

**Child and Family Service Review**

# Performance Improvement Plan Operation Guide

# 10/12/2017

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# CFSR PIP Process Map

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# CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP) Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of the PIP process the department will use to successfully implement and sustain improvements in Tennessee’s systems and practice for the children and families the department serves. The CFSR PIP is implemented into three phases: 1.) Foundation, 2.) Planning, and 3.) Action. The plan will be developed using the data the Children’s Bureau submits to DCS by January 2018. DCS has 90 days to develop the PIP (April 2018).

<https://training.cfsrportal.org/resources/3105#Program%20Improvement%20Planning>[[1]](#footnote-1)

## Phase 1.) Foundation

The department will develop a Planning and Implementation Team and Communication Plan; assess CFSR outcomes and other relevant data; and prioritize areas needing improvement and concerns. The team will develop goals and objectives and identify and implement potential interventions/services/ Focus on improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. The Office of Continuous Quality Improvement will take the lead in developing the PIP team to ensure all staffing levels, program areas, and stakeholders are well represented.

***Step 1: Identify the Team and Develop a Communication Plan***

The purpose of Step 1 is to identify and/or establish the team; determine team roles and responsibilities; engage stakeholders, Tribes, and courts; and develop a communication plan. The team plays a critical role in the improvement process. The team will be engaged throughout the entire process and will provide guidance through each phase.

1. Planning and Implementation Team

Membership

The department will select individuals for team membership who are empowered to influence change and make decisions, or have access to those who can. In addition, the department will include individuals who have experience and skills in implementing systems change. Key roles will be established that need to be represented on the team. Members will be selected that would be key partners in implementing reform efforts.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s leadership will approve a written outline of the roles and responsibilities of the team. This will include:

1. What is the purpose of the team as defined by leadership?

2. What are the roles and responsibilities of the team as described by leadership?

3. How does the team fit into the structure of the agency and to whom does the team report?

4. What is the specific plan for reporting recommendations to agency leadership and reporting leadership communication to the team?

5. Are the decisions recorded to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities over time?

Decision-Making Process

An outline will be drafted to determine the team’s decision-making process to guide implementation. This includes:

1. How does the team plan to make decisions (by majority vote, consensus, or another method)?

2. What values and methods of work has the team decided to follow throughout the project

As the process moves from the foundation phase to the planning and implementation phases, new members representing different roles or functions may be needed, or the department may find the need to develop additional teams to support the implementation of individual interventions.

1. Engage Partners and Develop a Communication Plan

Internal partners include but are not limited to mid-level managers, supervisors, and caseworkers.

External partners include but are not limited to Tribes, courts, service providers, foster and adoptive parents, parents, youth, and families, or their representatives, and other entities that may be affected by the interventions.

Team members will be expected to participate throughout the CFSP and CFSR-PIP period. Therefore, to ensure full participation and support the following will be used in the selection process:

1. Who are the internal and external partners with whom the department will communicate information and solicit feedback?

2. What strategies will be used to enlist their support?

Communication Plan

Once the team is established a communication plan will be developed for communicating with internal and external partners during each step of the process. The communication plan identifies the ways that the larger group of internal and external partners will be engaged throughout the process. The communication plan addresses:

• An ongoing review of data and assessment of the department’s strengths and concerns;

• Selection of priority areas for the CFSP and CFSR-PIP;

• Identification of goals, objectives, target populations, and interventions;

• Identification and installation of implementation supports;

• Implementation of interventions; and

• Assessment of process and outcome data.

The communication plan will include bi-directional communication for providing relevant information to internal and external partners, then gathering and analyzing their feedback throughout the CFSP and CFSR-PIP implementation period.

The bi-directional communication will include methods for both receiving and providing information and ideas in an active, responsive, and receptive manner. In addition to determining communication processes, the plan will also include what types of information and what communication formats are most significant to and most useful for internal and external partners based upon their role. Internal and external partners will participate in a continuous feedback loop coordinated by the department. Feedback will include how to gather input from internal and external partners on their interpretations of the data, contextual factors, further analysis needed, and the department’s priorities for improvement efforts. The team will also include in the plan a method for tracking the information.

***Step 2: Assess Needs***

The purpose of Step 2 is for the team to use quantitative and qualitative data to get a precise picture of the department’s strengths, needs, and challenges, and to prioritize areas of concern that the department needs to target for system improvement.

1. Understand the Department’s Current Context

The team will use the following questions to determine the department’s current context:

1. What political and resource issues challenge the state’s efforts to develop and implement the CFSP and CFSR-PIP?

2. Do any consent decrees, settlements, or pending lawsuits need to be considered?

3. What state initiatives are already underway?

4. What issues of disproportionality should be considered?

5. What issues regarding the department’s implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act should be considered?

6. How will the child welfare waiver demonstration project integrate with the CFSP and CFSR-PIP?

7. What are the goals of discretionary grant projects active in the state that should be integrated with the CFSP and CFSR-PIP?

8. What current or recent training and technical assistance (T/TA) should be considered?

B. Identify the Department’s Data to Assess Performance

The team will identify qualitative and quantitative data that target specific performance concerns. This includes a range of data sources and relevant data from partners, stakeholder groups, and other organizations that assess performance or otherwise inform understanding.

The data will be prioritized to maintain focus on specific CFSP goals to be accomplished to strengthen the department’s overall child welfare system and required CFSR improvement areas.

1. Identify CFSR outcomes (statewide data indicators and case review data) and systemic factor data.

2. What other performance data in TFACTS should be considered?

3. What supplemental data are available regarding well-being; e.g., survey or focus group data, trauma screening and assessment tool data, functional assessment data, quarterly or semi-annual progress reports, and/or evaluation findings of the waiver demonstration project?

C. Review and Understand the Data

The team will identify strengths and potential limitations of each of the identified data sources to qualify its usefulness or credibility to assess the state’s strengths, needs, and challenges.

1. Are there data quality concerns that limit the use of the data or its credibility?

2. Does the age of data limit its usefulness?

3. Are certain populations or geographic areas excluded from the available data?

Issues/Strengths/Concerns

The team will conduct a thorough review of available data to identify issues and determine strengths and areas of concern.

1. In looking at the data, what big issues can be identified? What do the data suggest in terms of higher and lower areas of performance?

2. Which performance areas fall below the national or case review standards and require improvement?

3. What do the data reveal about safety concerns?

4. What do the data show in terms of trends over time?

5. How does performance vary by different factors? Some key factors that may need to be considered include allegation type, age of child, racial and ethnic background, permanency goal, geography, case type, and identified strengths and needs of parents and children.

6. When combining the data into an integrated view of the state, what does it suggest about contributing factors and potential explanations for child and family outcomes in areas of safety, permanency, and well-being?

The team will determine how to provide user-friendly data to internal and external partners. Next, the team will determine how best to present complex data using trend lines, graphs, charts, and comparisons.

1. What data are most relevant to the different internal and external partners?

2. How will the state organize, present, and discuss the data in a user-friendly way with internal and external partners?

Based on information gathered, the team will determine whether additional data analysis, collection, clarification, and research are needed.

D. Prioritize Needs or Areas of Concern

List the critical needs or areas of concern, then consider the following questions:

1. What do the data, analysis, and partner feedback suggest about priorities for improvement?

2. What do the data, analysis, and partner feedback suggest about linkages between the performance areas? What are the cross-cutting issues?

3. What are the strengths to build on?

4. What efforts are currently in place to address performance?

5. What priorities for improvement will produce the greatest effect on the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for the state’s children and families?

***Step 3: Establish CFSP and CFSR-PIP Goals***

The purpose of Step 3 is for the team to determine and clearly articulate the overarching goals of the CFSP and CFSR-PIP in terms of the changes the department plans to achieve by the end of the improvement period.

The goals will align with the department’s prioritized needs, respond to improvement efforts mandated by federal regulations, and reflect the input of key internal and external partners. The CFSP and CFSR-PIP will target outcomes at multiple levels including systems, families, and children.

During this step, a discussion will be initiated by the department to discuss the “big picture.” This discussion will determine what the department wants its child welfare system for children and families to “look like” at the end of the CFSP and CFSR-PIP period and which key outcome areas it wishes to target for measurable improvement. This process will include department leadership, the planning and implementation team, and key internal and external partners.

1. Draft Goals

The team will determine which broad goals will best address the priority needs and areas of concern identified in Step 2 with a focus on improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes.

1. What goal(s) are needed to address the safety outcomes?

2. What goals(s) are needed to address the permanency outcomes?

3. What goal(s) are needed to address the well-being outcomes?

4. What goal(s) are needed to strengthen systemic factors?

B. Review and Finalize Goals

1. Do the goals selected address all required improvement areas?

2. Are the goals measurable?

3. Are the goals being considered achievable within the CFSP and CFSR- PIP time periods?

4. Do the goals meaningfully target the identified improvement areas?

***Step 4: Understand Target Populations***

The purpose of Step 4 is for the team to understand the populations whose child safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes the department is attempting to improve through its initiatives, so appropriate interventions are selected to address the identified problems.

The team will apply quantitative data analysis methods to help better pinpoint needs, characteristics, and/or combinations of factors that are contributing to a specific problem.

Qualitative methods, such as using new or existing interviews, surveys, and focus groups with key staff and stakeholders, and/or case record reviews, will also be considered. These will help the team gain deeper knowledge of key issues, detecting patterns, and understanding what is going on in different jurisdictions around the state.

The team may find it useful to collaborate with Chapin-Hall and Vanderbilt University who have the knowledge and statistical analysis programs to do this work.

For each key target population, the child, case, and family characteristics and needs that are associated with the outcomes the department is trying to address will be identified, as well as any relevant systemic barriers.

1. What child characteristics and needs, e.g., age, behaviors, are relevant to the identified outcome area? How did the department determine which child characteristics and needs are relevant to the problem?

2. What case characteristics, e.g., foster care, in-home, are relevant to the identified outcome areas? How does the department determine which case characteristics are relevant to the problem?

3. What family characteristics and needs, e.g., incarcerated parent, substance abuse, are relevant to the identified outcome areas? How did the department determine which family characteristics and needs are relevant to the problem?

4. What systemic barriers are relevant to the identified outcome areas? This includes staffing barriers, e.g., recruitment, caseload size; organizational support/service barriers, e.g., lack of appropriate services; insufficient number of foster homes; or leadership barriers, e.g., lack of buy-in from local child welfare directors, conflicting state-court relationships. How did the department determine which systemic barriers are relevant to the problem?

It may be helpful to examine the population(s) that is not experiencing the identified problem, e.g., children who are reunified within 12 months; children who are not re-entering care, to understand how this population may be different from those experiencing the problem.

At the end of this process, the team will summarize the key child, case, and family characteristics and needs of their target populations as well as the relevant systemic issues that may be affecting their identified outcomes. The state uses this information to inform the intervention selection process.

***Step 5: Develop Objectives and Select Interventions***

The purpose of Step 5 is for the team to develop objectives and select appropriate interventions to meet the needs and challenges to achieve the goals. Step 5 also includes discussion of the work necessary to assess the fit of proposed interventions, adapt any intervention, and/or develop new interventions needed to meet the department’s goals.

1. Identify and Develop Objectives

Identify one to three objectives to achieve the goals. These objectives may affect more than one child and family outcome and/or systemic factors, and could include one or more interventions.

1. Identify and Examine Potential Interventions

Evidence-Supported Interventions: For each objective what evidence-supported intervention can be implemented to address the priority needs/areas of concern addressed in the identified goals and objectives?

Adapted Interventions: For each objective, what evidence-supported interventions can be adapted by the state to address the priority needs/areas of concern addressed in the identified goals and objectives?

New Interventions: When, after careful exploration, the department is unable to identify an evidence-supported intervention that can be implemented “as is” or adapted, what new intervention is being considered to address the priority needs/areas of concern addressed in the identified goals and objectives?

1. Examine Effectiveness of Potential Evidence-Supported Interventions

When considering evidence-supported interventions, consider:

1. How will the identified interventions address the needs of the target populations?

2. What are the specific short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes the state intends to improve through each intervention?

3. What is known about the effectiveness of the intervention the state is considering?

• Are there research and evaluation findings linking the intervention to improvements in the outcomes the department is intending to effect?

• If there are no (or insufficient) research and evaluation findings readily available, what additional evidence is the state using to inform its decision?

4. Has the intervention been shown to be effective and culturally appropriate for the specific target populations identified?

5. Would the intervention need to be further developed or adapted in order to be culturally responsive and successfully implemented within the state’s child welfare system

• If adaptation is necessary, what steps is the department taking to ensure that any program changes are evidence-informed?

• Will the department be working with child welfare experts experienced in the intervention during the adaptation process?

• What program adaptation activities are needed?

1. Assess Fit of the Intervention

Alignment and Capacity

For each intervention, the team will assess how well the proposed intervention is aligned with the department’s context and may want to refer back to the questions used to understand the context.

In assessing the fit of a proposed intervention, the department will need to consider the current capacity to implement the intervention. This should include a high-level review of the anticipated level of internal and external stakeholder buy-in, and the needed infrastructure requirements, such as human resources, training, coaching and mentoring, administrative systems, policies, and financial resources.

1. Developing New Interventions

If the department is choosing a new intervention, consider:

1. What would be the core components of the new intervention?

2. Who would receive the intervention?

3. How might the intervention address the needs of the relevant target population(s)?

4. Does the department have the resources and supports.

5. What would be the specific short, intermediate, and long-term outcomes the state intends to improve through the intervention?

6. What evidence and experts would the department use to inform the development of this intervention?

F. Finalize Intervention Selection and Articulate Theory of Change

For each identified intervention selected, the department will determine its theory of change for why the selected intervention is likely to achieve its intended outcome.

***Step 6: Assess Readiness to Implement Interventions***

The purpose of Step 6 is for the state to assess its readiness to implement the selected interventions before beginning implementation. It is also to identify the infrastructure development and technical assistance required. This will include:

* Assess senior leadership buy-in
* Assess regional leadership buy-in
* Assess internal and external partners buy-in

Cumulative Effect

The department will determine the timing, roll-out, and full implementation of all of the selected interventions that will be implemented during this same time period. The state considers whether:

1. The supports are adequate for all of the interventions throughout the time period; and

2. Any ripple effects related to the identified infrastructure, resources, or T/TA needs.

# Phase 2.) Planning

In this phase, the department puts needed support in place, designs monitoring and feedback loops, and plans implementation.

***Step 7: Create the Implementation Plan***

The purpose of Step 7 is to develop and document the implementation plan. This involves documenting the goals identified in Step 3, the target population(s) identified in Step 4, and the objectives, selected interventions, and core components identified in Step 5. Using the results of the readiness assessment completed in Step 6, the department will develop the implementation plan by documenting for each intervention the actions to be taken, including the actions needed to put the necessary supports in place; the time frames; and sequencing of key actions.

For each intervention, the plan will include both interim benchmarks and a timetable for achieving the objective over the implementation period. These benchmarks should contain sufficient detail to support reporting on progress the state is making in implementing improvements in subsequent years. Benchmarks may be stated in terms of implementation milestones, such as key activities completed and/or process measures and interim targets for improvement of outcome measures.

A. Infrastructure Support

In Step 6, infrastructure supports and resources needed were identified to successfully implement the interventions. These included leadership supports, human resources, administrative supports, automation systems, policies, and financial supports. Actions steps and time frames will be developed for accomplishing activities needed to put the necessary supports and resources in place.

B. Sequence Interventions

Given the infrastructure and resources needed for each intervention, the information will be used to design an implementation plan. The implementation plan sequences the interventions so the actions and resources needed for each intervention build on or support one another and are not overwhelming to field staff or others affected by the change.

C. Team Membership and Local Teams

Review the composition of the planning and implementation team given the interventions that have been selected, and consider:

1. Based on the interventions selected, does the team require additional or alternative members with focused expertise?

2. Based on sequencing decisions, should the department establish an additional implementation team at the local level to direct, manage, and monitor implementation of selected intervention?

When local implementation teams are established, consider:

1. Have the roles and responsibilities for the local team(s) been clearly defined?

2. What communication protocols need to be developed to create linkages across all teams, including linkages to the overarching team?

D. Scale

The department will implement in one or two regions before scaling up in order to effectively manage implementation.

Proposed Scale

1. Develop a proposed plan for staging the implementation of the interventions over the PIP and the 5-year CFSP period.

2. What factors were considered when identifying test regions?

3. Will the scale proposed be sufficient to meet the improvement goals in a timely manner?

Criteria for Expansion

1. Determine criterion for expansion.

2. Selection of additional regions/populations for the expansion, conduct readiness assessments at the local level.

3. Determine approach will to roll out interventions. Example: use a “train-the-trainer” model.

E. Managing and Monitoring Implementation Over Time

ongoing managing and monitoring over the implementation period. Consider:

1. Determine the critical times when extra supports may be needed.

2. Determine process to track and monitor the implementation over time.

3. Determine process to review the adequacy of the implementation plan over time?

***Step 8: Select Measures and Establish Methods for Monitoring***

The purpose of Step 8 is to establish methods for monitoring. This involves selecting process and fidelity measures; identifying the source of the data for all measures, including outcome measures; and developing feedback loops. The communication plan is updated to reflect the measures and the feedback loops that provide information on whether the interventions are operating as intended and are having the desired effect on outcomes.

A. Develop Process Measures

Process measures to collect data on key activities and processes of the intervention short-term and long-term.

1. What key implementation activities should be tracked to assess progress? (Refer to the implementation plan activities and time frames identified in Step 7.)

2. What aspects of the intervention and associated processes should be measured to assess progress with implementation? For example, consider indicators like the number of referrals to an identified intervention, number of families enrolled, and services provided.

3. What implementation supports identified in Step 7 might need to be monitored particularly in the initial stages of implementation, to ensure that the supports are functioning in the way intended?

4. What data sources will be used to capture the above information? How will the data be collected and at what intervals? Who will collect and analyze the information?

B. Develop Fidelity Measures and Assessment Processes

Determine how the department will know the intervention(s) is being implemented as intended.

1. What protocols or processes will be used to monitor fidelity to the core components of each of the interventions and who will collect and analyze this information?

C. Identify Outcome Measures

Identify data that can be collected to determine the extent to which the intervention is affecting the desired outcome. Development and adjustment of data collection efforts take time. Planning and testing for these changes should begin early.

D. Develop Feedback Loops

Establish feedback loops to report progress, successes, barriers and lessons learned. Feedback loops include those implementing the intervention, those supporting the intervention, and the consumers and partners participating in and/or affected by the intervention. The team may want to use statewide and local implementation teams that meet frequently during the initial implementation stage. These teams are able to problem-solve and provide a rapid response to barriers identified as the intervention first begins.

E. Update Communication Plan

Update the plan for communication identified in Step 1 based on the objectives and interventions selected.

# Phase 3.) Action

In this phase, the department, partners and stakeholders, including parents, youth, and families, begin to experience the changes, and the implementation team is continuously monitoring and improving the change effort.

***Step 9: Initial Implementation, Assessment of Progress, and Adjustment***

The purpose is to (1) move forward with implementation of the interventions; (2) use feedback loops and process measures to assess how well the implementation is going; and (3) make initial adjustments to address any identified challenges. Determine and put in

place plans and mechanisms to sustain the improvement efforts after the completion of the CFSR-PIP.

A. Begin Implementing Interventions

Referring to the implementation plan developed in Step 7, consider:

B. Begin Initial Fidelity Monitoring

Using the measures identified in Step 8.

C. Begin Collecting Data On Initial Processes And Outcomes

For each intervention, use the process measures established in Step 8.

D. Begin Implementing Feedback Loops

Using the feedback loops established in Step 8.

E. Make Initial Adjustments

Use the information from feedback loops, process measures, and fidelity monitoring to make adjustments. Consider statewide actions as well as region-specific actions. Consider actions that address strengthening implementation supports and fidelity.

***Step 10: Assess Improvement in Outcomes and Adjust Interventions***

The purpose of Step 10 is to determine whether the interventions are having the intended effect, and to make adjustments as necessary.

A. Assess Effect

To determine whether each intervention is having the intended effect and achieving outcomes, the state reviews information obtained from the feedback loops and outcome measures.

B. Make Adjustments

Based on the information identified above, determine whether adjustments are needed.

Address Implementation Concerns (if applicable)

1. What supports need to be put in place or strengthened to improve implementation?

2. How can fidelity to the model be strengthened? Are there barriers that need to be addressed to ensure that the intervention is being implemented as intended?

3. What adjustments can be made that will not alter the core components of the intervention and the associated likely outcomes?

Address Intervention Concerns (if applicable)

1. If implementation is proceeding with the proper supports in place and according to the practice guide (i.e., all core components are in place), why are outcomes not being achieved?

2. Do adjustments to core components need to be made? Refer to the theory of change and how the original intervention was supposed to improve the intended outcomes.

***Step 11: Scale Up and Sustain***

The purpose of Step 11 is to determine when an intervention is ready for expansion and to plan and implement this expansion with necessary supports in place.

A. Determine Whether Intervention Is Ready for Expansion

Analyze data and information on the initial implementation efforts to determine whether the intervention is ready for expansion based upon criteria for expansion in the Implementation Plan. Consider information received through feedbacks loops, and process, fidelity, and outcome measures (refer to Step 10).

Consider adjustments that were made in the initial region(s):

1. Has the initial implementation region(s) had sufficient time to assess whether adjustments are having the desired benefit?

2. What do data and information show about the adjustments?

B. Assess and Adjust Implementation Plan for Expansion

Adjust the expansion plan based on data and lessons learned:

1. What new supports have been identified or put in place based on the experience of initial site(s)?

2. Are those supports available for the next regions?

3. Are adjustments made to initial region(s) being incorporated into planning for the next sites?

C. Assess Supports and Implementation Activities to Prepare Next Regions

Review supports and readiness activities for the next region to determine whether the region is prepared to begin implementation activities.

1. Has a local implementation team been formed?

2. Have readiness activities taken place with staff, stakeholders, and community partners?

3. Have the successes and lessons learned from initial regions been communicated to next regions?

4. Are supports in place or planned for next regions?

D. Sustain Improvement

Determine and put in place plans and mechanisms to sustain the improvement efforts after the completion of the CFSR-PIP or achievement of the CFSP improvements.

1. Refer to CFSR PIP Guide for more details of each phase. From: CFSR Portal [↑](#footnote-ref-1)