DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814

September 12, 2000

All-County Information Notice No. I-93-00

TO: All County Welfare Directors
                All CWS/CMS Single Points of Contact

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL
[ ] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order
[ ] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[ ] Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE DATA

This is to follow-up on the current issues concerning the submission of *Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System* (AFCARS) data as required by Section 479 of the Social Security Act.

Background

The Code of Federal Regulations (45 CFR 1355.40) requires the collection and submission of reliable information on foster care children, and children adopted under the auspices of the State public child welfare agency. The purpose of the data collected is to inform State/Federal policy decision-makers, program management, and to respond to Congressional and Departmental inquiries. Specifically, the AFCARS data is used for short/long-term budget projections, trend analysis, and to target areas for improved technical assistance. For instance, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 requires the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to use AFCARS data to develop outcome measures, which can be used to assess the performance of States in operating child protection and child welfare programs.

The noted regulations require the data to be collected by an automated system and transmitted electronically to DHHS semi-annually, by May 15th and November 14th. Data submitted in May includes the period from October 1st through March 31st. Similarly, data submitted in November includes the period from April 1st through September 30th. States are required to collect and report information on 103 data elements. Specifically, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is required to report child specific information on 66 foster care data elements and 37 adoption data elements. Attachment A contains a complete listing and a brief description of the AFCARS data elements. In addition, this attachment indicates where the data elements are located in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS).

Data submission standards and results

The DHHS requires AFCARS data to be complete, consistent, and timely in order to insure that SACWIS requirements are met. As you may be aware, some of the AFCARS information submitted by the State of California has not met these requirements as specified under 45 CFR 1355.40.

For instance, child specific information pertaining to the Date of Discharge from Foster Care (Element #56) failed to meet the timeliness requirement. According to the regulations, the Date of Discharge from Foster Care must be entered within 60 days. The AFCARS report submitted for period ending September 30, 1999, shows that the Date of Discharge from Foster Care (Element #56) had not been entered within 60 days in 23 percent of the 23,354 total cases that required the Discharge Date.

Another example where not all the data submitted has met requirements is the Date of Most Recent Review (Foster Care Element #5). As shown on the table below, a periodic review date (Administrative or court review, including dispositional hearing) had not been done and/or was not entered in CWS/CMS.

CWS/CMS Analysis of Periodic Review Requirement Based on Data from February 1999 thru July 1999

Cases in period	Require review	Reviews reported	More than 9 months since review	No review reported
131,953	101,415	93,920	17,027	7,495

Steps we are taking to facilitate entry

An ongoing effort is being made to coordinate county court review processes. As this occurs, the Court Management Section is being modified and updated to capture specific AFCARS data as required for Foster Care Element #5.

CDSS has improved AFCARS reporting with the use of the AFCARS Navigation Tool, which takes the users to all of the AFCARS required fields. This tool is available in either the Wizard menu or the Wizard icon located on the Client Services toolbar. Attachment B contains a copy of the primary Navigation Tool page for your information.

Other efforts to facilitate data entry include modifying the current system to generate monthly AFCARS reports (county, region, and office version) that break down by county the level of compliance with the AFCARS requirements. The monthly AFCARS reports will be sorted by caseload and worker name to allow high level and individual case level review. For Foster Care files, this break down is complete as of the Summer of 2000. The Adoption files county break down is anticipated for completion by the end of Winter, 2000.

Additionally, the State is applying the use of color coding for some AFCARS required fields in order to provide greater visibility. Color coding the AFCARS data elements will enable supervisors and program managers to identify necessary data during case reviews. It is anticipated that the color coding will be applied to eight (8) data elements of AFCARS by November, 2000.

The State will continue to investigate other changes that will help to facilitate entry of AFCARS information. As these changes occur, the State will monitor them to ensure that counties are informed.

If you have questions or need clarification on the information provided in this letter, please contact Corinne Mau, Manager, CMS Support Branch, at (916) 445-2888. Any questions concerning AFCARS data entry should be directed to the CWS/CMS System Support Consultants assigned to your county.

Sincerely,

SYLVIA PIZZINI
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

 c: CWDA

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System [AFCARS]

Foster Care AFCARS Data Elements

Data Element	Location Within CWS/CMS			Comments
	Section	**Notebook**	**Page**	
1. State				
2. Report Period End Date				
3. FIPS Code				*System Generated*
4. Record Number				*System Generated*
5. Date of Most Recent Periodic Review	Court Management	Hearing	ID	
6. Date of Birth	Client Management	Client	ID	
7. Sex	Client Management	Client	ID	
8. Race	Client Management	Client	ID	
9. Hispanic Origin	Client Management	Client	ID	
10. Child's Disability	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
11. Mental Retardation [DD]	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
12. Visually or Hearing Impaired	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
13. Physically Disabled [child]	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
14. Emotionally Disturbed [DSM]	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
15. Other Medically Diagnosed Cond. Requiring Special Care	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
16. Child Ever Adopted	Client Management	Client	Demographics	
17. Age [of child when previous adoption was legalized]	Client Management	Client	Demographics	
18. Date of *FIRST* Removal from home	Placement Management	Placement **	ID	***If more than 1 Placement Episode, then check in earliest placement notebook.*
19. Total Number of Removals from Home to Date				*System Generated*
20. Date Child was Discharged from Last FC	Placement Management	Last Placement	ID	
21. Date of *LATEST* Removal from Home	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Date Current Placement Episode began – In Child Removal Frame*
22. Transaction Date [date of latest removal from Home]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*System Generated. To view, place cursor in Removal Date field in Current Placement or Temp Custody NB. Then Select Edit > View Audit Info>Date Changed*
23. Date of Placement in Current Foster Care Setting	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Start Date*
24. Number of Previous Place. Settings During this Removal				*System Generated-Be sure all Placements for this Placement Episode are in CWS/CMS.*
25. Removal from Home [manner of removal for current placement episode]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Legal Authority field*

26. Physical Abuse	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [Read-only when Saved to Database]. Not Read-only in Temporary Custody Notebook. If no Temporary Custody NB was created, then open 1st Placement of current Episode; then select Update Placement command. Fields will be enabled.*
27. Sexual Abuse	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [see #26]*
28. Neglect	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [see #26]*
29. Alcohol Abuse [Parent]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
30. Drug Abuse [Parent]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
31. Alcohol Abuse [Child]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
32. Drug Abuse [Child]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
33. Child's Disability	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [see #26]*
34. Child's Behavior Problem	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
35. Death of Parent[s]	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
36. Incarceration of Parent	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
37. Caretaker's Inability to Cope due to Illness	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [see #26]*
38. Abandonment	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
39. Relinquishment	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Primary or Secondary reason [see #26]*
40. Inadequate House	Placement Management	Current Placement	ID	*Secondary reason [see #26]*
41. Placement Setting [current]	Placement Management	Placement Home [current]	ID	
42. Placement [out of State]	Placement Management	*Placement Home [current] OR Non-Foster Care Placement*	Address	
43. Case Plan Goal [most recent]	Case Management	Case Plan [In Effect]	*CP Participants*	
44. Caretaker Family Structure	Case Management	Client [For *Caretaker Removed From*]	ID	*Marital Status of Caretaker Removed From*

45. Year of Birth [1st Principal Caretaker]	Client Management	Client [For 1st Caretaker Removed From]	ID	*First Caretaker Removed From*
46. Year of Birth [2nd Principal Caretaker]	Client Management	Client [For 2nd Caretaker Removed From]	ID	*Second Caretaker Removed From*
47. Parents Rights Termination Date [mother]	Case Management	Family Information	Parental Rights	*If parent deceased then use Case Management, Client Notebook [Parent's], Demog Page*
48. Parents Rights Termination Date [father]	Case Management	Family Information	Parental Rights	*Same as #47*
49. Foster Family Structure	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	*Marital status of SCP*
50. Year of Birth [1st Foster Caretaker]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	
51. Year of Birth [2nd Foster Caretaker]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider current	ID	
52. Race [1st Foster Caretaker]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	Ethnicity is term in California
53. Hispanic Origin [1st Foster Caretaker]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	
54. Race *[2nd Foster Caretaker]*	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	Ethnicity is term in California
55. Hispanic Origin *[2nd Foster Caretaker]*	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider *current*	ID	
56. Date of Discharge from Foster Care	Placement Management	*Last* Placement	Placement Change	*Need End Date of most recent Placement Episode.*
57. Transaction Date [date of discharge from foster care]	Placement Management	*Last* Placement	Placement Change	*System Generated. To view, place cursor in Placement Episode End Date field. Select Edit > View Audit Info>Date Changed*
58. Reason for Discharge	Placement Management	*Last* Placement	Placement Change	*Placement Episode Termination Reason*
59. TitleIV-E [Foster Care Source of Federal Support]	Client Management	Client	ID Num	*Aid Code; Deleted Medi-Cal App from this list*
60. TitleIV-E [Adopt. Assistance Source of Federal Support]	a) Client Management b) *Case Management* c) *Placement Management*	a) Medi-Cal Application b) Client c) Adoptive Placement	a) *Information* b) ID c) AAP Agreements	a) *Title IV-E Eligible* b) *Intervention Reason of Adoption Services* c) *Start Date*

61. Title IV-E [AFDC - Source of Federal Support]	Client Management	Client	ID Num	*State ID and Aid Code*
62. Title IV-D [Child Support]	Data needs to come via interface with Statewide Child Support System			*This data is <u>not</u> in CWS/CMS*
63. Title XIX [Medicaid Sources of Fed Participation]	Client Management	Client	ID Num	*State ID and Aid Code*
64. SSI or Other Social Security Benefits [Source of Federal Support]	Client Management	Client	ID Num	*State ID and Aid Code*
65. None of the Above [sources of Fed. Support]	Client Management	Client	ID Num	*State ID and Aid Code*
66. Amount of Monthly FC Pay	Placement Management	Current Placement	Ongoing Requests	*Basic Rate & SCI*

Adoption AFCARS Data Elements

Data Element	Location Within CWS/CMS			Comments
	Section	**Notebook**	**Page**	
1. State				
2. Report Period End Date				
3. Record Number				*System Generated*
4. State Agency Involvement [in Adoption]				*System Generated*
5. Child's DOB	Client Management	Client	ID	
6. Sex	Client Management	Client	ID	
7. Race	Client Management	Client	ID	
8. Hispanic Origin	Client Management	Client	ID	
9. Special Needs [State determined child has sp nds]	Client Management	Client	AAP Eligibility	
10. Primary Basis for Special Needs	Client Management	Client	AAP Eligibility	
11. Mental Retardation	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
12. Visually or Hearing Impaired	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
13. Physically Disabled [child]	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
14. Emotionally Disturbed [DSM]	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
15. Other Medically Diagnosed Cond Requiring Special Care	Client Management	Health	Diagnosed Condition	
16. Year of Birth [birth mother]	Client Management	Client [mother's]	ID	*Check Child's Client NB for Relationships*
17. Year of Birth [birth father]	Client Management	Client [father's]	ID	*Check Child's Client NB for Relationships*
18. Mother Married [at time of child's birth]	Client Management	Client [Focus Child's]	Adoption Information	*Defaults to Yes*
19. Parental Rights Termination Date [Mother]	Case Management	Family Information	Parental Rights	*If parent deceased then use Case Management, Client Notebook [Parent's], Demog Page*
20. Parental Rights Termination Date [Father]	Case Management	Family Information	Parental Rights	*[See # 19]*
21. Date Adoption Legalized	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	ID	
22. Adoptive Parents Family Structure	Placement Management	Adoptive Home Study AND Substitute Care Provider	Application AND ID	*First & Second Applicant Fields AND Marital Status*

23.	Year of Birth [Adoptive Mother]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	
24.	Year of Birth [Adoptive Father]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	
25.	Race [Adoptive Mother]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	Ethnicity is term in California
26.	Hispanic Origin [Adoptive Mother]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	
27.	Race [Adoptive Father]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	Ethnicity is term in California
28.	Hispanic Origin [Adoptive Father]	Placement Management	Substitute Care Provider [for Adoptive Placement Home]	ID	
29.	Stepparent	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	ID	
30.	Other Relative of Child by Birth or Marriage	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	ID	
31.	Foster Parent of Child	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	ID	
32.	Other Non-Relative	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	ID	
33.	Placed From [child]				*System Generated*
34.	Placed By [child]				*System Generated*
35.	Monthly Subsidy [Is child receiving]	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	AAP Agreements	
36.	Monthly Amount	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	AAP Agreements	
37.	Title IV-E [is child receiving Adopt. Assistance]	Placement Management	Adoptive Placement	AAP Agreements	