



CDSS

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DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

October 31, 2014

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) NO. I-64-14

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS
ALL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS
ALL CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS)
ADOPTIONS DISTRICT OFFICES

SUBJECT: ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE ANALYSIS AND REPORTING
SYSTEM (AFCARS) DATA ENTRY PROGRESS

REFERENCE: 45 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATION (CFR) 1355.40
SECTION 479 OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; MANUAL OF
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTION 31-206.36;
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (W&IC) 16501; ALL
COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE (ACIN) NO. I-03-13; ACIN I-44-
05.

This ACIN reminds counties of the importance of completing required AFCARS information and how to record case information updates into the CWS/CMS, in order to meet required Child Welfare Services Program documentation, data reporting, and program performance measurements.

Recently, the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released new information regarding the third round of the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). A substantial part of the changes to this process is the introduction of new measures and a new method for measuring performance. These standards will be determined by including information from all jurisdictions where timely and accurate data are available. Counties are reminded that insufficient data negatively affects the state's performance outcomes and can result in federal funding penalties. In addition, the ACF will begin a formal AFCARS review in California early in 2015. To the extent

that efforts are made to improve data now, the state may avoid lengthy and complicated improvement plans regarding data quality.

The following actions should be followed to ensure improved data accuracy: In CWS/CMS, supervisors and staff should review and update all AFCARS data fields from the AFCARS Navigation Tool.

Select AFCARS after starting the “Navigation Tools” from the “Tool” drop down menu or the Tool Man button. Once in the AFCARS navigation screen, incomplete AFCARS fields display a green background; completed AFCARS fields display a white background; shadowed fields do not yet apply to the case. To update the green AFCARS fields, click on the “Open File” button next to the field and follow the instruction steps. The updated AFCARS fields will display a white background when you return to the AFCARS navigation screen.

Incomplete data entry results in AFCARS data elements exceeding the 10% data quality threshold for missing data. To assist counties with identifying cases with missing data, SafeMeasures AFCARS data quality assurance reports were developed which identify these missing data elements and can be found by clicking ‘Index’ on the SafeMeasures home screen. Under section ‘A’, select from the three reports:

- AFCARS Adoption Care Data Elements: Children in Placement
- AFCARS Foster Care Data Elements: Children in Placement
- AFCARS Foster Care Data Elements: Children in Probation Placement

Current or historical timeframes can be selected and the reports can be filtered by office. Each summary report displays the number of cases that have missing data fields required for the AFCARS elements that are out of compliance due. Each summary report also displays the number of cases where all data fields are found for the AFCARS elements that are out of compliance. Counties can then drill down to and sort by client record details including client name, client ID, case ID, case worker and case supervisor for all elements together or individual elements. These reports are designed to provide counties with the ability to ensure missing data is entered BEFORE data is extracted for each AFCARS submission and also track progress over time. Please note, probation cases are contained in a separate report on SafeMeasures.

Supervisors should ensure that staff correctly enter and update information as it is obtained. Please note that functionality in the AFCARS Navigation Tool for placement-related information corresponds to the current AFCARS reporting period only. As a result, staff may view green fields from the AFCARS Navigation Tool and then navigate to the AFCARS field and find the fields containing data entered for a different reporting period. The data in these fields needs to be updated for the current AFCARS reporting period.

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If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Sandoval, Chief,
Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau, at (916) 654-1192, or by sending an email to
CWSData@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

GREGORY E. ROSE
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division