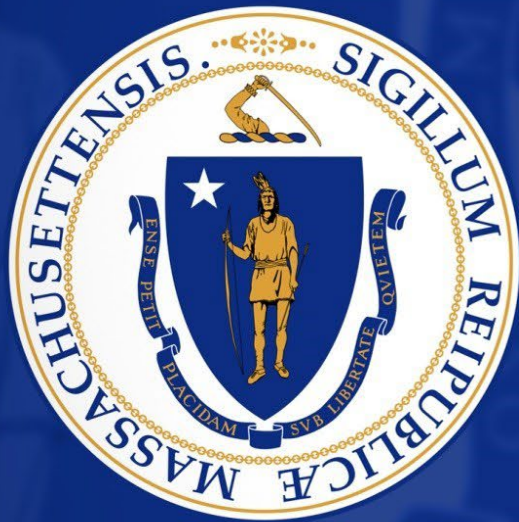




Massachusetts

Department of Children and Families

CFSR Technical Bulletin 14 Pilot PIP

Submitted: May 27, 2026

A Home for Every Child

Introduction: Massachusetts's Commitment to Technical Bulletin 14

Massachusetts began implementing its approved Round 4 CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP) on June 3, 2025. When Technical Bulletin 14 (TB14) was released, Massachusetts was well into its third quarter of implementation. The state remains dedicated to strengthening child safety, permanency, and well-being, and is using TB14 as an opportunity to enhance system-level enhancements by focusing its existing efforts more strategically within the broader aim of *A Home for Every Child* (AH4EC).

To achieve this, Massachusetts will build on current strategies to increase its home-to-child ratio. These approaches are centered on two main drivers:

1. **Prevention and Permanency** – safely reducing the number of children entering foster care and minimizing the time children spend in foster care.
2. **Foster Home Availability** – increasing the number of foster homes through targeted recruitment aligned with child needs, prioritizing kin placements, and improving foster home retention.

Through its Program Improvement Plan developed under Technical Bulletin 13A, Massachusetts has focused on strengthening child safety, permanency, and well-being through stabilization of intact families and children entering foster care, improving the case review system such that reviews and court hearings occur in a timely manner and support permanency, and enhancing child well-being through strengthened services and programs. Technical Bulletin 14 builds upon this foundation by organizing ongoing improvement efforts around measurable and lasting outcomes that affect the home-to-child ratio. The following sections detail the goals, strategies, and monitoring methods Massachusetts will use to advance these outcomes during the pilot period.

Technical Bulletin 14 Goals

Goal A: Children in Care

Massachusetts aims to reduce the number of children in foster care by preventing unnecessary entries, and supporting timely, safe exits from care.

Goal B: Family Type Placement and Capacity

Massachusetts aims to increase the availability of family-type placements by recruiting and retaining kin and non-kin homes, while improving placement stability through targeted supports.

Strategies and Initiatives to Impact Goals

The home-to-child ratio is shaped by entries and exits from foster care, as well as the availability of stable foster homes. The strategies listed below are designed to influence these factors by strengthening safety determinations, promoting alternatives to removal, maintaining family connections, improving placement stability, accelerating timely safe permanency, and enhancing foster home recruitment and retention.

Massachusetts intends to ensure that improvements in caseworker practice lead to measurable, durable, and meaningful outcomes and trends by aligning implementation support with clearly defined monitoring measures.

Strategy	Implementation/Ongoing Support	Monitoring/How We Will Know	Impact to Goal A?	Impact to Goal B:
S1. Embed assessment of danger, safety, and risk into daily practice to support prevention, placement, and permanency decisions.	1a. Utilize the updated <i>Protective Intake Policy</i> and structured decision-making tools (i.e., <i>MA DCF SDM Danger and Safety Assessment</i> and <i>embedded Plan for Child Safety</i>, <i>MA DCF SDM Risk Assessment</i>, and <i>MA DCF SDM Risk Reassessment</i>) to ensure consistent application of safety, danger, and risk assessments that inform decision-making regarding removals and continued child protective service involvement. 1b. Support family preservation and prevent removal by expanding access to Support and Stabilization Services (S&S) when safety concerns arise.	<u>Lead Measures</u> 1.1. Monthly entries into foster care (removals). 1.2. % of protective responses with a completed SDM Risk Assessment. 1.3. % of In-Home cases/families receiving Support and Stabilization Services when safety concerns arise.	☒	☐
S2. Increase placement with kin to improve placement stability and time to permanency.	2a. Reinforce practices that support kin-first or kin-first/second placement. These include: • Clear messaging about the importance of kin placements (first/second) and their positive impact on stability, permanency, and well-being. • Managerial approval requirement when placing children in non-kin settings. • Documentation of concerted efforts to place with kin and rationale when not moving forward with kin placement.	<u>Lead Measures</u> 2.1. % of children entering care whose initial placement was with kin (kin-first). 2.2. % of children entering care whose initial or second placement was with kin (kin-first/second). 2.3. % of open cases/families with an identified/open kin collateral.	☐	☒

Strategy	Implementation/Ongoing Support	Monitoring/How We Will Know	Impact to Goal A?	Impact to Goal B:
	2b. Early identification and engagement with kin and other natural supports.	2.4. Placement stability rate (moves per 1,000 days in foster care) for: • Children whose initial placement was with kin. • Children whose first or second placement was with kin.		
S3. Diligent Recruitment: Increase consistency and effectiveness of statewide efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents through centralized oversight.	3a. Utilize technical assistance provided by the National Center for Diligent Recruitment to implement the centralized supervision and management of recruiters and oversight of local and statewide recruitment plans aligned to child population and capacity needs.	<u>Lead Measures</u> 3.1. Home-to-Child Ratio • Home count • Bed count	☐	☒
S4. Strengthen stability and retention of foster homes.	4a. Ensure that Kinship Social Workers (KSW) and Foster Family Social Workers (FFSW) receive regular monthly supervision for each foster home on their caseload through ongoing supervision, managerial oversight, and management reports. The goal is to strengthen stability and retention of foster homes. 4b. Ensure that KSWs and FFSWs provide regular visits and engage with foster families and all placed children in their homes through ongoing supervision, managerial oversight, and management reports. The goal is to offer real-time problem-solving, support caregiving capacity, and minimize disruptions to placements.	<u>Lead Measures</u> 4.1. % of foster homes with documented monthly supervision. 4.2. % of foster homes with monthly in-person foster home contact.	☒	☐
S5. Monitor monthly ratios to track progress and inform course correction.	5a. Leverage the DCF Agency Priority Initiative's (API) AGILE SCRUM process to track performance, course-correct, and refine as needed. 5b. Utilize targeted case reviews to explore barriers to positive outcomes on Core, Chaser, and Lead measures as needed.	• DCF API leadership will monitor trends on all Core, Chaser, and Lead measures and if needed, utilize targeted case review findings to course-correct and refine as needed.	☒	☒

Technical Bulletin 14 Mandatory Core and Chaser Measures¹

Measure Type	Measure	Measure Definition	Denominator	Numerator
CORE	Home-to-Child Ratio	The ratio of the count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month (denominator) to the count of homes available to those children (numerator).	The count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month.	The count of all licensed homes with an active license on the last day of the month plus all unlicensed homes with a child placed in the home on the last day of the month.
CHASER	Maintaining Family Connections	Of all children in care on the last day of the month, the percentage of those children who were living with a relative or kin.	The count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month.	Of all children in the denominator, the count of those children who were living with a relative or kin on the last day of the month.
CHASER	Use of Congregate Care	Of all days children spent in foster care during the reporting month, the percentage of those days that were spent in congregate care.	Of all children who were in foster care for one or more days during the month, the sum of the total number of days spent in care, regardless of living arrangement.	Of all children in the denominator, the sum of the total days spent in congregate care across all of those children.
CHASER	Recent Maltreatment History	Of all children with a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition during the month, the percent who had a prior substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition within the prior 182 days.	The count of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition during the month.	Of all children in the denominator, the count of those who had a prior substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition within 182 days.
CHASER	Home Disruptions	Of all homes with a child placed in the home during the month, the percent of those homes with a disruption during the month.	The count of all homes with a child placed in the home for at least 1 day during the month.	Of all homes in the denominator, the count of homes that had a child move out of the home for a reason other than an exit or a trial home visit.

¹ Mandatory Core and Chaser measures per ACF's *Child and Family Services Reviews TB #14 Core Measure and Chaser Measures Analytic and Technical Instructions*: <https://www.cfsportal.acf.hhs.gov/document/download/ngzWXd>

Concluding Statement

Participation in the PIP Pilot described in Technical Bulletin 14 permits Massachusetts to integrate ongoing efforts into a unified framework focused on measurable positive outcomes. By organizing strategies around the main drivers of the home-to-child ratio and pairing these targeted implementation supports within the Department's Agency Priority Initiative framework, Massachusetts aims to achieve systemwide improvements in child safety, permanency, and well-being, while ensuring that every child has access to a safe and stable home.