

TITLE IV—GRANTS TO STATES FOR AID AND SERVICES TO NEEDY FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AND FOR CHILD—WELFARE SERVICES^[1]

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^[1] Title IV of the Social Security Act is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Family Assistance administers benefit payments under Title IV, Parts A and C. The Administration for Public Services, Office of Human Development Services,

administers social services under Title IV, Parts B and E. The Office of Child Support Enforcement administers the child support program under Title IV, Part D.

Title IV appears in the United States Code as §§601–687, subchapter IV, chapter 7, Title 42.

Regulations of the Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to Title IV are contained in chapters II, III, and XIII, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations. Regulations of the Secretary of Labor relating to Title IV are contained in subtitle A, Title 29, and chapter 29, Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations.

See Vol. II, 31 U.S.C. 3720 and 3720A, with respect to collection of payments due to Federal agencies; 6504–6505, with respect to intergovernmental cooperation; 7501–7507, with respect to uniform audit requirements for State and local governments receiving Federal financial assistance.

See Vol. II, P.L. 82-183, §618, which prohibits denial of grants-in-aid under certain conditions.

See Vol. II, P.L. 88-352, §601, for prohibition against discrimination in federally assisted programs.

See Vol. II, P.L. 89-73, §213, with respect to eligibility for Federal surplus property.

See Vol. II, P.L. 89-97, §121(b), with respect to restrictions on payment to a State receiving payments under Title XIX.

See Vol. II, Appendix I, P.L. 94-241, §1, for §502(a)(1) of H.J. Res. 549, with respect to participation by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands on the same basis as Guam.

See Vol. II, P.L. 100-204, §724(d), with respect to furnishing information to the United States Commission on Improving the Effectiveness of the United Nations; and §725(b), with respect to the detailing of Government personnel.

See Vol. II, P.L. 100-235, §§5–8, with respect to responsibilities of each Federal agency for computer systems security and privacy.

See Vol. II, P.L. 100-690, §5301(a)(1)(C) and (d)(1)(B), with respect to benefits of drug traffickers and possessors.

See Vol. II, P.L. 101-508, §§13301 and 13302, with respect to the OASDI Trust Funds.

See Vol. II, P.L. 115–271, §8081, with respect to funding under Title IV and Medicaid for family-focused residential treatment programs for substance use disorder.

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Title 45: Public Welfare
[PART 1355—GENERAL](#)

§1355.25 Principles of child and family services.

The following principles, most often identified by practitioners and others as helping to assure effective services for children, youth, and families, should guide the States and Indian Tribes in developing, operating, and improving the continuum of child and family services.

(a) The safety and well-being of children and of all family members is paramount. When safety can be assured, strengthening and preserving families is seen as the best way to promote the healthy development of children. One important way to keep children safe is to stop violence in the family including violence against their mothers.

(b) Services are focused on the family as a whole; service providers work with families as partners in identifying and meeting individual and family needs; family strengths are identified, enhanced, respected, and mobilized to help families solve the problems which compromise their functioning and well-being.

(c) Services promote the healthy development of children and youth, promote permanency for all children and help prepare youth emancipating from the foster care system for self-sufficiency and independent living.

(d) Services may focus on prevention, protection, or other short or long-term interventions to meet the needs of the family and the best interests and need of the individual(s) who may be placed in out-of-home care.

(e) Services are timely, flexible, coordinated, and accessible to families and individuals, principally delivered in the home or the community, and are delivered in a manner that is respectful of and builds on the strengths of the community and cultural groups.

(f) Services are organized as a continuum, designed to achieve measurable outcomes, and are linked to a wide variety of supports and services which can be crucial to meeting families' and children's needs, for example, housing, substance abuse treatment, mental health, health, education, job training, child care, and informal support networks.

(g) Most child and family services are community-based, involve community organizations, parents and residents in their design and delivery, and are accountable to the community and the client's needs.

(h) Services are intensive enough and of sufficient duration to keep children safe and meet family needs. The actual level of intensity and length of time needed to ensure safety and assist the family may vary greatly between preventive (family support) and crisis intervention services (family preservation), based on the changing needs of children and families at various times in their lives. A family or an individual does not need to be in crisis in order to receive services.

[61 FR 58654, Nov. 18, 1996]

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Title 45: Public Welfare

[PART 1356—REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO TITLE IV-E](#)

§1356.21 Foster care maintenance payments program implementation requirements.

(a) *Statutory and regulatory requirements of the Federal foster care program.* To implement the foster care maintenance payments program provisions of the title IV-E plan and to be eligible to receive Federal financial participation (FFP) for foster care maintenance payments under this part, a title IV-E agency must meet the requirements of this section, 45 CFR 1356.22, 45 CFR 1356.30, and sections 472, 475(1), 475(4), 475(5), 475(6), and for a Tribal title IV-E agency section 479(B)(c)(1)(C)(ii)(II) of the Act.

(b) *Reasonable efforts.* The title IV-E agency must make reasonable efforts to maintain the family unit and prevent the unnecessary removal of a child from his/her home, as long as the child's safety is assured; to effect the safe reunification of the child and family (if temporary out-of-home placement is necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the child); and to make and finalize alternate permanency plans in a timely manner when reunification is not appropriate or possible. In order to satisfy the "reasonable efforts" requirements of section 471(a)(15) (as implemented through section 472(a)(2) of the Act), the title IV-E agency must meet the requirements of paragraphs (b) and (d) of this section. In determining reasonable efforts to be made with respect to a child and in making such reasonable efforts, the child's health and safety must be the paramount concern.

(1) *Judicial determination of reasonable efforts to prevent a child's removal from the home.* (i) When a child is removed from his/her home, the judicial determination as to whether reasonable efforts were made, or were not required to prevent the removal, in accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this section, must be made no later than 60 days from the date the child is removed from the home pursuant to paragraph (k)(1)(ii) of this section.

(ii) If the determination concerning reasonable efforts to prevent the removal is not made as specified in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section, the child is not eligible under the title IV-E foster care maintenance payments program for the duration of that stay in foster care.

(2) *Judicial determination of reasonable efforts to finalize a permanency plan.* (i) The title IV-E agency must obtain a judicial determination that it has made reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan that is in effect (whether the plan is reunification, adoption, legal guardianship, placement with a fit and willing relative, or placement in another planned permanent living arrangement) within twelve months of the date the child is considered to have entered foster care in accordance with the definition at §1355.20 of this part, and at least once every twelve months thereafter while the child is in foster care.

(ii) If such a judicial determination regarding reasonable efforts to finalize a permanency plan is not made in accordance with the schedule prescribed in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, the child becomes ineligible under title IV-E at the end of the month in which the judicial determination was required to have been made, and remains ineligible until such a determination is made.

(3) *Circumstances in which reasonable efforts are not required to prevent a child's removal from home or to reunify the child and family.* Reasonable efforts to prevent a child's removal from home or to reunify the child and family are not required if the title IV-E agency obtains a judicial determination that such efforts are not required because:

(i) A court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the parent has subjected the child to aggravated circumstances (as defined in State, or for a Tribal title IV-E agency, Tribal law, which definition may include but need not be limited to abandonment, torture, chronic abuse, and sexual abuse);

(ii) A court of competent jurisdiction has determined that the parent has been convicted of:

(A) Murder (which would have been an offense under section 1111(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child of the parent;

(B) Voluntary manslaughter (which would have been an offense under section 1112(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child of the parent;

(C) Aiding or abetting, attempting, conspiring, or soliciting to commit such a murder or such a voluntary manslaughter; or

(D) A felony assault that results in serious bodily injury to the child or another child of the parent; or,

(iii) The parental rights of the parent with respect to a sibling have been terminated involuntarily.

(4) *Concurrent planning.* Reasonable efforts to finalize an alternate permanency plan may be made concurrently with reasonable efforts to reunify the child and family.

(5) *Use of the Federal Parent Locator Service.* The State agency may seek the services of the Federal Parent Locator Service to search for absent parents at any point in order to facilitate a permanency plan.

(c) *Contrary to the welfare determination.* Under section 472(a)(2) of the Act, a child's removal from the home must have been the result of a judicial determination (unless the child was removed

pursuant to a voluntary placement agreement) to the effect that continuation of residence in the home would be contrary to the welfare, or that placement would be in the best interest, of the child. The contrary to the welfare determination must be made in the first court ruling that sanctions (even temporarily) the removal of a child from home. If the determination regarding contrary to the welfare is not made in the first court ruling pertaining to removal from the home, the child is not eligible for title IV-E foster care maintenance payments for the duration of that stay in foster care.

(d) *Documentation of judicial determinations.* The judicial determinations regarding contrary to the welfare, reasonable efforts to prevent removal, and reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan in effect, including judicial determinations that reasonable efforts are not required, must be explicitly documented and must be made on a case-by-case basis and so stated in the court order.

(1) If the reasonable efforts and contrary to the welfare judicial determinations are not included as required in the court orders identified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a transcript of the court proceedings is the only other documentation that will be accepted to verify that these required determinations have been made.

(2) Neither affidavits nor nunc pro tunc orders will be accepted as verification documentation in support of reasonable efforts and contrary to the welfare judicial determinations except for a Tribal title IV-E agency for the first 12 months that agency's title IV-E plan is in effect as provided for in section 479B(c)(1)(C)(ii)(I) of the Act.

(3) Court orders that reference State or Tribal law to substantiate judicial determinations are not acceptable, even if such law provides that a removal must be based on a judicial determination that remaining in the home would be contrary to the child's welfare or that removal can only be ordered after reasonable efforts have been made.

(e) *Trial home visits.* A trial home visit may not exceed six months in duration, unless a court orders a longer trial home visit. If a trial home visit extends beyond six months and has not been authorized by the court, or exceeds the time period the court has deemed appropriate, and the child is subsequently returned to foster care, that placement must then be considered a new placement and title IV-E eligibility must be newly established. Under these circumstances the judicial determinations regarding contrary to the welfare and reasonable efforts to prevent removal are required.

(f) *Case review system.* In order to satisfy the provisions of section 471(a)(16) of the Act regarding a case review system, each title IV-E agency's case review system must meet the requirements of sections 475(5) and 475(6) of the Act.

(g) *Case plan requirements.* In order to satisfy the case plan requirements of sections 471(a)(16), 475(1) and 475(5)(A) and (D) of the Act, the title IV-E agency must promulgate policy materials and instructions for use by staff to determine the appropriateness of and necessity for the foster care placement of the child. The case plan for each child must:

(1) Be a written document, which is a discrete part of the case record, in a format determined by the title IV-E agency, which is developed jointly with the parent(s) or guardian of the child in foster care; and

(2) Be developed within a reasonable period, to be established by the title IV-E agency, but in no event later than 60 days from the child's removal from the home pursuant to paragraph (k) of this section;

(3) Include a discussion of how the case plan is designed to achieve a safe placement for the child in the least restrictive (most family-like) setting available and in close proximity to the home of the parent(s) when the case plan goal is reunification and a discussion of how the placement is consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child. (FFP is not available when a court orders a placement with a specific foster care provider);

(4) Include a description of the services offered and provided to prevent removal of the child from the home and to reunify the family; and

(5) Document the steps to finalize a placement when the case plan goal is or becomes adoption or placement in another permanent home in accordance with sections 475(1)(E) and (5)(E) of the Act. When the case plan goal is adoption, at a minimum, such documentation shall include child-specific recruitment efforts such as the use of State, Tribal, regional, and national adoption exchanges including electronic exchange systems.

(This requirement has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under OMB Control Number 0980-0140. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.)

(h) *Application of the permanency hearing requirements.* (1) To meet the requirements of the permanency hearing, the title IV-E agency must, among other requirements, comply with section 475(5)(C) of the Act.

(2) In accordance with paragraph (b)(3) of this section, when a court determines that reasonable efforts to return the child home are not required, a permanency hearing must be held within 30 days of that determination, unless the requirements of the permanency hearing are fulfilled at the hearing in which the court determines that reasonable efforts to reunify the child and family are not required.

(3) If the title IV-E agency concludes, after considering reunification, adoption, legal guardianship, or permanent placement with a fit and willing relative, that the most appropriate permanency plan for a child is placement in another planned permanent living arrangement, the title IV-E agency must document to the court the compelling reason for the alternate plan. Examples of a compelling reason for establishing such a permanency plan may include:

(i) The case of an older teen who specifically requests that emancipation be established as his/her permanency plan;

(ii) The case of a parent and child who have a significant bond but the parent is unable to care for the child because of an emotional or physical disability and the child's foster parents have committed to raising him/her to the age of majority and to facilitate visitation with the disabled parent; or,

(iii) the Tribe has identified another planned permanent living arrangement for the child.

(4) When an administrative body, appointed or approved by the court, conducts the permanency hearing, the procedural safeguards set forth in the definition of *permanency hearing* must be so extended by the administrative body.

(i) *Application of the requirements for filing a petition to terminate parental rights at section 475(5)(E) of the Social Security Act.* (1) Subject to the exceptions in paragraph (i)(2) of this section,

the title IV-E agency must file a petition (or, if such a petition has been filed by another party, seek to be joined as a party to the petition) to terminate the parental rights of a parent(s):

(i) Whose child has been in foster care under the responsibility of the title IV-E agency for 15 of the most recent 22 months. The petition must be filed by the end of the child's fifteenth month in foster care. In calculating when to file a petition for termination of parental rights, the title IV-E agency:

(A) Must calculate the 15 out of the most recent 22 month period from the date the child is considered to have entered foster care as defined at section 475(5)(F) of the Act and §1355.20 of this part;

(B) Must use a cumulative method of calculation when a child experiences multiple exits from and entries into foster care during the 22 month period;

(C) Must not include trial home visits or runaway episodes in calculating 15 months in foster care; and,

(D) Need only apply section 475(5)(E) of the Act to a child once if the title IV-E agency does not file a petition because one of the exceptions at paragraph (i)(2) of this section applies;

(ii) Whose child has been determined by a court of competent jurisdiction to be an abandoned infant (as defined under State or for a Tribal title IV-E agency, Tribal law). The petition to terminate parental rights must be filed within 60 days of the judicial determination that the child is an abandoned infant; or,

(iii) Who has been convicted of one of the felonies listed at paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section. Under such circumstances, the petition to terminate parental rights must be filed within 60 days of a judicial determination that reasonable efforts to reunify the child and parent are not required.

(2) The title IV-E agency may elect not to file or join a petition to terminate the parental rights of a parent per paragraph (i)(1) of this section if:

(i) At the option of the title IV-E agency, the child is being cared for by a relative;

(ii) The title IV-E agency has documented in the case plan (which must be available for court review) a compelling reason for determining that filing such a petition would not be in the best interests of the individual child. Compelling reasons for not filing a petition to terminate parental rights include, but are not limited to:

(A) Adoption is not the appropriate permanency goal for the child; or,

(B) No grounds to file a petition to terminate parental rights exist; or,

(C) The child is an unaccompanied refugee minor as defined in 45 CFR 400.111; or

(D) There are international legal obligations or compelling foreign policy reasons that would preclude terminating parental rights; or

(iii) The title IV-E agency has not provided to the family, consistent with the time period in the case plan, services that the title IV-E agency deems necessary for the safe return of the child to the home, when reasonable efforts to reunify the family are required.

(3) When the title IV-E agency files or joins a petition to terminate parental rights in accordance with paragraph (i)(1) of this section, it must concurrently begin to identify, recruit, process, and approve a qualified adoptive family for the child.

(j) *Child of a minor parent in foster care.* Foster care maintenance payments made on behalf of a child placed in a foster family home or child care institution, who is the parent of a son or daughter in the same home or institution, must include amounts which are necessary to cover costs incurred on behalf of the child's son or daughter. Said costs must be limited to funds expended on items listed in the definition of *foster care maintenance payments* in §1355.20 of this part.

(k) *Removal from the home of a specified relative.* (1) For the purposes of meeting the requirements of section 472(a)(1) of the Act, a removal from the home must occur pursuant to:

(i) A voluntary placement agreement entered into by a parent or guardian which leads to a physical or constructive removal (i.e., a non-physical or paper removal of custody) of the child from the home; or

(ii) A judicial order for a physical or constructive removal of the child from a parent or specified relative.

(2) A removal has not occurred in situations where legal custody is removed from the parent or relative and the child remains with the same relative in that home under supervision by the title IV-E agency.

(3) A child is considered constructively removed on the date of the first judicial order removing custody, even temporarily, from the appropriate specified relative or the date that the voluntary placement agreement is signed by all relevant parties.

(l) *Living with a specified relative.* For purposes of meeting the requirements for living with a specified relative prior to removal from the home under section 472(a)(1) of the Act, all of the conditions under section 472(a)(3), and for Tribal title IV-E agencies section 479B(c)(1)(C)(ii)(II) of the Act, one of the two following situations must apply:

(1) The child was living with the parent or specified relative, and was AFDC eligible in that home in the month of the voluntary placement agreement or initiation of court proceedings; or

(2) The child had been living with the parent or specified relative within six months of the month of the voluntary placement agreement or the initiation of court proceedings, and the child would have been AFDC eligible in that month if s/he had still been living in that home.

(m) *Review of payments and licensing standards.* In meeting the requirements of section 471(a)(11) of the Act, the title IV-E agency must review at reasonable, specific, time-limited periods to be established by the agency:

(1) The amount of the payments made for foster care maintenance and adoption assistance to assure their continued appropriateness; and

(2) The licensing or approval standards for child care institutions and foster family homes.

(n) *Foster care goals.* The specific foster care goals required under section 471(a)(14) of the Act must be incorporated into State law or Tribal law by statute, code, resolution, Tribal proceedings or administrative regulation with the force of law.

(o) *Notice and right to be heard.* The title IV-E agency must provide the foster parent(s) of a child and any preadoptive parent or relative providing care for the child with timely notice of and the opportunity to be heard in any proceedings held with respect to the child during the time the child is in the care of such foster parent, preadoptive parent, or relative caregiver. Notice of and opportunity to be heard does not include the right to standing as a party to the case.

[65 FR 4088, Jan. 25, 2000, as amended at 66 FR 58677, Nov. 23, 2001; 77 FR 947, Jan. 6, 2012]