



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING



ISMAEL AHMED
DIRECTOR

August 18, 2008

The Honorable Bill Hardiman, Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan State Senate
Lansing, Michigan 48933

The Honorable Dudley Spade, Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan House of Representatives
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Senator Hardiman and Representative Spade:

Section 271(1) of 2007 Public Act No. 131 (Enrolled Senate Bill 232) requires the Department of Human Services to report on the progress of child and family services reviews. The reviews, conducted in the state by the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, are intended to assess the department's compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Public Law 105-89, 111 Stat. 2115, with the ultimate goal of improving the state child welfare system and the safety, permanency, and child and family service outcomes to children and families.

If you have any questions about the attached material, please contact Mary Mehren, director of the Policy and Program Division, at (517) 241-7521.

Sincerely,

Stanley M. Stewart for

Ismael Ahmed

Attachments

C: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Senate and House Standing Committees on Human Services
Senate and House Fiscal and Policy Offices
State Budget Office

Child and Family Services Review
Fiscal Year 2008, July 2008
Boilerplate Report – Sections 271-1 and 271-2

Sec. 271. (1) The department shall report to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house standing committees on human services, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget director on the progress of child and family services reviews (CFSR). The reviews, conducted in the state by the children’s bureau of the United States department of health and human services, are intended to assess the department’s compliance with the adoption and safe families act of 1997, Public Law 105-89, 111 Stat. 2115, with the ultimate goal of improving the state child welfare system and the safety, permanency, and child and family service outcomes to children and families. The report shall be submitted January 1 and July 1.

(2) The report required under subsection (1) shall include the findings and progress of all of the following:

(a) Changes made by the courts with respect to court forms and court rules to meet the statutory requirement.

The court has made no changes with respect to court forms and court rules since the prior report.

(b) Department policy changes within the areas of foster care, juvenile justice, and adoption to meet the statutory requirements.

The Children’s Protective Services (CPS) Manual of the Child and Family Services manual group added the requirement regarding DHS employees’ obligation to report suspected abuse and neglect.

The Adoption Services Manual of the Child and Family Services Manual group revisions include:

- A change in the time allowed for the return of required documentation for a Request for Medical Subsidy for an adopted child. A request will be denied if documentation is not received within ninety days of the receipt of the request.
- A requirement was added for fingerprinting of adoptive parent applicants.

The Children's Foster Care Manual (FC) of the Child and Family Services manual group revisions include:

- A requirement was added regarding DHS employees' obligation to report suspected abuse and neglect.
- Changes were made on the department's review and assessment of the title IV-E eligibility process and policies since the last title IV-E review in March 2007:
 - The term "Removal Household" was changed to "Removal Home".
 - The reasons for determining deprivation were corrected to:
 - Eliminate the concept of deprivation being "frozen" at permanent wardship.
 - Clarify that deprivation can change and the child remains eligible, but not reimbursable if no current deprivation factor is met.
 - Clarify for a child who was initially determined title IV-E eligible, once termination of parental rights (TPR) has occurred, from that point forward and throughout the child's foster care episode, the deprivation factor is met.
- Clarification was added that the loss of title IV-E eligibility due to a change in deprivation, financial need or placement does not deprive the child of future eligibility. Once eligibility factors are met, the child again becomes eligible for title IV-E funding.
- The section on specification in court order was deleted and replaced with the following:
 - Clarification that orders, which contain stipulations for dual or co-supervision by a court or another agency, do not meet federal requirements. Therefore, the youth is not eligible for title IV-E funding as long as that order remains in effect.
 - Deletion of the requirement that a transcript accompany an order. A transcript is only required if the case is audited or in a federal review and the transcript is the only documentation that would confirm eligibility.
 - Clarification that court orders that contain the reasonable efforts to prevent removal finding must meet minimally acceptable standard for abuse/neglect wards and the court order must contain:
 - The child's correct name, and
 - A checked box indicating the court has found that reasonable efforts were made to prevent the removal of the child from the home, based on the petition, DHS report, and/or testimony.

- Addition of a requirement for fingerprinting of foster home applicants and current foster home licensees.
- Discontinuation of the foster parent mentor fee that was previously available to experienced foster parents who recruited and entered into an agreement to mentor a new foster parent.

The Juvenile Justice Field Services Manual revisions include:

- Modification to the Class IV Offense Codes item to clarify that code 412 is to be used for all misdemeanor larceny offenses.
- Information was added about documentation requirements when facilities use federal grant money for educational purposes.
- New procedures were added for reporting a child/ward death.

(c) Recommendations made by a workgroup composed of department and other agency stakeholders.

Recommendations made by the CFSR workgroup were implemented. DHS is in the process of convening new workgroups in preparation for the fiscal year 2009 federal CFSR onsite review that will occur in Michigan. The final date for the on-site review is the week of September 21, 2009. Michigan is in the preparation stages for the statewide self assessment, a critical component in the CFSR.

(d) A summary of the 7 systemic factors that determine the state's compliance with the adoption and safe families' act of 1997, Public Law 105-89, 111 Stat. 2515.

The seven systemic factors that determine the state's compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 are:

1. *Statewide Information System* that allows the department to manage child and family cases and report on the performance outcome data.
2. *Case Review System*, which is the court review and authorization of child welfare cases.
3. *Quality Assurance System* that reviews case work and recommends improvements in child welfare.
4. *Staff Training* program that ensures child welfare staff and supervisors are prepared to do their job effectively.
5. *Service Array*, which provides for the breadth of services available to children and families in order to meet the needs they have.

6. *Agency Responsiveness to the Community*, which examines the capacity of DHS and the community to partner effectively with stakeholders in the communities where families live.
7. *Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment, Licensing and Retention* – strategies to ensure that there are an adequate number of foster and adoptive homes available to meet the needs of the children.

(e) A summary of the 7 data outcome indicators used to determine the state's compliance with the adoption and safe families act of 1997, Public Law 105-89, 111 Stat. 2115, including the length of time required to achieve family reunification for foster care cases.

The seven data outcome indicators used to determine the state's compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 are:

1. *Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect*
2. *Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate*
3. *Children have permanency and stability in their living situations*
4. *The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children*
5. *Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs*
6. *Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs*
7. *Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs*

The length of time required to achieve family reunification for foster care cases is measured as follows in the CFSR process: *Of children exiting foster care to reunification, what is the median number of months in foster care?*

Michigan's median length of stay was 13.6 months as of March 2008. The national median length of stay is 6.5 months.

(f) Federal recommendations made to the state, including recommendations to the courts.

There have been no new federal recommendations made to the state or courts since our last report to the Legislature in 2008. Prior federal recommendations were implemented as part of Michigan's 2004-2006 Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

(g) Federal penalties assessed against the state for noncompliance.

There has been no determination at this time of federal penalties that Michigan will be required to pay. Michigan is awaiting notification from the federal Department of Health and Human Services regarding the closure and results of the 2004-2006 Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

(h) Status of the performance improvement plan submitted to the federal government.

The Program Improvement Plan (PIP) was completed in May 2006. Michigan does not yet have results as to whether the federal Department of Health and Human Services considers Michigan's performance on the PIP to have met all applicable standards.