

## § 1355.21

(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 Adop-

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tion 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; 88 FR 66708, Sept. 28, 2023]

## § 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]

**§ 1355.22 Designated Placement requirements under titles IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQI+ children.**

LGBTQI+ children (including children with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning, and intersex status or identity) shall be placed and receive services in accordance with the following requirements:

(a) *Protections generally applicable.* As part of meeting the requirement to provide a safe and appropriate placement for all children in foster care, the title IV-E/IV-B agency must ensure that all placements, including those for LGBTQI+ children, are free from harassment, mistreatment, or abuse.

(b) *Designated Placements and services for LGBTQI+ children.* The title IV-E/IV-B agency must meet the following requirements for each LGBTQI+ child in foster care:

(1) *Designated Placements.* The title IV-E/IV-B agency must ensure there is a Designated Placement available for all LGBTQI+ children in foster care who request or would benefit from such a placement. Nothing in this section requires any provider to become or serve as a Designated Placement. As used in this section, for a placement to be specifically designated for an LGBTQI+ child, the provider must meet the protections generally applicable as defined at paragraph (a) of this section and:

(i) Commit to establish an environment that supports the child's LGBTQI+ status or identity;

(ii) Be trained with the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide for the needs of the child related to the child's self-identified sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. The training must reflect evidence,

and research about the impacts of rejection, discrimination, and stigma on the safety and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ children, and provide information for providers about professional standards and recommended practices that promote the safety and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ children; and

(iii) Facilitate the child's access to age- or developmentally appropriate resources, services, and activities that support their health and well-being as described in paragraph (e) of this section.

(2) *Process for notification of and request for Designated Placements.* The IV-E/IV-B agency must implement a process by which an LGBTQI+ child may request a Designated Placement as described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section or request that their current placement be offered services to become a Designated Placement. The title IV-E/IV-B agency's process for considering such a request must provide the child with an opportunity to express their needs and concerns. The process must safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of the child, consistent with section 471(a)(8) of the Act and 45 CFR 205.50, and must include the following components:

(i) Notice of the availability of Designated Placements and the ability to request that services be offered to their current placement must be provided to, at minimum:

- (A) All children age 14 and over; and
- (B) Children under age 14 who:

(1) Have been removed from their home due, in whole or part, to familial conflict about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics; or

(2) Have disclosed their LGBTQI+ status or identity or whose LGBTQI+ status or identity is otherwise known to the agency;

(ii) The notice must be provided in an age- or developmentally appropriate manner, both verbally and in writing, and must inform the child of how they may request a Designated Placement or services for their current placement and the process the title IV-E/IV-B agency will use in responding to their request; and