

SUBCHAPTER G—THE ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES, FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS, ADOPTION ASSISTANCE, AND CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART 1355—GENERAL

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 620 *et seq.*, 42 U.S.C. 670 *et seq.*; 42 U.S.C. 1302.

§ 1355.10 Scope.

Unless otherwise specified, part 1355 applies to States and Indian Tribes and contains general requirements for Federal financial participation under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act.

[61 FR 58653, Nov. 18, 1996]

§ 1355.20 Definitions.

(a) Unless otherwise specified, the following terms as they appear in 45 CFR parts 1355, 1356 and 1357 of this title are defined as follows—

Act means the Social Security Act, as amended.

ACYF means the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Adoption means the method provided by State law, or for a Tribal title IV-E agency, Tribal law, which establishes the legal relationship of parent and child between persons who are not so related by birth, with the same mutual rights and obligations that exist between children and their birth parents. This relationship can only be termed “adoption” after the legal process is complete.

Child abuse and neglect means the definition contained in 42 U.S.C. 5106(g)(2).

Child care institution means a private child care institution, or a public child care institution which accommodates no more than twenty-five children, and is licensed by the licensing authority responsible for licensing or approval of institutions of this type as meeting the standards established for such licensing. The licensing authority must be a State authority in the State in which the child care institution is located, a Tribal authority with respect to a child care institution on or near an Indian Reservation, or a Tribal authority of a Tribal title IV-E agency with respect to a child care institution in the Tribal title IV-E agency’s service area. This

definition must not include detention facilities, forestry camps, training schools, or any other facility operated primarily for the detention of children who are determined to be delinquent.

Commissioner means the Commissioner on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Date a child is considered to have entered foster care means the earlier of: The date of the first judicial finding that the child has been subjected to child abuse or neglect; or, the date that is 60 calendar days after the date on which the child is removed from the home pursuant to §1356.21(k). A title IV-E agency may use a date earlier than that required in this definition, such as the date the child is physically removed from the home. This definition determines the date used in calculating all time period requirements for the periodic reviews, permanency hearings, and termination of parental rights provision in section 475(5) of the Act and for providing time-limited reunification services described at section 431(a)(7) of the Act. The definition has no relationship to establishing initial title IV-E eligibility.

Department means the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Detention facility in the context of the definition of child care institution in section 472(c)(2) of the Act means a physically restricting facility for the care of children who require secure custody pending court adjudication, court disposition, execution of a court order or after commitment.

Entity, as used in §1355.38, means any organization or agency (e.g., a private child placing agency) that is separate and independent of the title IV-E agency; performs title IV-E functions pursuant to a contract or subcontract with the title IV-E agency; and, receives title IV-E funds. A State or Tribal court is not an “entity” for the purposes of §1355.38 except if an administrative arm of the State or Tribal court carries out title IV-E administrative functions pursuant to a contract with the title IV-E agency.

Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from

their parents or guardians and for whom the title IV-E agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and preadoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the State, Tribal or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is Federal matching of any payments that are made.

Foster care maintenance payments are payments made on behalf of a child eligible for title IV-E foster care to cover the cost of (and the cost of providing) food, clothing, shelter, daily supervision, school supplies, a child’s personal incidentals, liability insurance with respect to a child, and reasonable travel for a child’s visitation with family, or other caretakers. Local travel associated with providing the items listed above is also an allowable expense. In the case of child care institutions, such term must include the reasonable costs of administration and operation of such institutions as are necessarily required to provide the items described in the preceding sentences. “Daily supervision” for which foster care maintenance payments may be made includes:

(1) *Foster family care*—licensed child care, when work responsibilities preclude foster parents from being at home when the child for whom they have care and responsibility in foster care is not in school, licensed child care when the foster parent is required to participate, without the child, in activities associated with parenting a child in foster care that are beyond the scope of ordinary parental duties, such as attendance at administrative or judicial reviews, case conferences, or foster parent training. Payments to cover these costs may be: included in the basic foster care maintenance payment; a separate payment to the foster parent, or a separate payment to the child care provider; and

(2) *Child care institutions*—routine day-to-day direction and arrangements to ensure the well-being and safety of the child.

Foster family home means, for the purpose of title IV–E eligibility, the home of an individual or family licensed or approved as meeting the standards established by the licensing or approval authority(ies), that provides 24-hour out-of-home care for children. The licensing authority must be a State authority in the State in which the foster family home is located, a Tribal authority with respect to a foster family home on or near an Indian Reservation, or a Tribal authority of a Tribal title IV–E agency with respect to a foster family home in the Tribal title IV–E agency's service area. The term may include group homes, agency-operated boarding homes or other facilities licensed or approved for the purpose of providing foster care by the State or Tribal agency responsible for approval or licensing of such facilities. Foster family homes that are approved must be held to the same standards as foster family homes that are licensed. Anything less than full licensure or approval is insufficient for meeting title IV–E eligibility requirements. Title IV–E agencies may, however, claim title IV–E reimbursement during the period of time between the date a prospective foster family home satisfies all requirements for licensure or approval and the date the actual license is issued, not to exceed 60 days.

Full review means the joint Federal and title IV–E agency review of all federally-assisted child and family services programs, including family preservation and support services, child protective services, foster care, adoption, and independent living services, for the purpose of determining the title IV–E agency's substantial conformity with the plan requirements of titles IV–B and IV–E as listed in §1355.34 of this part. A full review consists of two phases, the statewide assessment (or for a Tribal title IV–E agency, an assessment of the service area) and a subsequent on-site review, as described in §1355.33 of this part.

Legal guardianship means a judicially-created relationship between child and caretaker which is intended

to be permanent and self-sustaining as evidenced by the transfer to the caretaker of the following parental rights with respect to the child: protection, education, care and control of the person, custody of the person, and decision-making. The term *legal guardian* means the caretaker in such a relationship.

National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) means the voluntary national data collection and analysis system established by the Administration for Children and Families in response to a requirement in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Pub. L. 93–247), as amended.

Partial review means:

(1) For the purpose of the child and family services review, the joint Federal and State/Tribal review of one or more federally-assisted child and family services program(s), including family preservation and support services, child protective services, foster care, adoption, and independent living services. A partial review may consist of any of the components of the full review, as mutually agreed upon by the title IV–E agency and the Administration for Children and Families as being sufficient to determine substantial conformity of the reviewed components with the plan requirements of titles IV–B and IV–E as listed in §1355.34 of this part;

(2) For the purpose of title IV–B and title IV–E State plan compliance issues that are outside the prescribed child and family services review format, e.g., compliance with AFCARS requirements, a review of State laws, policies, regulations, or other information appropriate to the nature of the concern, to determine State compliance; or

(3) For the purpose of title IV–E plan compliance issues for a Tribal title IV–E agency which are outside of the prescribed child and family services review format, a review of Tribal laws, policies, regulations, or other information appropriate to the nature of the concern, to determine plan compliance.

Permanency hearing means:

(1) The hearing required by section 475(5)(C) of the Act to determine the permanency plan for a child in foster care. Within this context, the court

(including a Tribal court) or administrative body determines whether and, if applicable, when the child will be:

- (i) Returned to the parent;
- (ii) Placed for adoption, with the title IV-E agency filing a petition for termination of parental rights;
- (iii) Referred for legal guardianship;
- (iv) Placed permanently with a fit and willing relative; or
- (v) Placed in another planned permanent living arrangement, but only in cases where the title IV-E agency has documented to the State or Tribal court a compelling reason for determining that it would not be in the best interests of the child to follow one of the four specified options above.

(2) The permanency hearing must be held no later than 12 months after the date the child is considered to have entered foster care in accordance with the definition at § 1355.20 of this part or within 30 days of a judicial determination that reasonable efforts to reunify the child and family are not required. After the initial permanency hearing, subsequent permanency hearings must be held not less frequently than every 12 months during the continuation of foster care. The permanency hearing must be conducted by a family or juvenile court or another court of competent jurisdiction or by an administrative body appointed or approved by the court which is not a part of or under the supervision or direction of the title IV-E agency. Paper reviews, *ex parte* hearings, agreed orders, or other actions or hearings which are not open to the participation of the parents of the child, the child (if of appropriate age), and foster parents or preadoptive parents (if any) are not permanency hearings.

State means, for title IV-B, the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. For title IV-E the term “State” means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa.

State agency means the State agency administering or supervising the administration of the title IV-B and title

IV-E State plans and the title XX social services block grant program. An exception to this requirement is permitted by section 103(d) of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96-272). Section 103(d) provides that, if on December 1, 1974, the title IV-B program (in a State or local agency) and the social services program under section 402(a)(3) of the Act (the predecessor program to title XX) were administered by separate agencies, that separate administration of the programs could continue at State option.

Statewide assessment (or Tribal assessment) means the initial phase of a full review of all federally-assisted child and family services programs in the States (or for a Tribal title IV-E agency, in the service area), including family preservation and support services, child protective services, foster care, adoption, and independent living services as described in § 1355.33(b) of this part, for the purpose of determining substantial conformity with the plan requirements of titles IV-B and IV-E as listed in § 1355.34 of this part.

Title IV-E agency means the State or Tribal agency administering or supervising the administration of the title IV-B and title IV-E plans.

Tribal agency means, for the purpose of title IV-E, the agency of the Indian Tribe, Indian Tribal organization (as those terms are defined in section 479B(a) of the Act) or consortium of Indian Tribes that is administering or supervising the administration of the title IV-E and title IV-B, subpart 1 plan.

(b) Unless otherwise specified, the definitions contained in section 475 of the Act apply to all programs under titles IV-E and IV-B of the Act.

[48 FR 23114, May 23, 1983, as amended at 57 FR 30429, July 9, 1992; 58 FR 67924, Dec. 22, 1993; 61 FR 58653, Nov. 18, 1996; 65 FR 4076, Jan. 25, 2000; 66 FR 58675, Nov. 23, 2001; 77 FR 925, Jan. 6, 2012]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 88 FR 66708, Sept. 28, 2023, § 1355.20 was amended by revising the definition of “Foster family home” in paragraph (a), effective Nov. 27, 2023. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1355.20 Definitions.

(a) * * *

§ 1355.21

Foster family home means, for the purpose of title IV-E eligibility, the home of an individual or family licensed or approved as meeting the standards established by the licensing or approval authority(ies), that provides 24-hour out-of-home care for children. The licensing or approval authority must be a state authority in the state in which the foster family home is located, a tribal authority with respect to a foster family home on or near an Indian Reservation, or a tribal authority of a tribal title IV-E agency with respect to a foster family home in the tribal title IV-E agency's service area. Agencies may establish one set of foster family home licensing or approval standards for all relative or kinship foster family homes that are different from the set of standards used to license or approve all non-relative foster family homes. Anything less than full licensure or approval is insufficient for meeting title IV-E eligibility requirements. Title IV-E agencies may, however, claim title IV-E reimbursement during the period of time between the date a prospective foster family home satisfies all requirements for licensure or approval and the date the actual license is issued, not to exceed 60 days.

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§ 1355.21 Plan requirements for titles IV-E and IV-B.

(a) The plans for titles IV-E and IV-B must provide for safeguards on the use and disclosure of information which meet the requirements contained in section 471(a)(8) of the Act.

(b) The plans for titles IV-E and IV-B must provide for compliance with the Department's regulations applicable to the State and/or Tribe as listed in 45 CFR 1355.30.

(c) The State agency and the Indian Tribe must make available for public review and inspection the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and the Annual Progress and Services Reports. (See 45 CFR 1357.15 and 1357.16.) The title IV-E agency also must make available for public review and inspection the title IV-E Plan.

[48 FR 23114, May 23, 1983, as amended at 61 FR 58654, Nov. 18, 1996; 77 FR 926, Jan. 6, 2012]

§ 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

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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