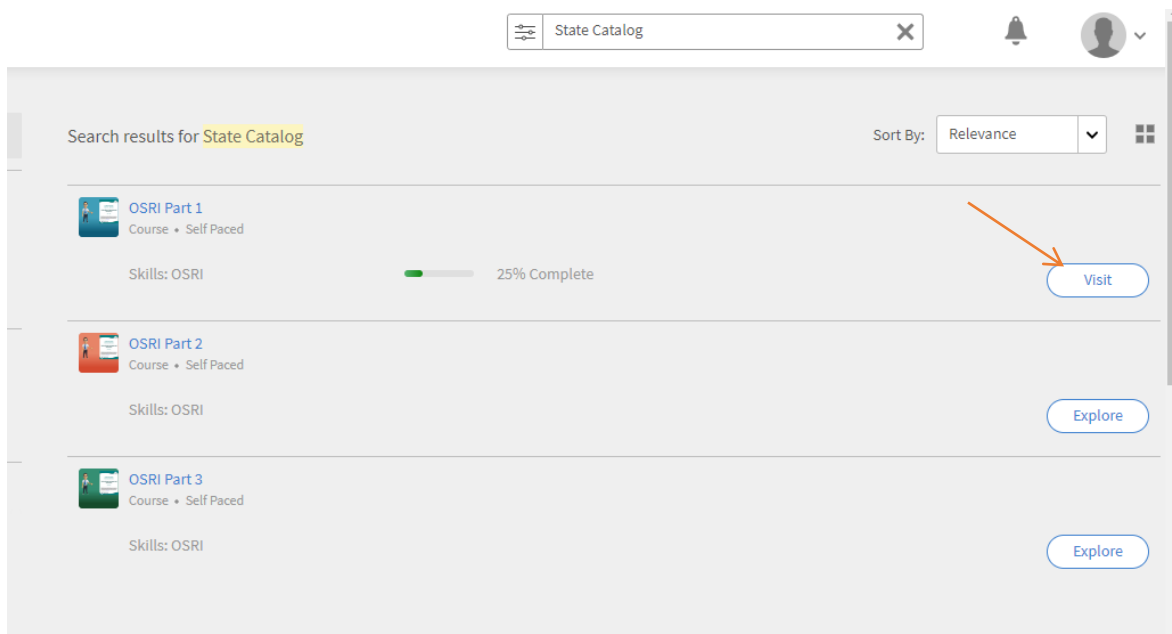


Step 5: Click the Catalog icon on the left-hand side of your screen. This will take you to the Catalog screen where you will type “State Catalog” into the search bar located on the upper right of the screen.



Step 6: This search will then list the 3 required parts of the OSRI that must be completed to be temporarily certified. You will begin by exploring the OSRI Part 1 module and you must complete each part in chronological order.

Note: These modules are self-paced and will automatically save your progress.



Step 7: The OSRI Part 1 of the series consists of two videos, OSRI Part 1 Quiz, and the OSRI Part 1 Course Evaluation (red arrows). It is strongly encouraged that you access and use the OSRI resources located on the far right column under Job Aid (purple arrows). There are three different OSRI Roud 4 Instruments to choose from that will aide your understanding of the modules.

- Video 1: a high-level overview of the OSRI's overall structure and a walkthrough of the Face Sheet (approximately 19mins)
- Video 2: Safety Outcomes 1 and 2 (approximately 18mins)

Once videos 1 and 2 have been completed and marked with a green checkmark, the OSRI Part 1 Quiz will be unlocked. You must score at least 80 percent to pass the quiz. The quiz consists of 20 multiple choice questions related to the materials covered in Part 1. You will be given an opportunity to retake the quiz if you do not pass. You must pass the quiz for all 3 parts in order to succesully complete the temporary certification. Completion of the OSRI Part 1 Course Evaluation is the last step to complete the OSRI Part 2 of the series. Upon completion of the course evaluation, a certificate of completion will generate for you to save for your records. This certificate of completion will be needed for Step 13.

Note: You are able to reaccess your certificate of completion by clicking on the OSRI Part 1 Course Evaluation.

The OSRI Course is a 3-part series that provides an introduction and overview of the Round 4 Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI), the federal instrument used to review cases during the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs). Part 1 of this series consists of two videos. Video 1, Overview and Face Sheet, provides a high-level overview of the OSRI's overall structure and a walkthrough of the Face Sheet. Video 2, Safety Outcomes 1 & 2, provides walkthroughs of the OSRI's Safety outcomes. This program is approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval #886521998-4306) for 1 continuing education (CE) contact hour. Learners who complete the course, pass its quiz, and complete the course evaluation will receive a certificate granting 1 CE contact hour.

Modules **Notes**

Core Content		1 hr 22 mins
	OSRI Video 1 SELF PACED	19 mins
	OSRI Video 2 SELF PACED	18 mins
	OSRI Part 1 Quiz SELF PACED	30 mins
	OSRI Part 1 Course Evaluation SELF PACED	15 mins

4/4 Core Content Completed

Skills covered
OSRI - Skill Level 1 (10 Credits)

Job Aid
OSRI Round 4 Instrument (Fillable) +
OSRI Round 4 Instrument (Non-Fillable) +
OSRI Round 4 Instrument (Spanish/Fillable) +

Author(s)
 Susan Koch

Step 8: Upon completion of the OSRI Part 1, return to the State Catalog and access the OSRI Part 2. Please note that Part 1 is a prerequisite for Part 2 of the OSRI module. Part 2 of this series consists of two videos, OSRI Part 2 Quiz, and the OSRI Part 2 Course Evaluation.

- Video 3: Permanency Outcome 1 (approximately 15mins)
- Video 4: Permanency Outcome 2 (approximately 19mins)

Once videos 3 and 4 have been completed and marked with a green checkmark, the OSRI Part 2 Quiz will be unlocked. You must score at least 80 percent to pass the quiz. The quiz consists of 20 multiple choice questions related to the materials covered in Part 2. You will be given an opportunity to retake the quiz if you do not pass. You must pass the quiz for all 3 parts in order to successfully complete the temporary certification. Completion of the OSRI Part 2 Course Evaluation is the last step to complete the OSRI Part 2 of the series. Upon completion of the course evaluation, a certificate of completion will generate for you to save for your records. This certificate of completion will be needed for Step 13.

Note: You are able to reaccess your certificate of completion by clicking on the OSRI Part 2 Course Evaluation.

Step 9: Upon completion of the OSRI Part 2, return to the State Catalog and access the OSRI Part 3. Please note that Parts 1 and 2 are prerequisites for Part 3 of the OSRI module. Part 3 of this series consists of two videos, OSRI Part 3 Quiz, and the OSRI Part 3 Course Evaluation.

- Video 5: Well-Being Outcome 1 (approximately 26mins)
- Video 6: Well-Being Outcomes 2 and 3 (approximately 15mins)

Once videos 5 and 6 have been completed and marked with a green checkmark, the OSRI Part 3 Quiz will be unlocked. You must score at least 80 percent to pass the quiz. The quiz consists

of 20 multiple choice questions related to the materials covered in Part 3. You will be given an opportunity to retake the quiz if you do not pass. You must pass the quiz for all 3 parts in order to successfully complete the temporary certification. Completion of the OSRI Part 3 Course Evaluation is the last step to complete the OSRI Part 3 of the series. Upon completion of the course evaluation, a certificate of completion will generate for you to save for your records. This certificate of completion will be needed for Step 13.

Note: You are able to reaccess your certificate of completion by clicking on the OSRI Part 3 Course Evaluation.

Step 10: Layla Morgan Mock Case

From the State Catalog, you will see the “Layla Morgan Mock Case” listed. Click on Explore to begin reviewing the content. This course includes a complete foster care mock case, Layla Morgan, that can be used to practice applying the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions (OSRI). The course includes a total of 17 modules that must be completed in order. These modules include links to key databases, mock case interviews available as audio files, an OSRI answer key, a series of Rationale Videos that explain and justify the item and outcome ratings for the case, and a mandatory quiz and course evaluation.

The screenshot displays a list of three courses in a catalog interface. Each course entry includes a small icon, the course title, a subtitle, tags, skills, a progress bar, and a completion status. The first two courses, OSRI Part 2 and OSRI Part 3, are 'Self Paced' and show 100% completion. The third course, Layla Morgan Mock Case, is 'Blended' and also shows 100% completion. A red arrow points to the 'Explore' button for the Layla Morgan Mock Case course.

Course Title	Course Type	Tags	Skills	Progress	Status	Action
OSRI Part 2	Course • Self Paced	State Catalog	OSRI	100% Complete	100% Complete	Visit
OSRI Part 3	Course • Self Paced	State Catalog	OSRI	100% Complete	100% Complete	Visit
Layla Morgan Mock Case	Course • Blended	Children's Bureau Catalog, State Catalog	Case Review	100% Complete	100% Complete	Explore

To begin this course, click on Module 1. This will allow you to access the Mock State Child Welfare Information System (MSCWIS), a database that contains all of the mock case documents.

Modules

Notes

Core Content

5 hrs 33 mins

Module 1: Mock State Child Welfare Information System (MSCWIS)

ACTIVITY

Last Visited

1 hr

The MSCWIS is the database used to store all of the documents that you will need to conduct your case review using the OSRI. To complete this activity:

1. Click the Go To Activity URL to launch the MSCWIS site in a new browser tab.
2. Click the View link under the Action column to open the case file.
3. Use the navigation menu on the left to access the case documents.
4. When you are ready to complete the OSRI, return to the ALM tab and click Completed.

Module 2: Case-Related Interview—Brooke Tillman

SELF PACED

23 mins 8 secs

Module 3: Case-Related Interview—Keith and Paula Jackson

SELF PACED

9 mins

Module 4: Case-Related Interview: Josh and Lupe Shanihan

SELF PACED

13 mins

Module 5: Case-Related Interview—Raymond Capa

SELF PACED

11 mins 14 secs

To complete this activity:

- Click the Go To Activity URL to launch the MSCWIS site in a new browser tab. You should keep this tab open for as long as you need to access the case documents.

Module 1: Mock State Child Welfare Information System (MSCWIS)

Activity Module

The MSCWIS is the database used to store all of the documents that you will need to conduct your case review using the OSRI. To complete this activity: 1. Click the Go To Activity URL to launch the MSCWIS site in a new browser tab. 2. Click the View link under the Action column to open the case file. 3. Use the navigation menu on the left to access the case documents. 4. When you are ready to complete the OSRI, return to the ALM tab and click Completed.

Go to Activity URL


Mark as complete

Note: The Activity can be marked as complete only after visiting the URL and finishing the Activity

- b) From the MSCWIS site, click the View link under the Action column to open the Layla Morgan case.


Mock State Child Welfare Information System (MSCWIS)

Cases




All Cases

Case Name	Case Type	PUR Start Date	Action
Layla Morgan	Foster Care	04/01/2020	view



- c) Use the navigation menu on the left to access the various case documents, which are organized by folder. You should spend as much time as you need to review the case and take notes—either electronically or by hand—as you would during an actual review.

Cases



Case Navigation

- [Face Sheet](#)
 - [Children](#)
 - [Participants](#)
- [Case Notes](#)
- [Case Plans](#)
- [Child Abuse and Neglect Reports](#)
- [Correspondence](#)
- [Court](#)
- [Education](#)
- [ICPC](#)
- [Intake Reports](#)
- [Interviews](#)
- [Medical](#)
- [Miscellaneous](#)
- [Parent Assessments and Progress Reports](#)
- [Placement Record](#)
- [Police Reports](#)
- [Risk Assessments](#)
- [Safety Assessments](#)
- [Safety Plans](#)
- [State Policies](#)
- [Target Child Assessment and Progress Reports](#)

[Layla Morgan](#)
Type of Case: Foster Care








Face Sheet

Case Type: Foster Care
PUR Start Date: 04/01/2020
Review Date: 07/21/2021

- d) When you have finished reviewing the documents, return to the Adobe Learning Manager tab and click Completed.
- e) Click the Forward Arrow at the bottom of the screen to advance to the next module. Modules 2-8 are self-paced videos that will cover interviews with key participants.

The MSCWIS is the database used to store all of the documents that you will need to conduct your case review using the OSRI. To complete this activity:

1. Click the Go To Activity URL to launch the MSCWIS site in a new browser tab.
2. Click the View link under the Action column to open the case file.
3. Use the navigation menu on the left to access the case documents.
4. When you are ready to complete the OSRI, return to the ALM tab and click Completed.

	Module 2: Case-Related Interview—Brooke Tillman SELF PACED	Last Visited 24 mins
	Module 3: Case-Related Interview—Keith and Paula Jackson SELF PACED	9 mins
	Module 4: Case-Related Interview: Josh and Lupe Shanihan SELF PACED	13 mins
	Module 5: Case-Related Interview—Raymond Capa SELF PACED	11 mins 14 secs
	Module 6: Case-Related Interview—Layla Morgan SELF PACED	16 mins
	Module 7: Case-Related Interview—Janet Morgan SELF PACED	6 mins 50 secs
	Module 8: Case-Related Interview—Helen and Mary Valencia SELF PACED	8 mins 56 secs

- f) Module 9 will prompt you to create and rate the mock case using the OMS.
 - a. Click Go To Activity URL to launch the OMS site in a new tab.
 - b. Click Go To My Training Review. You must be logged into your CFSR Information Portal account to click the button.
 - c. Click the Practice CQI Review button.
 - d. Select “My Training Review.”
 - e. Click “Go to Onsite Review Instrument.”
 - f. You can refer to your open MSCWIS tab to review documents as needed.
 - g. Return to the ALM tab and click Completed.

****Please note that this module has an estimated completion time of 1 hour; however, the time required to complete this module will vary.**

- g) Module 10 provides an in-depth answer key with ratings and rationale statements for the Layla Morgan Mock case.
- h) Modules 11-15 are self-faced videos that provide a thorough explanation on the ratings and rationales. These videos will cover Safety Outcomes 1 and 2, Permanency Outcomes 1 and 2 and Well-Being Outcomes 1 and 2.
- i) Module 16 will generate the Layla Morgan Mock Case Quiz. You must score at least 80 percent to pass the quiz. There are a total of 25 multiple choice questions. You will be given an opportunity to retake the quiz if you do not pass
- j) Upon passing the Layla Morgan Mock Case Quiz from module 16, you must complete the Layla Morgan Mock Case Course Evaluation in order to obtain your certificate of completion. This certificate of completion will be needed for Step 13.

Note: You are able to reaccess your certificate of completion by clicking on the Module 17: Layla Morgan Course Evaluation.

Step 11: Javier Diaz Mock Case (Round 3 E-Learning Academy)

The Javier Diaz Mock Case will require the user to access the Round 3 E-Learning Academy to complete the module. Please click on the following link: [Round 3 E-Learning Academy](#). The Round 3 OSRI modules will need to be complete to unlock the Javier Diaz case. Since you will have completed the Round 4 OSRI modules, you can click through the Round 3 OSRI module just to unlock the Javier Diaz case and do not need to read the content of the Round 3 OSRI module.

Note: Please disregard the following statement on the CFSR page:

*"Please note that all courses on the Round 3 ELA pertain **only** to the Round 3 OSRI. The Round 3 ELA should **not** be used to prepare for a Round 4 CFSR or any other activities that use the Round 4 OSRI."*

Due to the current development of the Round 4 E-Learning Academy, CDSS is requiring that all new temporary certified case reviewers complete this mock case.

The screenshot shows the Round 3 E-Learning Academy interface. At the top, there is a header with text about certificates of completion and a 'User Links' box containing 'My account' and 'Log out'. Below the header is a list of courses with expand/collapse icons. The courses are: 'The OSRI', 'In-Home Services Mock Case I: Marsha Taylor', 'Foster Care Mock Case II: David Clement', and 'Foster Care Mock Case III: Javier Diaz'. A red arrow points to the 'Foster Care Mock Case III: Javier Diaz' course. Below this course, there is a description: 'This course includes a complete foster care mock case, Javier Diaz, that can be used to practice applying the OSRI. The module includes downloadable documents related to the mock case, mock case interviews available as audio files, and a series of rationale videos that explain and justify the item and outcome ratings for the case. Certificate available: COC.' At the bottom of the course list, there is a link that says 'View this course'.

This mock case has a total of 9 steps that must be completed. After you have reviewed the content in each step, click on the “Mark this activity as complete” button and the circle will be filled in green to the right of that step. Once you complete the 9 steps, all the steps will have a green dot filled. The screen will say “Next step: Quiz”. It says the quiz is “optional”, however for the temporary certification, **this quiz is mandatory**. Click “Click here to take the quiz” to proceed to the quiz for the Javier Diaz Mock Case.

Note: The Javier Diaz Mock Case will **NOT** generate a Certificate of Completion (COC) for you to save.

Step 12: E-mail JBS International, Inc. (JBS)

After you have completed the Javier Diaz Mock Case and passed the associated quiz, please email JBS at ela@cfsrportal.org to request your **Certificate of Completion (COC)** using the template below:

*Hello,
My name is (First Name Last Name) and I have completed the Javier Diaz Mock Case through the Round 3 E-Learning Academy. I am requesting the Certification of Completion for this course.
Thank you.*

Step 13: E-mail CDSS

After you have received your Javier Diaz Mock Case Certificate of Completion from JBS and saved the Certificates of Completion for the 4 modules in the Round 4 E-Learning Academy, email the CDSS Case Review Unit (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov) by copy and pasting the template below and attaching the five Certificates of Completion.

*Hello CDSS,
I am attaching the five Certificates of Completion for the following courses:*

- OSRI Part 1
- OSRI Part 2
- OSRI Part 3
- Layla Morgan Mock Case
- Javier Diaz Mock Case (Round 3 E-Learning)

Please add me to the case review directory and grant me access to OMS.

Name:

County:

Email:

Phone:

Role (Case reviewer, QA staff, other (explain)):

Date you plan to attend the 4-day Case Review Training:

The CDSS will save your certificates, add you to the case review directory so that you will receive case review related emails, and submit your information to JBS to grant you OMS access so that you can review and enter cases into the electronic system. The process to gain OMS access takes approximately one week after the certificates are received. JBS will send a

“Welcome to the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) Online Monitoring System (OMS)” email when access has been granted.

Summary:

- ✓ Create an account.
- ✓ Login to CSFR Portal.
- ✓ Complete OSRI Part 1 and Quiz
- ✓ Complete OSRI Part 2 and Quiz
- ✓ Complete OSRI Part 3 and Quiz
- ✓ Complete the Layla Morgan Mock Case
- ✓ Complete the Javier Diaz Mock Case
- ✓ Email JBS requesting the Javier Diaz Mock Case Certificate of Completion
- ✓ Email CDSS with the information in the template and the Certificates of Completion as proof of completion for the five courses

How to Complete the Quality Assurance Training Module (updated 4/25/2023)

The QA Training Module on the E-Learning Training Academy (ETA) is one of the prerequisites to attend the 2-day QA training. This module continues to only be on the Round 3 E-Learning Academy. This document will be updated when these modules are transferred into the Round 4 ETA.

Step 1: Each participant will already have obtained access to the E-Learning Activity when you completed the pre-requisites for the 4-Day training.

Step 2: Go to <https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/> and log into the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) Information Portal log-in.

Step 3: Go to E-Learning Academy- Round 3 E-Learning Academy- OSRI Quality Assurance.

Participants will complete:

- QA Overview Module
 - Video: QA Overall Video
- QA Staff Module
 - Video 1: Stages of QA
 - Video 2: Types of Errors
 - Video 3: Writing Effective QA Notes and Returning the Case
 - Samantha Brower QA Mock Case
 - Tony Morris Mock Case
 - Jessica Hillerman QA Mock Case

Step 4: After completing the QA Overview Module and QA Training Module: email JBS at ela@cfsrportal.org to request your Certificates of Completion for the QA Overview Module and the QA Staff Module. The email must include your name and the name of the completed courses. Note that JBS may take up to 5 business days to email your certificates to you.

Step 5: Once the certificates are received, participants must send both certificates to the CDSS (cwscasereviews@dss.ca.gov).

APPENDIX E

Onboarding New Case Review and Quality Assurance Staff

Through the Regional Training Academies, the CDSS provides the 4-day CFSR Case Review Training and the 2-day CFSR Quality Assurance (QA) training to certify staff in case review. However, it is the responsibility of the county to onboard their staff to case review and provide training and coaching outside of those formalized trainings. This document provides onboarding practices that can be utilized as a resource in onboarding staff. This process is not a requirement but serves as an example of county led onboarding that has been successful.

Onboarding to Case Review:

New staff are provided with the Case Review Policy and Procedures Manual that includes Online Temporary Certification Training Instructions in Appendix (D). The staff begins the onboarding process by completing the case review modules on the CFSR website. After the completion of these modules, the staff attends the next available Case Review 4-day Training, while concurrently completing the following onboarding process. The staff should be provided with all the case review resources and tools from the CFSR website and those provided from CDSS. The staff should be encouraged to initially review these resources and then use them as tools and resources throughout the onboarding process and ongoing as a case reviewer.

After becoming familiar with the case review resources, the staff is provided 1-3 case reviews that received a minimum of 1st level QA. If the county has available cases that had received 2nd level QA, those cases should be used. The staff reads the case reviews to familiarize themselves with the Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and the case review process. They formulate case review and/or child welfare practice questions to address with their manager and/or QA (depending on county structure and preference). These cases are reviewed with the manager and/or QA and all questions are addressed.

Next, the staff receives 2-5 cases (one at a time) that received a minimum of 1st level QA. If the county has available cases that had received 2nd level QA, those cases should be used. The staff reads the draft of the case review before it received QA and identifies any questions or potential notes for the reviewer. They write down all their notes about changes needed to the OSRI and questions about general case review and/or child welfare and meet with the manager and/or QA staff to review the notes and questions. At this point, it is expected that they will not identify a lot of notes for the reviewer on their own, so next, they are provided with the QA notes from when it was QA'd. They review the notes and formulate any additional questions based on the case circumstances and the QA notes that were provided. The supervisor and/or QA staff explains the QA notes, addresses the staff's questions, and provides general case review knowledge relevant to the case circumstances. The supervisor provides oral

and written feedback to the staff. After the case review and the QA notes were reviewed, the staff is provided the final version of the review that shows how the QA notes were addressed. This process is effective even for reviewers who are not going to be QA staff. This process helps to teach the reviewer about the process of case review and QA and familiarize them with the OSRI tool and the expectations of the OSRI.

Now that the staff has had a chance to read through a few case reviews and is becoming more familiar with the OSRI and the case review process, the manager/ QA staff should review the case review resources with the staff to answer questions and provide clarity. This should also happen throughout the onboarding process when discussing cases, however, it is important to be mindful of the importance of coaching the new staff on how and when to utilize the various case review tools. In the step of onboarding, the staff is required to mock QA cases. This is similar to the last step, however, at this point, it is expected that the staff will have complete QA notes that are written as if a reviewer was going to read them. The staff receives 2-5 cases (one at a time) that have received a minimum of 1st level QA. If the county has available cases that had received 2nd level QA, those cases should be used. The staff reads the draft of the case review before it received QA. They write their QA notes and separately write their questions for their manager and/or QA staff. The manager and/or QA staff reviews the staff's QA side by side with the QA notes that had been completed on the case. Similarities and differences are discussed with the staff in addition to addressing the staff's questions and teaching them the nuances of case review as it comes up within the case circumstances. The manager and/or QA staff provides oral and written feedback to the staff. After the case review and the QA notes have been reviewed, the staff is provided the final version of the review that shows how the QA notes were addressed.

After the supervisor feels comfortable with the staff's level of understanding and ability to identify errors and inconsistencies in a completed case review, typically after 2-5 Mock QAs, the staff is given a mock case review. They receive all the case files, interview notes, etc. and are to review the entire case, fill out the OSRI, including writing rationale statements, and submit the case to their manager and/or QA staff. The manager and/or QA staff provides oral and written feedback to the staff, including but not limited to comparing the answers to the master, reviewing any differences with the staff, and providing feedback and coaching on the quality of the rationale statements.

Lastly, the staff shadows a peer on a case review. They pull the case files with the peer, complete the interviews with the peer and then the staff rates the case independently. The staff can reach out to their peer to talk through any ratings that they need assistance on. After the review is complete, the ratings and narratives are compared to the peer's case review and QA'd by the QA Staff. The QA Staff meets with the staff to review the case QA notes. The staff makes the changes based on the QA notes and the final version is reviewed with the manager.

Throughout the above process, the staff also reviews all the case review materials within the case review training binder, becomes familiar with the CFSR website including OMS and the FAQs, reviews relevant ACLs and ACINs, etc. Additionally, the staff joins all case review related team meetings and discussions. Onboarding concludes as the manager and/or QA Staff oversees the staff and provides ongoing support while the staff completes their first few case reviews or QAs. The staff is then continually supported by their supervisor and peers as ongoing continued learning and supported by the Regional Training Academies and CDSS through ongoing technical assistance phone calls, regional collaboratives, webinars, and other learning opportunities.

APPENDIX F

CWS Face Sheet Date Screenshots

Client Services - [Case [REDACTED]]

File Edit Search Action Associated Attach/Detach Window Help Toolz

ID Svc Comp Assignment Trans Req ICPC-100A ICPC-100B Doc Tracking Spec Proj Closure Summary

Identification

Case Info

Case Name [REDACTED]

Case Number [REDACTED]

Start Date [02/25/2019] End Date [08/26/2022] Projected End Date [08/31/2022]

Case Status

Status	Effective Date	End Date
1 Court Involvement	02/27/2019	08/26/2022

Status

☒ Court Involvement ☐ Voluntary

Effective Date [02/27/2019] End Date [08/26/2022]

Case Alerts

Face Sheet Question J:
The date of the first case opening, of the cases open for services during the PUR is under the green tab of a case in CWS/CMS.

For all dates in the face sheet: If the date is incorrect in CWS/CMS based on knowledge from the case file, the county is expected to collaborate internally to get the date corrected in CWS/CMS. In the OSRI, use the correct date, not the original date that was in the system in error.

Client Services - [Case ...]

File Edit Search Action Associated Attach/Detach Window Help Toolz

ID Svc Comp Assignment Trans Req ICPC-100A ICPC-100B Doc Tracking Spec Proj Closure Summary

Identification
****Safety Alert History Exists - See Client Notebooks****

Case Info

Case Name

Case Number

Start Date End Date Projected End Date

10/13/2020 [] []

Country State

[] California

Country

United States

Case Status

	Status	Effective Date	End Date
1	Court Involvement	10/21/2020	

Status

☒ Court Involvement ☐ Voluntary

Effective Date

10/21/2020

End Date

[]

Associated Referral Information

Referral Name

Referral ID

Received Date

10/03/2020

Intervention

	Reason
1	Adoption Services
2	Caretaker Absence/Incapacity
3	General Neglect - Basic Necessities

Primary Agency Responsible

County Welfare Department

Open Notebook: Information Available: Current

Select Item to Open

Placement Load

For this Client

	Name	Age(Yrs)	Sex at Birth	Birth Date
1				01/14/2006

Open this Placement

Start Date	End Date	Rem Date	PE End Date	Reason for Rem	Fac Name	Fac Type	Age
10/16/2020	05/27/2022	10/16/2020	05/27/2022	General Neglect	Aspiranet/FFACRPH	Cour	

OK Cancel New Remove Sort... History... View PE History... Help

Face Sheet Question K:

The date of the child's latest removal is under the red tab in CWS/CMS

Face Sheet Question N:

The date of discharge from foster care is under the red tab in CWS/CMS.

Helpful Tips:

- Face Sheet Question M will be the same as N in situations when the date the child is physically returned to the parents is the same as their date of discharge from foster care.
- For cases with trial home visits, ensure that N is the date defined in the OSRI, which may or may not match the date in this box.
- The information below is from a Federal FAQ of specific circumstances of when K will differ from the screen shot above. This includes circumstances such as when the agency obtains custody of a hospitalized newborn before the child is discharged from the hospital and placed with a caregiver.

Face Sheet – Question K: For cases being reviewed as part of the foster care sample, what date should be entered for Question K (What is the date of the child's latest removal?) when the agency has obtained custody (placement and care responsibility), but the location of the child was unknown when the agency went to remove the child (e.g., parents have

absconded with the child) so placement has not yet occurred?

The OSRI refers to the date of latest removal as a child's removal from his or her normal place of residence and placement in a substitute care setting under the placement and care responsibility of the state or local title IV-B/IV-E agency. Therefore, in this scenario, for the purposes of the OSRI, the date on which the child was located and placed in substitute care should be used to answer K.

Client Services - Case [Hearing (04/30/2019)]

File Edit Search Associated Attach/Detach Window Help Tools

ID Minors Citations and Subpoenas Notices Results Attendees

Court Results

Minor

Open Notebook: Information Available: All

Select Item to Open: Hearing Load

For this Case

Local	ID	Name	Start Date	End Date	Serv. Cor
1			02/25/2019	08/26/2022	Permanent Ple

Open this Hearing

	Date	Minors Calendared	Hearing Type	Subtypes
12	04/11/2019		Jurisdiction/Disposition	300
			Jurisdiction/Disposition	300
			Jurisdiction/Disposition	300
			Jurisdiction/Disposition	300
13	08/28/2019		Detention	300
			Detention	300
			Detention	300
			Detention	300

OK Cancel New Remove Sort... History... Help

Face Sheet Question L:

The date of the judicial finding is under the pink tab in CWS/CMS. Please refer to the definition in the OSRI to determine the date for L.

Client Services - [Case ██████████]

File Edit Search Action Associated Attach/Detach Window Help Toolz

ID Svc Comp Assignment Trans Req ICPC-100A ICPC-100B Doc Tracking Spec Proj Closure Summary

Identification

Case Info

Case Name ██████████

Case Number ██████████

Start Date 02/25/2019 End Date 08/26/2022 Projected End Date 08/31/2022

County ██████████ State California

Country United States

Case Status

	Status	Effective Date	End Date
1	Court Involvement	02/27/2019	08/26/2022

Status

☒ Court Involvement

☐ Voluntary

Effective Date 02/27/2019

End Date 08/26/2022

Associated Referral Information

Referral Name ██████████

Referral ID ██████████

Received Date 02/25/2019

Intervention

	Reason
1	Adoption Services
2	General Neglect - Basic Nec

Primary Agency Responsible

County Welfare Department

Face Sheet Question O:

The date of the most recent case closure is under the green tab in CWS/CMS.

APPENDIX G

Case Review Inquiry Form Instructions

The purpose of this document is to provide instruction for completing the case review inquiry form. The case inquiry form will be submitted via Salesforce to request CDSS's approval to eliminate or retain cases for review based on the criteria on this form. For instructions on how to submit a form via Salesforce, please refer to the Salesforce training zip file that was provided upon receiving access to Salesforce.

This form is used to request a case be eliminated or retained from the county's case list during the Period Under Review (PUR). The PUR refers to the time period being reviewed. The PUR begins one year before the first day of the quarter in which the case is being reviewed and ends when the case closes or the date that the case is reviewed, whichever comes first. For a case to be eliminated it must meet at least one of the listed elimination criteria (1-14). If the reviewer determines that a case can be retained without all key participants being interviewed, please use criteria 15. There is an additional comment box at the end of the form to be used to provide supplementary information when justifying the reason for choosing the selected criteria and explaining case circumstances. For confidentiality purposes, do not provide the full name(s) of participants in the case; limit your response to only the first name and last initial. Providing the requested information will prevent a delay in processing your request.

Section 1: General Information

County Name: Enter the name of the county that appears on the case list.

Period Under Review (PUR): Enter the sampling period start date.

Submitted By: Enter the name of the staff who is submitting the inquiry and their role. Please note, if the county has a quality assurance staff, they must review the form and be copied on the submission.

Case ID#: Enter the case ID number provided on the case list.

Date Submitted: Enter the date the inquiry is being submitted.

Case Type: Using your sample case list, identify whether the case type is in-home or foster care.

PIP: If the inquiry is for a PIP case, select Yes. If the inquiry is for a non-PIP case, select No.

CFSR: If the inquiry is for a CFSR case, select Yes. If the inquiry is for a non-CFSR case, select No.

Target Child's First Name and Last Initial: For confidentiality purposes, do not provide the minor's full name; limit your response to only the minor's first name and last initial.

Section 2: Case Information

Foster Care Cases: Target Child Date of Birth: Enter the date of birth for the target child listed on the case list.

In- Home Cases: Date of Birth of all children in the home: Enter the date of birth of all children in the family as identified in the case file.

Date Case Opened: Enter the case opening date from CWS/CMS.

Date Child Entered Foster Care: If applicable, enter the date the target child was removed from his or her normal place of residence and placed in a substitute care setting under the placement and care responsibility of the state or local title IV-B/IV-E agency. If there are multiple entries into foster care during the PUR, then enter the date of the child's first entry into foster care during the PUR. If it is an in-home case and a child in the family entered care during the PUR, please include the date that child/ children entered care. If not applicable, enter NA.

Date of Child's Most Recent Discharge from Foster Care: If applicable, enter the date the child was discharged from foster care. If not applicable, enter NA.

Date Case Closed: If applicable, enter the date the agency officially closed the case. If not applicable, enter NA.

Request Type: Enter if the county is requesting to retain or eliminate the case.

Section 3: Reason for Inquiry

- **In-home services case open for fewer than 45 consecutive days during the PUR or an in-home services case in which the child was on a trial home visit (THV- placement at home) at the start of the PUR and the case was open for fewer than 45 consecutive days during the PUR.** -Enter the date the case opened and the date on which the agency officially closed the case.
- **In-home services case in which any child in the family was in foster care for more than 24 hours during the PUR.** – Enter the date of birth of the target child and/or all the children in the family under the age of majority. Enter the date any child in the family was removed from his or her normal place of residence and placed in a substitute care setting under the placement and care responsibility of the state or local title IV-B/ IV-E agency. If there are multiple entries into foster care during the PUR, enter the date of the child's first entry into foster care during the PUR and the date of discharge from care if applicable. Indicate whether the case is still open or not.

For example: A family with three children have an open in-home case. Sibling 1 enters care 3 months into the PUR and remains in care for two days. Sibling 1 was in foster care for more than 24 hours.

- **A case open for subsidized adoption or guardianship payment only and not open for other services during the period under review.** – Enter the date that adoption or guardianship was finalized.
- **A case in which the child was discharged, the case closed, or the child's adoption/ guardianship was finalized, and the child is no longer under the care of the state child welfare agency according to agency policy before the PUR.** –Enter the permanency goal that was achieved (put N/A if in-home case): In the narrative box below, explain the circumstances of why the case remains/remained open in CWS/CMS.
- **A foster care case in which the target child reached the age of 18 before the PUR or an in-home case in which all the children in the family reached the age of 18 before the PUR.** – The date of birth for the child(ren) will be entered in Section 2.
- **A case in which the selected child is or was an "incoming" Interstate**

Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) case where the responsibility for that child lies with another state. – Enter what state is responsible for the child.

- **A case appearing multiple times in the sample, such as a case that involved siblings in foster care in separate cases or an in-home case in which a sibling set appears more than once on the sample. Please request to eliminate the duplicate case that appears further down on the case list.**– Enter the Case ID of the target child's sibling that appears on your case list (not the Case ID of the child on the inquiry). Enter the position on the sample list of the target child on this inquiry. Enter the position on the sample list of the target child's sibling. Note: Position refers to the numerical order the children appear on the Salesforce case list.

For example: A sibling set of two appear on the same case list. Sibling 1 (County Case ID# 1234-5678-91011) is position 5 on the case list (5th case on the sample) and sibling two (County Case ID# 9876-5432-1010) is position 12 on the case list (12th case on the sample). The case being submitted for elimination is sibling 2 because they appear lower on the case list. For the sub questions you would answer as follows:

 - i. Enter the Case ID of the target child's sibling that appears on your case list (not the Case ID of the child on the inquiry): County Case ID# 1234-5678-91011)
 - ii. Enter the position on the sample list of the target child on this inquiry: 12
 - iii. Enter the position on the sample list of the target child's sibling:5
- **A case that was reviewed in the past 12 months (including the previous four quarters).**–Enter the PUR start date of when the case was previously reviewed. Enter the date the case review was completed (Item E on the face sheet of the OSRI) and the date the case was submitted to CDSS. Please see the following example in defining the “past 12 months”: The quarterly sample provided to counties beginning July 1, 2022, any case that was reviewed during the quarters beginning 4/1/22, 1/1/22, 10/1/21, and 7/1/21 would be eliminated.

Note: For foster care cases, this criterion applies only to the target child being reviewed in the previous 12 months. For in-home cases, this criterion applies to any child in the home who had been reviewed in the previous 12 months. For example: Child A and B are brothers. When their case is reviewed on 4/1/22 it was Child A who was pulled for the review, but as an in-home case, both children were reviewed. On 7/1/22, Child B's case is pulled. Since he was reviewed as a child in the home when Child A's case was pulled for review three months prior, this case can be eliminated).

- **A case in which the child was placed in a locked juvenile facility or other placement that does not meet the federal definition of foster care for the entire PUR.** – Enter the date of placement in a non-title IV-B/IV-E placement. In the narrative box, explain the circumstances of the case. (Please include placement type(s), start and end dates of placement(s), and the case

circumstances.)

- **A foster care case in which the child was in foster care for fewer than 24 hours during the PUR.** - Enter dates of entry and discharge from care.
- **A foster care case in which the child was on a trial home visit (placement at home) at the start of the PUR and remains in the home for the entire PUR.** – Enter the date in which the trial home visit began. In the narrative box, explain the case circumstances.

For example: The PUR begins 7/01/22, the target child returned home on a trial home visit on 6/20/22 and remained there until the case transitioned into family maintenance. The target child never re-entered care during the PUR.

- **A key participant chooses not to participate when they are advised by an attorney not to participate in the case review in cases involving administrative, civil, or criminal litigation and perspectives from other participants cannot be obtained to reasonably reflect the key participant's perspective.** Enter the explanation of the case circumstances in the narrative box.
- **A key participant in a case is unable to be interviewed and sufficient information and perspectives from other key participants cannot be obtained.** – Describe the composition of the family/household at the time of removal and any other relevant case circumstances. List the key participants who were interviewed. List the key participants who were not interviewed. Describe efforts to engage those not interviewed. Please include date and type of attempt, who it was made by, and the results of the attempts. Explain efforts to consult with the current case worker if the case is open. Identify anyone else available to speak to this participant's perspective (i.e., family member, attorney, CASA, parent advocate, etc.) and attempts to engage those participants.

Please see Policy and Procedure Guide for more information about excluding key participants due to lack of interview.

- **Other** - If a county believes that a case should not be reviewed but the exclusion does not meet any of the above criteria, please explain the case circumstances in the narrative box below with an explanation of why the county believes this case should be excluded.

Section 4: Case Retention Request

- **A key participant in a case is unable to be interviewed, however, sufficient information and perspectives from other key participants can be obtained.** – Describe the circumstances of the case including composition of the family/household at the time of removal and any other relevant case circumstances. List the key participants who were interviewed. List the key participants who were not interviewed. Describe efforts to engage those not interviewed. Please include date and type of attempt, who it was made by, and the results of the attempts. Explain efforts to consult with the current case worker if the case is open. Identify anyone else available to speak to this

participant's perspective (i.e., family member, attorney, CASA, parent advocate, etc.) and attempts to engage those participants.

Please see Policy and Procedure Guide for more information about retaining key participants despite lack of interview.

Optional Comments –Include optional comments in the narrative box below. This field is not required for a majority of cases as the previous questions should provide all needed information.

Appendix H

List of Quality Assurance Staff Responsibilities

The QA Training uses this outline to train on the responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Staff. Per the CFSR Case Review Policy and Procedures, QA staff are expected to attend the Quality Assurance training to learn the details of each of these responsibilities.

Oversee and facilitate the operational functions of the case review unit.

- Primary contact to the CDSS
- Training of reviewers
- Support mental health needs of the case reviewers
 - Note: A QA staff is not expected to be a mental health expert, but to be knowledgeable of the county's resources to support mental health and provide those resources to the reviewer when needed. This is further detailed in the QA training.
- Adhering to Safety and Oversight Concerns Policy and Procedure
- Communicating with county upper management includes communication about the case review unit and the data produced through the case reviews

Oversee and facilitate the process of completing case reviews from start to finish.

- QA vets the case list to identify if each case is reviewable and by whom.
- Complete all inquiries if needed to retain or eliminate a case
- Assigns reviewable cases to the case reviewers at the beginning of the quarter and ongoing as needed
- Engages in informal and formal QA processes for each case review (this is detailed in throughout the coaching section below)
- Leads the team in meeting quality and quantity goals across quarters
- Submits completed case reviews to CDSS on a flow basis
- County QA role during 2nd level QA

Use the process of quality assurance to coach case reviewers on completing timely and accurate case reviews.

- Preparing to Coach Case Review Staff
 - Hiring (if applicable as part of your county role)
 - On-boarding and Training a new Case Reviewer
- Informal QA process and coaching
 - Coaching on Engaging Key Participants/ Securing Interviews
 - Coaching Reviewers on how to interview
 - Coaching on the case types and rating the OSRI
 - Using Visuals as a coaching tool and QA tool
 - Coach on how to rate the OSRI
- Formal QA process and coaching
 - Writing QA notes
 - Identifying Case Review resources that the reviewer should reference
 - Meeting with the case reviewer
 - Consulting with CDSS

- Knowledge of the common areas that may require coaching throughout the OSRI.
 - Case Summary
 - Rationale Statements
 - Coaching
 - Case Contextual Information
 - Practice performing quality assurance using the QA Guide, 4-Day training, reviewers briefs and all other tools in the 4-Day training binder