

of this subchapter for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, without regard to whether implementing regulations have been promulgated, and with delay permitted if State legislation is required to meet additional requirements, see section 12(a), (b) of Pub. L. 109-288, set out as a note under section 621 of this title.

Amendment by Pub. L. 109-239 effective Oct. 1, 2006, and applicable to payments under this part and part E of this subchapter for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, without regard to whether implementing regulations have been promulgated, and with delay permitted if State legislation is required to meet additional requirements, see section 14 of Pub. L. 109-239, set out as a note under section 622 of this title.

Amendment by Pub. L. 109-171 effective as if enacted on Oct. 1, 2005, except as otherwise provided, see section 7701 of Pub. L. 109-171, set out as a note under section 603 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 107-133 effective Jan. 17, 2002, with delay permitted if State legislation is required, see section 301 of Pub. L. 107-133, set out as a note under section 629 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1997 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-89 effective Nov. 19, 1997, except as otherwise provided, with delay permitted if State legislation is required, see section 501 of Pub. L. 105-89, set out as a note under section 622 of this title.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Pub. L. 116-260, div. X, §7(a)-(c), Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 2413, 2414, provided that:

“(a) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—Of the additional amounts made available by reason of section 6 of this Act [section 6 of div. X of Pub. L. 116-260, set out as a note under section 629d of this title], the Secretary shall reserve \$10,000,000 for grants under subsection (b) of this section for fiscal year 2021, which shall be considered to be made under section 438 of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 629h].

“(b) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts reserved under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall—

“(A) reserve not more than \$500,000 for Tribal court improvement activities; and

“(B) from the amount remaining after the application of subparagraph (A), make a grant to each highest State court that is approved to receive a grant under section 438 of the Social Security Act for the purpose described in section 438(a)(3) of such Act, for fiscal year 2021.

“(2) AMOUNT.—The amount of the grant awarded to a highest State court under this subsection shall be the sum of—

“(A) \$85,000; and

“(B) the amount that bears the same ratio to the amount reserved under subsection (a) that remains after the application of paragraph (1)(A) and subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, as the number of individuals in the State in which the court is located who have not attained 21 years of age bears to the total number of such individuals in all States the highest courts of which were awarded a grant under this subsection (based on the most recent year for which data are available from the Bureau of the Census).

“(3) OTHER RULES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The grants awarded to the highest State courts under this subsection shall be in addition to any grants made to the courts under section 438 of the Social Security Act for any fiscal year.

“(B) NO ADDITIONAL APPLICATION.—The Secretary shall award grants to the highest State courts under this subsection without requiring the courts to submit an additional application.

“(C) REPORTS.—The Secretary may establish reporting criteria specific to the grants awarded under this subsection.

“(D) REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—If a highest State court does not accept a grant awarded under this subsection, or does not agree to comply with any reporting requirements imposed under subparagraph (C) or the use of funds requirements specified in subsection (c), the Secretary shall redistribute the grant funds that would have been awarded to that court under this subsection among the other highest State courts that are awarded grants under this subsection and agree to comply with the reporting and use of funds requirements.

“(E) NO MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The limitation on the use of funds specified in section 438(d) of such Act shall not apply to the grants awarded under this section.

“(c) USE OF FUNDS.—A highest State court awarded a grant under subsection (b) shall use the grant funds to address needs stemming from the COVID-19 public health emergency, which may include any of the following:

“(1) Technology investments to facilitate the transition to remote hearings for dependency courts when necessary as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“(2) Training for judges, attorneys, and case-workers on facilitating and participating in remote hearings that comply with due process and all applicable law, ensure child safety and well-being, and help inform judicial decision-making.

“(3) Programs to help families address aspects of the case plan to avoid delays in legal proceedings that would occur as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“(4) Other purposes to assist courts, court personnel, or related staff related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.”

[For definitions of “COVID-19 public health emergency” and “Secretary” as used in section 7(a)-(c) of div. X of Pub. L. 116-260, set out above, see section 2 of div. X of Pub. L. 116-260, set out as a note below.]

DEFINITIONS

Pub. L. 116-260, div. X, §2, Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 2409, provided that: “In this Act [div. X of Pub. L. 116-260, see Short Title of 2020 Amendment note set out under section 1305 of this title]:

“(1) COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—The term ‘COVID-19 public health emergency’ means the public health emergency declared by the Secretary pursuant to section 319 of the Public Health Service Act [42 U.S.C. 247d], entitled ‘Determination that a Public Health Emergency Exists Nationwide as the Result of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus’.

“(2) COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PERIOD.—The term ‘COVID-19 public health emergency period’ means the period beginning on April 1, 2020 and ending with September 30, 2021.

“(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.”

§ 629i. Grants for programs for mentoring children of prisoners

(a) Findings and purposes

(1) Findings

(A) In the period between 1991 and 1999, the number of children with a parent incarcerated in a Federal or State correctional facility increased by more than 100 percent, from approximately 900,000 to approximately 2,000,000. In 1999, 2.1 percent of all children in the United States had a parent in Federal or State prison.

(B) Prior to incarceration, 64 percent of female prisoners and 44 percent of male prisoners in State facilities lived with their children.

(C) Nearly 90 percent of the children of incarcerated fathers live with their mothers,

and 79 percent of the children of incarcerated mothers live with a grandparent or other relative.

(D) Parental arrest and confinement lead to stress, trauma, stigmatization, and separation problems for children. These problems are coupled with existing problems that include poverty, violence, parental substance abuse, high-crime environments, intrafamilial abuse, child abuse and neglect, multiple care givers, and/or prior separations. As a result, these children often exhibit a broad variety of behavioral, emotional, health, and educational problems that are often compounded by the pain of separation.

(E) Empirical research demonstrates that mentoring is a potent force for improving children's behavior across all risk behaviors affecting health. Quality, one-on-one relationships that provide young people with caring role models for future success have profound, life-changing potential. Done right, mentoring markedly advances youths' life prospects. A widely cited 1995 study by Public/Private Ventures measured the impact of one Big Brothers Big Sisters program and found significant effects in the lives of youth—cutting first-time drug use by almost half and first-time alcohol use by about a third, reducing school absenteeism by half, cutting assaultive behavior by a third, improving parental and peer relationships, giving youth greater confidence in their school work, and improving academic performance.

(2) Purposes

The purposes of this section are to authorize the Secretary—

(A) to make competitive grants to applicants in areas with substantial numbers of children of incarcerated parents, to support the establishment or expansion and operation of programs using a network of public and private community entities to provide mentoring services for children of prisoners; and

(B) to enter into on a competitive basis a cooperative agreement to conduct a service delivery demonstration project in accordance with the requirements of subsection (g).

(b) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Children of prisoners

The term “children of prisoners” means children one or both of whose parents are incarcerated in a Federal, State, or local correctional facility. The term is deemed to include children who are in an ongoing mentoring relationship in a program under this section at the time of their parents' release from prison, for purposes of continued participation in the program.

(2) Mentoring

The term “mentoring” means a structured, managed program in which children are appropriately matched with screened and trained adult volunteers for one-on-one relationships, involving meetings and activities on a regular

basis, intended to meet, in part, the child's need for involvement with a caring and supportive adult who provides a positive role model.

(3) Mentoring services

The term “mentoring services” means those services and activities that support a structured, managed program of mentoring, including the management by trained personnel of outreach to, and screening of, eligible children; outreach to, education and training of, and liaison with sponsoring local organizations; screening and training of adult volunteers; matching of children with suitable adult volunteer mentors; support and oversight of the mentoring relationship; and establishment of goals and evaluation of outcomes for mentored children.

(c) Program authorized

From the amounts appropriated under subsection (i) for a fiscal year that remain after applying subsection (i)(2), the Secretary shall make grants under this section for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2011 to State or local governments, tribal governments or tribal consortia, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations in areas that have significant numbers of children of prisoners and that submit applications meeting the requirements of this section, in amounts that do not exceed \$5,000,000 per grant.

(d) Application requirements

In order to be eligible for a grant under this section, the chief executive officer of the applicant must submit to the Secretary an application containing the following:

(1) Program design

A description of the proposed program, including—

(A) a list of local public and private organizations and entities that will participate in the mentoring network;

(B) the name, description, and qualifications of the entity that will coordinate and oversee the activities of the mentoring network;

(C) the number of mentor-child matches proposed to be established and maintained annually under the program;

(D) such information as the Secretary may require concerning the methods to be used to recruit, screen support, and oversee individuals participating as mentors, (which methods shall include criminal background checks on the individuals), and to evaluate outcomes for participating children, including information necessary to demonstrate compliance with requirements established by the Secretary for the program; and

(E) such other information as the Secretary may require.

(2) Community consultation; coordination with other programs

A demonstration that, in developing and implementing the program, the applicant will, to the extent feasible and appropriate—

(A) consult with public and private community entities, including religious organi-

zations, and including, as appropriate, Indian tribal organizations and urban Indian organizations, and with family members of potential clients;

(B) coordinate the programs and activities under the program with other Federal, State, and local programs serving children and youth; and

(C) consult with appropriate Federal, State, and local corrections, workforce development, and substance abuse and mental health agencies.

(3) Equal access for local service providers

An assurance that public and private entities and community organizations, including religious organizations and Indian organizations, will be eligible to participate on an equal basis.

(4) Records, reports, and audits

An agreement that the applicant will maintain such records, make such reports, and cooperate with such reviews or audits as the Secretary may find necessary for purposes of oversight of project activities and expenditures.

(5) Evaluation

An agreement that the applicant will cooperate fully with the Secretary's ongoing and final evaluation of the program under the plan, by means including providing the Secretary access to the program and program-related records and documents, staff, and grantees receiving funding under the plan.

(e) Federal share

(1) In general

A grant for a program under this section shall be available to pay a percentage share of the costs of the program up to—

(A) 75 percent for the first and second fiscal years for which the grant is awarded; and

(B) 50 percent for the third and each succeeding such fiscal years.

(2) Non-Federal share

The non-Federal share of the cost of projects under this section may be in cash or in kind. In determining the amount of the non-Federal share, the Secretary may attribute fair market value to goods, services, and facilities contributed from non-Federal sources.

(f) Considerations in awarding grants

In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall take into consideration—

(1) the qualifications and capacity of applicants and networks of organizations to effectively carry out a mentoring program under this section;

(2) the comparative severity of need for mentoring services in local areas, taking into consideration data on the numbers of children (and in particular of low-income children) with an incarcerated parents¹ (or parents) in the areas;

(3) evidence of consultation with existing youth and family service programs, as appropriate; and

(4) any other factors the Secretary may deem significant with respect to the need for or the potential success of carrying out a mentoring program under this section.

(g) Service delivery demonstration project

(1) Purpose; authority to enter into cooperative agreement

The Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with an eligible entity that meets the requirements of paragraph (2) for the purpose of requiring the entity to conduct a demonstration project consistent with this subsection under which the entity shall—

(A) identify children of prisoners in need of mentoring services who have not been matched with a mentor by an applicant awarded a grant under this section, with a priority for identifying children who—

(i) reside in an area not served by a recipient of a grant under this section;

(ii) reside in an area that has a substantial number of children of prisoners;

(iii) reside in a rural area; or

(iv) are Indians;

(B) provide the families of the children so identified with—

(i) a voucher for mentoring services that meets the requirements of paragraph (5); and

(ii) a list of the providers of mentoring services in the area in which the family resides that satisfy the requirements of paragraph (6); and

(C) monitor and oversee the delivery of mentoring services by providers that accept the vouchers.

(2) Eligible entity

(A) In general

Subject to subparagraph (B), an eligible entity under this subsection is an organization that the Secretary determines, on a competitive basis—

(i) has substantial experience—

(I) in working with organizations that provide mentoring services for children of prisoners; and

(II) in developing quality standards for the identification and assessment of mentoring programs for children of prisoners; and

(ii) submits an application that satisfies the requirements of paragraph (3).

(B) Limitation

An organization that provides mentoring services may not be an eligible entity for purposes of being awarded a cooperative agreement under this subsection.

(3) Application requirements

To be eligible to be awarded a cooperative agreement under this subsection, an entity shall submit to the Secretary an application that includes the following:

(A) Qualifications

Evidence that the entity—

(i) meets the experience requirements of paragraph (2)(A)(i); and

¹ So in original. Probably should be "parent".

(ii) is able to carry out—

(I) the purposes of this subsection identified in paragraph (1); and

(II) the requirements of the cooperative agreement specified in paragraph (4).

(B) Service delivery plan

(i) Distribution requirements

Subject to clause (iii), a description of the plan of the entity to ensure the distribution of not less than—

(I) 3,000 vouchers for mentoring services in the first year in which the cooperative agreement is in effect with that entity;

(II) 8,000 vouchers for mentoring services in the second year in which the agreement is in effect with that entity; and

(III) 13,000 vouchers for mentoring services in any subsequent year in which the agreement is in effect with that entity.

(ii) Satisfaction of priorities

A description of how the plan will ensure the delivery of mentoring services to children identified in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (1)(A).

(iii) Secretarial authority to modify distribution requirement

The Secretary may modify the number of vouchers specified in subclauses (I) through (III) of clause (i) to take into account the availability of appropriations and the need to ensure that the vouchers distributed by the entity are for amounts that are adequate to ensure the provision of mentoring services for a 12-month period.

(C) Collaboration and cooperation

A description of how the entity will ensure collaboration and cooperation with other interested parties, including courts and prisons, with respect to the delivery of mentoring services under the demonstration project.

(D) Other

Any other information that the Secretary may find necessary to demonstrate the capacity of the entity to satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

(4) Cooperative agreement requirements

A cooperative agreement awarded under this subsection shall require the eligible entity to do the following:

(A) Identify quality standards for providers

To work with the Secretary to identify the quality standards that a provider of mentoring services must meet in order to participate in the demonstration project and which, at a minimum, shall include criminal records checks for individuals who are prospective mentors and shall prohibit approving any individual to be a mentor if the criminal records check of the individual reveals a conviction which would prevent the

individual from being approved as a foster or adoptive parent under section 671(a)(20)(A) of this title.

(B) Identify eligible providers

To identify and compile a list of those providers of mentoring services in any of the 50 States or the District of Columbia that meet the quality standards identified pursuant to subparagraph (A).

(C) Identify eligible children

To identify children of prisoners who require mentoring services, consistent with the priorities specified in paragraph (1)(A).

(D) Monitor and oversee delivery of mentoring services

To satisfy specific requirements of the Secretary for monitoring and overseeing the delivery of mentoring services under the demonstration project, which shall include a requirement to ensure that providers of mentoring services under the project report data on the children served and the types of mentoring services provided.

(E) Records, reports, and audits

To maintain any records, make any reports, and cooperate with any reviews and audits that the Secretary determines are necessary to oversee the activities of the entity in carrying out the demonstration project under this subsection.

(F) Evaluations

To cooperate fully with any evaluations of the demonstration project, including collecting and monitoring data and providing the Secretary or the Secretary's designee with access to records and staff related to the conduct of the project.

(G) Limitation on administrative expenditures

To ensure that administrative expenditures incurred by the entity in conducting the demonstration project with respect to a fiscal year do not exceed the amount equal to 10 percent of the amount awarded to carry out the project for that year.

(5) Voucher requirements

A voucher for mentoring services provided to the family of a child identified in accordance with paragraph (1)(A) shall meet the following requirements:

(A) Total payment amount; 12-month service period

The voucher shall specify the total amount to be paid a provider of mentoring services for providing the child on whose behalf the voucher is issued with mentoring services for a 12-month period.

(B) Periodic payments as services provided

(i) In general

The voucher shall specify that it may be redeemed with the eligible entity by the provider accepting the voucher in return for agreeing to provide mentoring services for the child on whose behalf the voucher is issued.

(ii) Demonstration of the provision of services

A provider that redeems a voucher issued by the eligible entity shall receive periodic payments from the eligible entity during the 12-month period that the voucher is in effect upon demonstration of the provision of significant services and activities related to the provision of mentoring services to the child on whose behalf the voucher is issued.

(6) Provider requirements

In order to participate in the demonstration project, a provider of mentoring services shall—

(A) meet the quality standards identified by the eligible entity in accordance with paragraph (1);

(B) agree to accept a voucher meeting the requirements of paragraph (5) as payment for the provision of mentoring services to a child on whose behalf the voucher is issued;

(C) demonstrate that the provider has the capacity, and has or will have nonfederal resources, to continue supporting the provision of mentoring services to the child on whose behalf the voucher is issued, as appropriate, after the conclusion of the 12-month period during which the voucher is in effect; and

(D) if the provider is a recipient of a grant under this section, demonstrate that the provider has exhausted its capacity for providing mentoring services under the grant.

(7) 3-year period; option for renewal**(A) In general**

A cooperative agreement awarded under this subsection shall be effective for a 3-year period.

(B) Renewal

The cooperative agreement may be renewed for an additional period, not to exceed 2 years and subject to any conditions that the Secretary may specify that are not inconsistent with the requirements of this subsection or subsection (i)(2)(B), if the Secretary determines that the entity has satisfied the requirements of the agreement and evaluations of the service delivery demonstration project demonstrate that the voucher service delivery method is effective in providing mentoring services to children of prisoners.

(8) Independent evaluation and report**(A) In general**

The Secretary shall enter into a contract with an independent, private organization to evaluate and prepare a report on the first 2 fiscal years in which the demonstration project is conducted under this subsection.

(B) Deadline for report

Not later than 90 days after the end of the second fiscal year in which the demonstration project is conducted under this subsection, the Secretary shall submit the report required under subparagraph (A) to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House

of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate. The report shall include—

(i) the number of children as of the end of such second fiscal year who received vouchers for mentoring services; and

(ii) any conclusions regarding the use of vouchers for the delivery of mentoring services for children of prisoners.

(9) No effect on eligibility for other Federal assistance

A voucher provided to a family under the demonstration project conducted under this subsection shall be disregarded for purposes of determining the eligibility for, or the amount of, any other Federal or federally-supported assistance for the family.

(h) Independent evaluation; reports**(1) Independent evaluation**

The Secretary shall conduct by grant, contract, or cooperative agreement an independent evaluation of the programs authorized under this section, including the service delivery demonstration project authorized under subsection (g).

(2) Reports

Not later than 12 months after September 28, 2006, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Congress that includes the following:

(A) The characteristics of the mentoring programs funded under this section.

(B) The plan for implementation of the service delivery demonstration project authorized under subsection (g).

(C) A description of the outcome-based evaluation of the programs authorized under this section that the Secretary is conducting as of September 28, 2006, and how the evaluation has been expanded to include an evaluation of the demonstration project authorized under subsection (g).

(D) The date on which the Secretary shall submit a final report on the evaluation to the Congress.

(i) Authorization of appropriations; reservations of certain amounts**(1) Limitations on authorization of appropriations**

To carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

(2) Reservations**(A) Research, technical assistance, and evaluation**

The Secretary shall reserve 4 percent of the amount appropriated for each fiscal year under paragraph (1) for expenditure by the Secretary for research, technical assistance, and evaluation related to programs under this section.

(B) Service delivery demonstration project**(i) In general**

Subject to clause (ii), for purposes of awarding a cooperative agreement to conduct the service delivery demonstration

project authorized under subsection (g), the Secretary shall reserve not more than—

(I) \$5,000,000 of the amount appropriated under paragraph (1) for the first fiscal year in which funds are to be awarded for the agreement;

(II) \$10,000,000 of the amount appropriated under paragraph (1) for the second fiscal year in which funds are to be awarded for the agreement; and

(III) \$15,000,000 of the amount appropriated under paragraph (1) for the third fiscal year in which funds are to be awarded for the agreement.

(ii) Assurance of funding for general program grants

With respect to any fiscal year, no funds may be awarded for a cooperative agreement under subsection (g), unless at least \$25,000,000 of the amount appropriated under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year is used by the Secretary for making grants under this section for that fiscal year.

(Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title IV, §439, as added Pub. L. 107-133, title I, §121, Jan. 17, 2002, 115 Stat. 2419; amended Pub. L. 109-288, §8, Sept. 28, 2006, 120 Stat. 1249; Pub. L. 118-258, title I, §113(a), Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2963.)

AMENDMENT OF SECTION

Pub. L. 118-258, title I, §§113(a), 117, Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2963, 2969, provided that, effective Oct. 1, 2025, and applicable to payments under this part for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, with delay permitted if either State legislation or tribal action is required to meet additional requirements, section is amended to read as follows:

§ 629i. *State partnership planning and demonstration grants to support meaningful relationships between foster children and the incarcerated parents of the children*

(a) Authority

(1) In general

The Secretary may make demonstration grants to eligible State partnerships to develop, implement, and provide support for programs that enable and sustain meaningful relationships between covered foster children and the incarcerated parents of the children.

(2) Payment of annual installments

The Secretary shall pay each demonstration grant in 5 annual installments.

(3) 1-year planning grants

The Secretary may make a planning grant to a recipient of a demonstration grant, to be paid to the recipient 1 year before payment of the 1st annual installment of the demonstration grant and in an amount not greater than any installment of the demonstration grant, if—

(A) the recipient includes a request for a planning grant in the application under subsection (c); and

(B) the Secretary determines that a planning grant would assist the recipient and improve the effectiveness of the demonstration grant.

(b) Eligible State partnership defined

(1) In general

In this section, the term “eligible State partnership” means an agreement entered into by, at a minimum, the following:

(A) The State child welfare agency responsible for the administration of the State plans under this part.

(B) The State agency responsible for adult corrections.

(2) Additional partners

For purposes of this section, an eligible State partnership may include any entity with experience in serving incarcerated parents and their children.

(3) Partnerships entered into by Indian tribes or tribal consortia

Notwithstanding paragraph (1), if an Indian tribe or tribal consortium enters into a partnership pursuant to this section that does not consist solely of tribal child welfare agencies (or a consortium of the agencies), the partnership shall be considered an eligible State partnership for purposes of this section.

(c) Application requirements

An eligible State partnership seeking a demonstration grant under this section to carry out a program described in subsection (a)(1) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require. The application shall include the following:

(1) A summary of the program, including how the program will support a meaningful relationship between a covered foster child and an incarcerated parent of the child.

(2) A description of the activities to be carried out by the program, which must include all of the activities described in subsection (d) that are in the best interest of the covered foster child.

(3) A framework for identifying—

(A) each covered foster child eligible for services under the program, including, to the extent practicable, coordination of data between relevant State child welfare agencies and court systems; and

(B) the roles and responsibilities of the entities in the partnership.

(4) Documentation that the applicant is an eligible State partnership.

(5) Assurances that the applicant will participate fully in the evaluation described in subsection (f)(2) and shall maintain records for the program, including demographic information disaggregated by relevant characteristics with respect to covered foster children and incarcerated parents who participate in the program.

(d) Program activities

To the extent that the activities are in the best interest of the covered foster child, the activities referred to in subsection (c)(2) shall include the following:

(1) Revision of policies

Through consultation with incarcerated parents and their families, grantees shall promote organizational policies of participating child welfare entities and collaborating correctional facilities to

promote meaningful relationships through regular and developmentally appropriate communication and visitation between covered foster children and the incarcerated parents, including, when appropriate, the following:

(A) For child welfare entities—

(i) inclusion of parents in case planning and decision making for children;

(ii) regular sharing of information and responses to requests for information between caseworkers and incarcerated parents with respect to the case information of a child, any changes to a case, permanency plans, requirements to maintain parental rights, and any efforts to terminate parental rights;

(iii) appropriate opportunities for incarcerated parents to demonstrate their relationship with a covered foster child given their incarceration, including training and courses required for a service plan; and

(iv) the enhanced visitation described in paragraph (2).

(B) For correctional facilities, fostering visitation and communication that is developmentally appropriate in terms of—

(i) the nature of communication and visitation, including—

(I) the ability to physically touch parents;

(II) engaging with parents in locations that are appropriate for the age and development of the child;

(III) exchanging items that are appropriate to the age and development of the child, include expectations that are appropriate for the age and development of the child related to behavior, attire, and wait times; and

(IV) allowing appropriate adults to bring children if legal guardians are not available to promote regular contact;

(ii) reasonable inclusion of all children of the parent;

(iii) communication and visitation at times when the children are available;

(iv) security procedures to comfort children and be minimally invasive; and

(v) promoting parent-child relationships regardless of the sentence imposed on the parent.

(2) Enhanced visitation

(A) Grantees shall facilitate weekly communication and, for at least 9 days each year, in-person visitation between a covered foster child and any incarcerated parent of the child.

(B) Electronic visitation (such as live video visits, phone calls, and recorded books) may be used but shall not be the sole method to promote a meaningful relationship for purposes of the grant.

(C) Enhanced visitation programs shall—

(i) integrate best practices for visitation programs with incarcerated parents and their children;

(ii) adopt developmentally appropriate visitation policies and procedures such as those described in paragraph (1)(B);

(iii) reduce or eliminate the cost of developmentally appropriate communication and visitation for the covered foster child, which may

include the purchase of communication technology, covering transportation, insurance, and lodging costs, costs related to providing appropriate visitation spaces and activities, and other relevant costs;

(iv) to the extent practicable, integrate appropriate parenting education to help prepare and process visits; and

(v) avoid restricting visitation and communication as a punishment for the incarcerated parents.

(3) Training

Grantees shall incorporate ongoing training for child welfare workers, correctional facility staff, and other program providers to understand the importance of promoting meaningful relationships between children and incarcerated parents.

(4) Case management

Grantees shall provide case management services for the incarcerated parents of a covered foster child to promote the relationship, access to services, and coordination with the caseworkers of the covered foster child to strengthen the relationship.

(5) Legal assistance

Grantees shall facilitate access to necessary legal services and may use grant funds for services that are not reimbursable under other Federal programs.

(e) Federal share

The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant made under this section shall be not greater than 75 percent.

(f) Technical assistance, evaluations, and reports

(1) Technical assistance

The Secretary shall provide technical assistance with respect to grants under this section, including by—

(A) assisting grantees in understanding best practices in promoting meaningful relationships between incarcerated parents and their children as well as consulting with appropriate stakeholders when developing their programs;

(B) assisting grantees with establishing and analyzing implementation and performance indicators; and

(C) conducting an annual technical assistance and training meeting and an annual grantee meeting so that grantees can learn from the experiences of other grantees.

(2) Evaluations

The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of program outcomes, including with respect to parent and child well-being, parent-child interactions, parental involvement, awareness of child development and parenting practices, placement stability, and termination of parental rights with respect to covered foster children and incarcerated parents, to measure program effectiveness, as determined by the Secretary, and identify opportunities for improved program practices and implementation.

(3) Reports to the Congress

(A) Initial report

Not later than 3 years after January 4, 2025, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on

Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report that includes—

- (i) *the number of applications for grants under this section;*
- (ii) *the number of grants awarded, and the amounts for each grant; and*
- (iii) *information on the grants, including—*
 - (I) *interim results of the evaluation described in paragraph (2);*
 - (II) *disaggregated data on covered foster children and incarcerated parents;*
 - (III) *information on the composition of eligible State partnerships;*
 - (IV) *best practices for facilitating meaningful relationships between covered foster children and incarcerated parents; and*
 - (V) *barriers to implementation or expansion of programs funded under this section.*

(B) Final report

Not later than 6 years after January 4, 2025, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a report that includes—

- (i) *the final results of the evaluation described in paragraph (2); and*
- (ii) *recommendations for refinements to grant requirements to improve program outcomes.*

(g) Authority of Secretary with respect to Indian tribes and tribal organizations

(1) Waiver or modification of requirements

In making a grant to an Indian tribe or tribal organization under this section, the Secretary may waive the matching requirement of subsection (e) or modify an application requirement imposed by or under subsection (c) if the Secretary determines that the waiver or modification is appropriate to the needs, culture, and circumstances of the Indian tribe or tribal organization.

(2) Evaluation

The Secretary shall use tribally relevant data in carrying out the evaluation under subsection (f)(2) with respect to an Indian tribe or tribal organization.

(h) Limitations on authorization of appropriations

There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more than \$35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2029 to carry out this section.

(i) Definition of covered foster child

In this section, the term “covered foster child” means a child that—

- (1) *is in foster care; and*
- (2) *has at least 1 parent incarcerated in a Federal, State, or local correctional facility.*

See 2025 Amendment note below.

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

September 28, 2006, referred to in subsec. (h)(2), was in the original “the date of enactment of this subsection” and “that date of enactment”, which were translated as meaning the date of enactment of Pub. L. 109-288, which amended subsec. (h) of this section generally, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 439 of act Aug. 14, 1935, was classified to section 639 of this title prior to repeal by Pub. L. 100-485.

AMENDMENTS

2025—Pub. L. 118-258 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section related to grants for programs for mentoring children of prisoners.

2006—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(A)(i), substituted “purposes” for “purpose” in heading.

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(A)(ii)–(iv), substituted “Purposes” for “Purpose” in heading, substituted “The purposes of this section are to authorize the Secretary—” for “The purpose of this section is to authorize the Secretary”, designated the remaining provisions as subpar. (A), and added subpar. (B).

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(B), substituted “(i)” for “(h)” and “(i)(2)” for “(h)(2)”.

Pub. L. 109-288, §8(a)(1), substituted “2007 through 2011” for “2002 through 2006”.

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(1)(B), added subsec. (g). Former subsec. (g) redesignated (h).

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(C), amended heading and text of subsec. (h) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of the programs conducted pursuant to this section, and submit to the Congress not later than April 15, 2005, a report on the findings of the evaluation.”

Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(1)(A), redesignated subsec. (g) as (h). Former subsec. (h) redesignated (i).

Subsec. (h)(1). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(a)(2)(A), added par. (1) and struck out heading and text of former par. (1). Text read as follows: “There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$67,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2002 and 2003, and such sums as may be necessary for each succeeding fiscal year.”

Subsec. (h)(2). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(a)(2)(B), substituted “4 percent” for “2.5 percent”.

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(D)(i), substituted “reservations” for “reservation” in heading.

Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(1)(A), redesignated subsec. (h) as (i).

Subsec. (i)(2). Pub. L. 109-288, §8(b)(2)(D)(ii), substituted “Reservations” for “Reservation” in heading, designated existing provisions as subpar. (A), inserted heading, and added subpar. (B).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2025 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 118-258 effective Oct. 1, 2025, and applicable to payments under this part for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, with delay permitted if either State legislation or tribal action is required to meet additional requirements, see section 117 of Pub. L. 118-258, set out as a note under section 622 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2006 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 109-288 effective Oct. 1, 2006, and applicable to payments under this part and part E of this subchapter for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, without regard to whether implementing regulations have been promulgated, and with delay permitted if State legislation is required to meet additional requirements, see section 12(a), (b) of Pub. L. 109-288, set out as a note under section 621 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 17, 2002, with delay permitted if State legislation is required, see section 301 of Pub. L. 107-133, set out as an Effective Date of 2002 Amendment note under section 629 of this title.

§ 629k. Reduction of administrative burden**(a) In general**

The Secretary shall reduce the burden of administering this part imposed on the recipients of funds under this part, by—

(1) reviewing and revising administrative data collection instruments and forms to eliminate duplication and streamline reporting requirements for the recipients while collecting all data required under this part;

(2) in coordination with activities required under the Paperwork Reduction Act, conducting an analysis of the total number of hours reported by the recipients to comply with paperwork requirements and exploring, in consultation with the recipients, how to reduce the number of hours required for the compliance by at least 15 percent;

(3) collecting input from the recipients with respect to fiscal and oversight requirements and making changes to ensure consistency with standards and guidelines for other Federal formula grant programs based on the input; and

(4) respecting the sovereignty of Indian tribes when complying with this subsection.

(b) Limitation on applicability

Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to any reporting or data collection otherwise required by law that would affect the ability of the Secretary to monitor and ensure compliance with State plans approved under this part or ensure that funds are expended consistent with this part.

(Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title IV, § 441, as added Pub. L. 118–258, title I, § 106(f)(1), Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2952.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Paperwork Reduction Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), probably means chapter 35 (§ 3501 et seq.) of Title 44, Public Printing and Documents. See Short Title note set out under section 3501 of Title 44.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 2025, and applicable to payments under this part for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, with delay permitted if either State legislation or tribal action is required to meet additional requirements, see section 117 of Pub. L. 118–258, set out as an Effective Date of 2025 Amendment note under section 622 of this title.

IMPLEMENTATION

Pub. L. 118–258, title I, § 106(f)(2), Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2953, provided that: “Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 4, 2025], the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

“(A) comply with section 441 of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 629k], as added by the amendment made by paragraph (1); and

“(B) notify each recipient of funds under part B of title IV of the Social Security Act [42 U.S.C. 620 et seq.] of any change made by the Secretary pursuant to such section affecting the recipient.”

§ 629l. Public access to State plans

The Secretary shall—

(1) create a standardized format for State plans required under sections 622 and 629b of this title used to monitor compliance with those sections;

(2) produce comparisons and analyses of trends in State plans to inform future technical assistance and policy development;

(3) make the State plans available on a public website; and

(4) include on the website aggregated national summaries of State submissions as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title IV, § 442, as added Pub. L. 118–258, title I, § 106(f)(1), Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2953.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 2025, and applicable to payments under this part for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, with delay permitted if either State legislation or tribal action is required to meet additional requirements, see section 117 of Pub. L. 118–258, set out as an Effective Date of 2025 Amendment note under section 622 of this title.

SUBPART 3—COMMON PROVISIONS

§ 629m. Data exchange standards for improved interoperability**(a) Designation**

The Secretary shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget and considering State government perspectives, by rule, designate data exchange standards to govern, under this part and part E—

(1) necessary categories of information that State agencies operating programs under State plans approved under this part are required under applicable Federal law to electronically exchange with another State agency; and

(2) Federal reporting and data exchange required under applicable Federal law.

(b) Requirements

The data exchange standards required by paragraph (1) shall, to the extent practicable—

(1) incorporate a widely accepted, non-proprietary, searchable, computer-readable format, such as the Extensible Markup Language;

(2) contain interoperable standards developed and maintained by intergovernmental partnerships, such as the National Information Exchange Model;

(3) incorporate interoperable standards developed and maintained by Federal entities with authority over contracting and financial assistance;

(4) be consistent with and implement applicable accounting principles;

(5) be implemented in a manner that is cost-effective and improves program efficiency and effectiveness; and

(6) be capable of being continually upgraded as necessary.