

§ 1355.31

and Activities. (Only one section is applicable: 45 CFR 100.12, How may a State simplify, consolidate, or substitute federally required State plans?).

(n) 45 CFR Part 201—Grants to States for Public Assistance Programs. Only the following sections are applicable:

(1) § 201.5—Grants. (Applicable to title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance only.)

(2) § 201.6—Withholding of payment; reduction of Federal financial participation in the costs of social services and training. (Applicable only to an unapprovable change in an approved State plan, or the failure of the State to change its approved plan to conform to a new Federal requirement for approval of State plans.)

(3) § 201.15—Deferral of claims for Federal financial participation. (Applicable only to title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance.)

(4) § 201.66—Repayment of Federal funds by installments. (Applicable only to title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance.)

(o) 45 CFR Part 204.1—Submittal of State Plans for Governor's Review.

(p) 45 CFR Part 205—General Administration—Public Assistance Programs. Only the following sections are applicable:

(1) § 205.5—Plan amendments.

(2) § 205.10—Hearings.

(3) § 205.50—Safeguarding information for the financial assistance programs.

(4) § 205.100—Single State agency.

[61 FR 58654, Nov. 18, 1996, as amended at 66 FR 58675, Nov. 23, 2001]

§ 1355.31 Elements of the child and family services review system.

Scope. Sections 1355.32 through 1355.37 of this part apply to reviews of child and family services programs administered by States under subparts 1 and 2 of title IV-B of the Act, and reviews of foster care and adoption assistance programs administered by States under title IV-E of the Act.

[65 FR 4076, Jan. 25, 2000]

§ 1355.32 Timetable for the reviews.

(a) *Initial reviews.* Each State must complete an initial full review as described in § 1355.33 of this part during

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the four-year period after the final rule becomes effective.

(b) *Reviews following the initial review.*

(1) A State found to be operating in substantial conformity during an initial or subsequent review, as defined in § 1355.34 of this part, must:

(i) Complete a full review every five years; and

(ii) Submit a completed statewide assessment to ACF three years after the on-site review. The statewide assessment will be reviewed jointly by the State and the Administration for Children and Families to determine the State's continuing substantial conformity with the State plan requirements subject to review. No formal approval of this interim statewide assessment by ACF is required.

(2) A State program found not to be operating in substantial conformity during an initial or subsequent review will:

(i) Be required to develop and implement a program improvement plan, as defined in § 1355.35 of this part; and

(ii) Begin a full review two years after approval of the program improvement plan.

(c) *Reinstatement of reviews based on information that a State is not in substantial conformity.* (1) ACF may require a full or a partial review at any time, based on any information, regardless of the source, that indicates the State may no longer be operating in substantial conformity.

(2) Prior to reinstating a full or partial review, ACF will conduct an inquiry and require the State to submit additional data whenever ACF receives information that the State may not be in substantial conformity.

(3) If the additional information and inquiry indicates to ACF's satisfaction that the State is operating in substantial conformity, ACF will not proceed with any further review of the issue addressed by the inquiry. This inquiry will not substitute for the full reviews conducted by ACF under § 1355.32(b).

(4) ACF may proceed with a full or partial review if the State does not provide the additional information as requested, or the additional information confirms that the State may not be operating in substantial conformity.

(d) *Partial reviews based on noncompliance with State plan requirements that are outside the scope of a child and family services review.* When ACF becomes aware of a title IV-B or title IV-E compliance issue that is outside the scope of the child and family services review process, we will:

(1) Conduct an inquiry and require the State to submit additional data.

(2) If the additional information and inquiry indicates to ACF's satisfaction that the State is in compliance, we will not proceed with any further review of the issue addressed by the inquiry.

(3) ACF will institute a partial review, appropriate to the nature of the concern, if the State does not provide the additional information as requested, or the additional information confirms that the State may not be in compliance.

(4) If the partial review determines that the State is not in compliance with the applicable State plan requirement, the State must enter into a program improvement plan designed to bring the State into compliance, if the provisions for such a plan are applicable. The terms, action steps and timeframes of the program improvement plan will be developed on a case-by-case basis by ACF and the State. The program improvement plan must take into consideration the extent of non-compliance and the impact of the non-compliance on the safety, permanency or well-being of children and families served through the State's title IV-B or IV-E allocation. If the State remains out of compliance, the State will be subject to a penalty related to the extent of the noncompliance.

(5) Review of AFCARS compliance will take place in accordance with 45 CFR 1355.40.

[65 FR 4076, Jan. 25, 2000, as amended at 66 FR 58675, Nov. 23, 2001]

§ 1355.33 Procedures for the review.

(a) The full child and family services reviews will:

(1) Consist of a two-phase process that includes a statewide assessment and an on-site review; and

(2) Be conducted by a team of Federal and State reviewers that includes:

(i) Staff of the State child and family services agency, including the State

and local offices that represent the service areas that are the focus of any particular review;

(ii) Representatives selected by the State, in collaboration with the ACF Regional Office, from those with whom the State was required to consult in developing its CFSP, as described and required in 45 CFR part 1357.15(1);

(iii) Federal staff of HHS; and

(iv) Other individuals, as deemed appropriate and agreed upon by the State and ACF.

(b) *Statewide assessment.* The first phase of the full review will be a statewide assessment conducted by the internal and external State members of the review team. The statewide assessment must:

(1) Address each systemic factor under review, including the statewide information system; case review system; quality assurance system; staff training; service array; agency responsiveness to the community; and foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment and retention;

(2) Assess the outcome areas of safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families served by the State agency using data from AFCARS and NCANDS. For the initial review, ACF may approve another data source to substitute for AFCARS, and in all reviews, ACF may approve another data source to substitute for NCANDS. The State must also analyze and explain its performance in meeting the national standards for the statewide data indicators;

(3) Assess the characteristics of the State agency that have the most significant impact on the agency's capacity to deliver services to children and families that will lead to improved outcomes;

(4) Assess the strengths and areas of the State's child and family services programs that require further examination through an on-site review;

(5) Include a listing of all the persons external to the State agency who participated in the preparation of the statewide assessment pursuant to §§ 1355.33(a)(2)(ii) and (iv); and

(6) Be completed and submitted to ACF within 4 months of the date that ACF transmits the information for the statewide assessment to the State.