



A HOME FOR
EVERY CHILD

ACF Webinar:
A Home for Every Child
Initiative and
Technical Bulletin (TB) #14

January 15, 2026
2:30 – 3:30PM EST

ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Welcome & Introductions



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Overview of TB 14



TB 14 provides states a new PIP option to better focus the Child Family Services Reviews (CFSR) process on meaningful outcomes instead of compliance driven activities.

- The current CFSR process is **high effort and administratively burdensome**
- Outcome improvement has been **limited and inconsistent across review cycles**
- All states have entered a PIP – **no state has ever had substantial compliance across all seven outcomes and all seven systemic factors**
- TB 14 shifts focus **more fully to outcomes, data and meaningful improvement**

ASPE OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES POLICY **BRIEF**
November 18, 2025

No States Have Ever Passed the Child and Family Services Reviews: Findings from an Analysis Over the Last 25 Years

Marissa Abbott, Jessica Rendon, and Jennifer Burnszynski

KEY POINTS

- In the past 25 years, zero states have passed the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process.
 - No state has ever “passed” (achieved substantial conformity on) all seven performance outcomes and all seven systemic factors.
 - As a result, all states have been on Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) following each of the first three rounds of the CFSR process.
 - Despite poor success in Round 1, the number of performance outcomes and systemic factors successfully achieved by states has continually declined even further each round.
 - Early results from the current round of reviews suggest that, most likely, no state will “pass” this round either.
- Although the process does not seem to be driving program improvement, it is costly and burdensome.
 - Estimates from the most recent round range from at least \$443,757 in costs to the federal government *per state* for state-led CFSRs to as much as \$620,678 in costs *per state* to the federal government for federally-led CFSRs.
 - These figures underestimate the true cost of this process, as they do not account for state costs – including those ultimately reimbursed by the federal government.
- Challenges with the CFSR process include that PIPs do not seem to improve these poor outcomes over time, as well as that there are substantial costs, administrative burdens, and financial penalties resulting from the process.
 - If the goal is sustainable performance improvement, then the CFSRs might not be effectively measuring state child welfare agency performance that is indicative of promoting child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSRs) are administered by the Children’s Bureau (CB) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with the aim of ensuring state conformity with federal child welfare requirements. This brief synthesizes experiences over the past 25 years of the CFSR, providing an overview of the process, analyzing collective state performance across rounds, and highlighting costs and challenges.

November 2025 BRIEF 1



A Home For Every Child



TB 14 advances the *A Home for Every Child* initiative by translating its priorities into how states plan, measure, and deliver improvement.



Improving Ratios

Strengthen the Numerator: More foster homes	Reduce the Denominator: Fewer children entering or remaining in foster care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Streamlined kinship licensure➤ Better identification of kin and fictive kin➤ Recruitment of new homes➤ Retention of existing families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evidence-based prevention of kids entering foster care➤ Faster permanency for those already in foster care➤ Stronger legal advocacy for youth or their parents➤ Strategic use of predictive analysis to supplement safety and risk assessment and decision-making

State Options and Pathways



Under TB 14, states can choose the pathway that best fits their readiness and priorities.

1

Traditional PIP Model

- Prescribed/responsive directly to CFSR findings on non-conformity
- Has failed to result in meaningful system change over the past 25 years
- Penalties apply if specific goals are not met
- Focuses on compliance and conformity
- Requires ongoing case review through implementation and post-PIP measurement period
- Requires compliance with TB 13A – and its broad array of specific measurement requirements

2

New PIP Pilot Program

- Clear goal of increasing the ratio of homes to child
- Focuses on areas of practice/policy/procedure that span the child welfare spectrum (prevention to permanency) affecting both the numerator (homes) and denominator (children)
- States select improvement metrics/measures that best fit their needs and report measures monthly
- Penalties only apply if a state fails to implement a PIP or submit required data – not tied to goals

PIP Pilot: Organizing Principle



Under TB 14, states participating in the PIP pilot will see several immediate benefits.



Benefits

- **Reduces Threat of Penalty:** States will not be penalized for failing to achieve prescribed measurement goals and are accountable for implementing clear, locally calibrated strategies that will improve practice and increase the ratio of foster homes to foster kids.
- **More Targeted Efforts:** Provides states flexibility to choose areas of practice and measurement across child welfare domains that ultimately deliver on the Home for Every Child ratio.
- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** Labor intensive case review is not required, and states are excused from the PIP development and measurement process outlined in Technical Bulletin 13A.

Principles for A Home for Every Child

Population: All foster families licensed in the state



Numerator

Denominator

Sample Lead Measures

The number of **licensed homes in a jurisdiction** at the end of the month.

The **number of children in custody, who require placement** at the end of the month

State-selected indicators that offer flexibility to choose and track specific priority practices and interventions, directly impacting numerator, denominator, and chaser outcomes.

- Foster Home ID
- License Type and Related Info (*including general foster care, relative, therapeutic and “approved” kin homes)
- Number of Beds
- Month-end placement status
- Foster Parent Demographic Data
- Jurisdiction/County

- Number of children less than 1 yr old in state custody end of month
- Number of children 1 to 5, 6 to 12, 13 to 17 in state custody end of month
- Number of children 18 + in state custody end of month
- Entries to foster care
- Exits to permanency

- Measures of licensed home recruitment and retention
- Percent of licensed homes with at least one placement
- Reports of critical incidents in licensed homes
- Percent of children in care at end of month who disrupted at least one time during that month
- Number of newly licensed kinship homes
- Subx Reports w/12 months of unsubstantiated referral
- Subx Reports w/12 months of screened out referral
- Subx Reports while a child is in an open prevention plan

**State specific negotiations will take into account the efforts states undertake or plan to undertake to assure appropriate placements. Additionally, state specific negotiations will take into account variation in how states collect and store relevant data.*

**Some of the measurements can be utilized from SWDI and AFCARS data collections*

What to Expect



States participating in the PIP pilot will report monthly ratio data to ACF, to allow for real-time comparisons across states and over time, strengthening accountability. States that opt in will immediately be released from the current PIP reporting and measurement requirements.



Reporting Data

- These data will supplement the Statewide Data Indicators (SWDI) and the Context data, which will continue to be produced bi-annually. Per TB 14- SWDI will be posted publicly on the CB website as part of the effort to promote transparency.
- The PIP pilot measurement requirements are an opportunity for ACF/CB to work with jurisdictions to test and develop mechanisms for timely and relevant data collection.
- Intended to counterbalance relieving burden and promoting meaning development of national data, this pilot is opportunity to work collaboratively - testing what is possible for future CFSR reform.
- The PIP pilot opportunity is **available immediately**. States are encouraged to participate and connect with **Federal CFSR and Regional Office leads** to participate in on-going education and technical assistance opportunities and to address questions to the **CFSR Team at CFSRTeam@acf.hhs.gov**.



What is the impact of this pilot on other parts of the CFSR process?

- The PIP Pilot applies **only** to states that have reached the **PIP Development phase**.
- **No changes** are made to earlier CFSR phases at this time.
- The pilot **does not yet excuse** or alter requirements prior to PIP Development.



Will this pilot impact penalties?

- Opting into the PIP **Pilot reduces the risk of federal penalties** for participating states.
- States **do not need to achieve specific measurement goals** to avoid penalties.
- Participating states must **implement their PIP** and adhere to **monthly reporting requirements**.



If a state chooses to participate in the pilot, but then does not meet the 1:1 ratio, what is the consequence?

- There is **no penalty for failure to achieve the 1:1 ratio.**
- The purpose is to **encourage continual improvement in practices**, which will result in **continual improvement to the ratio.**



Will the OSRI still exist as an instrument for self-review for states?

- The OSRI **will still be supported as instrument for jurisdictions that elect to use it** either as part of their on-going CQI or if they choose to for PIP measurement.
- Use of **the OSRI instrument is not required for PIP measurement** for those that opt into the PIP pilot.



How does a state that is currently implementing a PIP participate in the pilot?

- **All states will be given the opportunity to participate**, including those currently implementing PIPs.
- States currently implementing a PIP will renegotiate and will **agree to participate in the pilot for no less than a year.**
 - This ensures enough data to **identify trend lines and conduct meaningful analysis.**
- **The pilot is not a fit for all states**—Some states may assess their current performance and may elect not to pursue the pilot.



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Thank you!

*Questions? Please reach out directly to the
CFSR Team at CFSRTeam@acf.hhs.gov*

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