



# NEVADA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN 2025-2029



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ADMINISTRATOR - DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

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## INTRODUCTION - CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN

The Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) is a five-year plan that outlines the goals and objectives that the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), will carry out in administering programs and services to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families. It provides DCFS with the opportunity to implement a system of coordinated, integrated, culturally relevant, and family-focused services in keeping with the service principles reflected in 45 CFR 1355.25.

A primary purpose of the plan is to facilitate DCFS's integration of the federally funded programs that serve children and families along the child welfare continuum. The programs listed below are coordinated by the submission of the 2025-2029 CFSP.

- The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program (title IV-B, subpart 1)
- Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program (PSSF, Title IV-B Subpart 2)
- Monthly Caseworker Visits Funds
- Chafee Program and Training Voucher Program (ETV)
- Adoption Incentive Funds
- The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) as it relates to the activities funded by CAPTA in supporting achievement of the goals and objectives of the CFSP

The plan includes an overview of DCFS's organizational structure and a description of how that structure interacts with the children and families along the entire child welfare continuum. It describes the various services that DCFS provides under each of the federally funded programs, and perhaps most importantly, it outlines the goals, objectives, and measures of progress Nevada plans to work on over the next five years. Copies of DCFS's organizational charts are attached to this plan.

The strategic planning process for the state's five-year plan began in the middle of 2023, after the submission of the 2024 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR). The Division met internally to discuss current performance in program areas relevant to a child's safety, permanency, and well-being. The state reviewed relevant data, and assessed existing statewide groups where collaboration and further planning could occur. Over the past year, DCFS utilized these existing groups to facilitate conversations around vision and goals. Participants in these existing statewide groups included not only representatives from the child welfare agencies and the DCFS Family Programs Office (FPO), but also people with lived experience, young leaders, other program areas in the state, other divisions in the state, data experts, service providers, community partners, system partners, agency leadership, the Court Improvement Program (CIP), as well as judicial and legal partners.

The state also began receiving technical assistance from the Children’s Bureau (CB) in the second half of 2023. Nevada began meeting twice monthly with the CB and began preparations for the Round 4 of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). Many members of the state’s Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) were on these calls that focused on analyzing Nevada’s past and current performance on individual systemic factors. These conversations informed the development of this plan as well.

Beginning in December of 2023, DCFS facilitated several focused meetings with both leadership and continuous quality improvement (CQI) staff representing all the child welfare agencies, as well as the liaison for Court Improvement Program (CIP), and the DCFS Tribal Liaison. The Division also facilitated a four-day onsite meeting in partnership with the Children’s Bureau that focused on both the upcoming Title IV-E eligibility review, and the CFSR Round 4. Participation in these meetings included those representatives listed above, as well as state fiscal representatives, state data analytics representatives, child welfare leadership from across the state, eligibility staff and supervisors, and judicial and legal partners.

In recent months, statewide conversations have centered around a collective vision and general areas of practice that the state wanted to focus on over the next five years to improve Nevada’s child welfare system. Once overarching goals were identified, they were further refined in smaller, targeted spaces where objectives and strategies were proposed, and tentative timelines were framed out. These goals, strategies, and objectives were then shared with multiple statewide groups in which discussion, feedback, and further collaboration were encouraged. The goals were also shared with child welfare leadership through the Decision-Making Group (DMG) which is comprised of county-administered child welfare directors, the DCFS Deputy Administrator, and the DCFS Administrator.

In accordance with the requirements at 45 CFR 1357.15(1) and (m), DCFS collaborated and engaged internal and external partners in the process of identifying shared goals and objectives in development of the CFSP. System partners were involved in the review of available data, and in assessing current performance utilizing focus groups or surveys. System partners represented the groups listed below and are further defined in the Collaboration section of this report.

- Decision Making Group (DMG)
- Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS)
- Washoe County Human Services Agency (WCHSA)
- DCFS Rural Region Child Welfare (RRCW)
- Children’s Justice Act Task Force (CJA)
- Citizen’s Review Panel (CRP)
- Court Improvement Program (CIP)
- Court Improvement Councils (CICs)
- Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC)

- Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT)
- Foster parents and adoptive parents
- Youth Advisory Board (YAB) and other youth in foster care
- Independent living providers and other service providers
- ICWA Steering Committee
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Community and system partners

Multiple existing workgroups and teams will be involved in the implementation of the goals laid out in this plan; however, the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) will be charged with the oversight of the plan and its eventual alignment with the upcoming statewide assessment Nevada will conduct over the next year. The SQIC will utilize a continuous quality improvement (CQI) approach to integrate the results of Nevada's statewide assessment into the CFSP in coming years.

One of the functional components of Nevada's CQI system includes an existing feedback loop that exists within the SQIC to state and agency leadership. Members of the SQIC team include CQI champions from across the state, as well as child welfare agency leadership. Membership of some SQIC members in the DMG streamlines the feedback loop to and from decision-makers that helps guide collaborative efforts. This impacts performance and will result in overall improvement of outcomes for children and families that interact and touch the child welfare system in the state.

One of Nevada's goals in the CFSP is for Nevada to enhance its existing CQI system to identify the strengths and needs of the child welfare system in the state. The state would like to see better collaboration between systems that intersect with child welfare, as well as the voices of those with lived experience, marginalized communities, and those who have been historically underserved, and historically overrepresented in child welfare, uplifted. Over the next five years, Nevada will be focused on intentional and authentic efforts to develop work plans and timelines alongside our youth, families, agency, community, and system partners. The state will enhance its communication system and style to share information in meaningful and understandable ways, as well as to elicit feedback and participation from the groups listed above. Utilization of workgroups, committees, and subcommittees, both virtually and in person, will help Nevada achieve this goal. The state wishes to establish and sustain formal feedback loops so that there is a level of transparency in the work we are all doing. This meaningful collaboration will drive improvement in practice and services and promote the shared goals and desired outcomes of the 2025-2029 CFSP.

Nevada's 2025-2029 CFSP, when approved by the Children's Bureau, will be located at the following link:

<http://dcfs.nv.gov/Tips/Reports/>

The state contact for this report is as follows:

Lupie Janos, Social Services Chief III, [mjanos@dcfs.nv.gov](mailto:mjanos@dcfs.nv.gov)

Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services

## VISION AND COLLABORATION

### STATE AGENCY ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAMS

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is under the umbrella of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and is responsible for Children's Mental Health, Youth Corrections, and Child Welfare Services. Organizational charts for the DHHS and DCFS are attached to this report.

The implementation and administration of the CFSP is the responsibility of DCFS. This includes Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Subpart I (Child Welfare Services) and Subpart 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families), Child Abuse and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Chafee Program and the Educational Training Voucher (ETV) Program.

Nevada's Division of Child Family Services includes work in the areas listed below.

- Child Welfare Services, Protection and Permanency for Children: DCFS creates opportunities and programs that prevent and respond to issues of parental or caregiver maltreatment, mental health, and delinquency. DCFS strives to support permanency within the child's biological or primary and extended family so children may grow and develop within stable environments. DCFS also recognizes the responsibility to create and support alternative permanent environments when biological or primary families are unable or incapable of caring for their children. DCFS will collaboratively develop public policies to promote the strength and well-being of families.
- Preservation of Families: DCFS supports the value that the family is the best structure to assure stability, nurturing, care, and safety of its members and communities. Services are designed to build upon family strengths, honoring the family's traditions, history, and culture.
- Juvenile Justice Services for Youth and Juvenile Justice Facilities: Juvenile Justice Services serves youth ages 12 to 21 who have been committed to DCFS for either delinquent behavior or to access services for mental health treatment. DCFS recognizes that services must balance youth rehabilitation, treatment, and community safety. Many juvenile offenders have been victims



of maltreatment and therefore accountability must be balanced by the provision of services addressing trauma, loss, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Juvenile offenders are held accountable through a comprehensive system of graduated sanctions that include commitment to state-operated juvenile facilities. Youth are committed to DCFS by the juvenile court for correctional services to the following youth centers: Summit View Youth Center (SVYC), Caliente Youth Center (CYC) and Nevada Youth Training Center (NYTC). Upon successful completion of the programming within the center, youth are released back into the community with supervision and case management services provided by Youth Parole. Youth committed for mental health treatment are placed directly on parole and receive treatment and case management services based on their identified needs.

- Children’s Mental Health: DCFS uses a system of care model that strives to provide creative, individualized, strengths-based, and culturally responsive services for families with children that experience severe emotional disturbances. A developing continuum of care focuses on meeting the needs of children and families in the least restrictive environment, including utilization of the wraparound process to coordinate effective service delivery that enables children to reside with families when possible and with the assistance of informal supports rather than dependency on government or paid providers.

Nevada uses a state-administered and county operated structure for the management of child welfare services. The DCFS Family Programs Office, provides oversight to child welfare and direct child welfare services. The organizational structure of DCFS and program delivery of child welfare services are influenced by the state size and concentration of county population. Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.325 states that in counties where population is 100,000 or more, that the county shall provide protective services for children in that county and pay the cost of those services in accordance with standards adopted by the state. In 2001, the State Legislature expanded the county’s responsibility to include all child welfare services of child protection, foster care and adoption (NRS 432B.030 and NRS 432B.044).

Per NRS 432B.326 counties whose population is less than 100,000 (currently all counties other than Clark and Washoe counties) must pay to DCFS an assessment for the provision of child protective services not to exceed the limit of legislative authorization for spending on child protective services by DCFS in each county. This statute allows a county to request an exemption from the assessment by submitting a proposal to the Governor for the county to carry out child protective services for that jurisdiction. If the Governor approves the proposal, the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) must consider whether to approve the exemption. If the exemption is approved, the county is required to carry out child protective services for the county in accordance with standards adopted

by DCFS and pay for the cost of those services. As of the writing of this report, no county has requested an exemption.

The DCFS Rural Region Child Welfare is separated into five districts, each providing services to multiple counties. District 1 covers the northern part of the state with its main office based in Elko. This district provides services to Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln and White Pine Counties. District 2 covers the western and central part of the state and is based in Carson City. This district provides services to Carson City, Douglas County, and Storey County. District 3 covers the eastern and central part of the state and is based out of Fallon. This office provides services to Churchill, Lyon, Pershing and Mineral Counties. District 4 covers the southern rural part of the state and is based out of Pahrump. This office provides services to Esmeralda and Nye Counties. District 5 covers the counties of Lyon and Hawthorne. A map of the state with each county outlined is attached to this report for reference.

The population in Nevada continues to expand, seeing a population change of +17.6% between 2010 and 2022, according to US Census Bureau and USA Facts. The Las Vegas metropolitan area accounts for 70.9% of the state's population. Growth in Nevada's rural counties has been stable over the years, but places such as Elko, Douglas, and Nye counties have seen substantial growth. Nevada has a diversity index of 68.8% as a state, the third highest in the nation. The racial breakdown in Nevada according to the 2020 census is as follows: White or Caucasian 51.2%, Hispanic or Latino 28.7%, Black or African American 9.8%, American Indian and Alaska Native 1.4%, Asian 8.8%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander 0.8%, and two or more races 14%.

In addition to federal requirements, DCFS and county child welfare agencies are governed by the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), Nevada Administrative Code (NAC), and statewide child welfare policy. The Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) may be found in their entirety at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NRS/>.

Applicable NRS chapters to child welfare in Nevada include those listed below.

- NRS Chapter 62A-I (Juvenile Justice)
- NRS Chapter 63 (State facilities for detention of children)
- NRS Chapter 127 (Adoption of Children and Adults)
- NRS Chapter 128 (Termination of Parental Rights)
- NRS Chapter 424 (Foster Homes for Children)
- NRS Chapter 425 (Support to Dependent Children)
- NRS Chapter 432 (Public Services for Children)
- NRS Chapter 432A (Services and Facilities for Care of Children)
- NRS Chapter 432B (Protection of Children from Abuse and Neglect)
- NRS Chapter 433B (Additional Provisions Relating to Children)

The Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) contains all the permanent regulations pertaining to child welfare agencies in Nevada. These were adopted pursuant to the requirements of NRS Chapter 233B. The NAC in its entirety can be found at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/NAC/>.

Applicable NAC chapters to child welfare in Nevada include those listed below.

- NAC Chapter 127 (Adoption of Children)
- NAC Chapter 423 (Assistance to Former Foster Youth)
- NAC Chapter 424 (Foster Homes for Children)
- NAC Chapter 432 (Public Services for Children)
- NAC Chapter 432A (Services and Facilities for the Care of Children)
- NAC Chapter 432B (Protection of Children from Abuse and Neglect)

The Division, through its Family Programs Office, is responsible for ensuring quality child welfare services statewide, including the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in care. The FPO is responsible for ensuring that there are statewide collaborative child welfare policies that provide interpretation and procedures for accomplishing the tasks set out in the NRS or NAC. Statewide policies are available on the DCFS website: <http://dcfs.nv.gov/Policies/CW/>

Nevada's DHHS Office of Analytics maintains two online data sources that capture current relevant information regarding the state's child welfare system and the youth and families it serves. This information is updated quarterly and provides an overview of child welfare, foster care, and services provided in Nevada, including demographic information of its population and communities. The DCFS Data Book can be found along this path: <https://dcfs.nv.gov/Programs/Data/DCFSDataPage/>. The Nevada DHHS Office of Analytics Data Dashboards and Reports Catalog can be at the following link: [https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Office\\_of\\_Analytics/OFFICE\\_OF\\_ANALYTICS\\_-\\_DATA\\_REPORTS/](https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Office_of_Analytics/OFFICE_OF_ANALYTICS_-_DATA_REPORTS/).

## VISION STATEMENT

Nevada's vision is to have safe, healthy, and thriving kids in every community in the state. DCFS, through collaboration with the state's child welfare agencies, community partners, system partners, and those with lived experience will enhance its child welfare system, enhance its CQI system, and build a service array that provides quality prevention, safety, permanency, and well-being services to Nevada's youth and families.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The DCFS mission is to work together in genuine partnership with families, communities and other governmental agencies, to provide support and services to Nevada's youth and families to assist them in reaching their full human potential. The Division recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and children, youth and families thrive when they:

- Live in safe, permanent settings
- Experience a sense of sustainable emotional and physical well being
- Receive support to consistently make positive choices for family and the common good

The mission of the Washoe County Human Services Agency (WCHSA) is to promote the health, safety and well-being of children, adults and seniors who are vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. They provide an array of protective and supportive services to families and individuals to enhance their quality of life by ensuring they are optimizing their self-reliance and self-sufficiency, as they strive to have a strengthened, safe, and thriving community.

The mission of the Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) is to protect children from abuse and neglect by partnering with their community to build safe, nurturing and stable families, to support family preservation, when possible, to provide permanent families for those children who cannot safely return home and to ensure the well-being of children in their care. They strive to protect children from harm, advocate for their rights, provide support and resources to families in need, and promote policies that enhance the safety, health, and educational opportunities for all children. They are committed to acting as a beacon of hope and a source of support for children and families, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their needs are met.

### **Service Principles**

Service principles guide the state's work towards achieving this vision and mission and are consistent with children and family services principles specified in federal regulations (45 CFR 1355.25).

- *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.*
- *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.*

- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *Services are intensive enough and of sufficient duration to keep children safe and meet family needs. The actual level of intensity and length of time needed to ensure safety and assist the family may vary greatly between preventive (family support) and crisis intervention services (family preservation), based on the changing needs of children and families at various times in their lives. A family or an individual does not need to be in crisis in order to receive services.*

## **COLLABORATION**

Nevada's 2025-2029 CFSP was developed with input and recommendations provided by key statewide groups, individuals representing various program areas, and individuals representing various system partners. During regularly scheduled meetings, and through targeted conversations, Nevada embarked on its strategic planning process for the state's five-year plan in 2023, by first meeting internally to discuss current performance in program areas relevant to a child's safety, permanency, and well-being. The state reviewed relevant data, and assessed existing statewide groups in which collaboration and further planning could occur. DCFS ensured some of the statewide groups included membership of individuals with lived experience. DCFS utilized these existing groups to facilitate conversations around the state's vision and to identify and develop goals for its child welfare system.

DCFS facilitated several targeted meetings with both leadership and CQI staff representing all the child welfare agencies, as well as the liaison for CIP, and the DCFS

Tribal Liaison. Conversations centered around a collective vision and general areas of practice that the state wanted to focus on over the next five years to improve Nevada's child welfare system. These goals were further refined in smaller, targeted spaces where objectives and strategies were defined, and tentative timelines were framed out. These goals, strategies, and objectives were then shared with multiple statewide groups in which discussion, feedback, and further collaboration were encouraged. The goals were also shared with child welfare leadership through the Decision-Making Group (DMG) which is comprised of county-administered child welfare Directors and the DCFS Administrator.

Additionally, DCFS FPO partners with the DCFS Grants Management Unit that includes the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP). The DCFS Family Programs Office holds a monthly meeting with the GMU and DCFS Fiscal program. Collaboration with external state departments is addressed throughout this report.

Participation and membership in various groups and on statewide teams allows FPO to monitor established feedback loops and permits an ongoing, bi-directional information exchange across all levels of the agency, which in turn facilitates the change process. Concerns expressed and input from these on-going discussions were integrated into the goals and objectives of the CFSP. Nevada has built on the work done through its CQI Self-Assessment, and subsequent CQI Action Plan, developed during its CFSP Round 3 Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to enhance its process to elicit and receive staff and stakeholder feedback.

To engage in these productive feedback loops, DCFS shares data with agency staff, consumers and external community and system partners. The intentional sharing of data and conversations around its analysis and implications are standing agenda items on several statewide meetings that the FPO facilitates. Data is also posted on the DCFS website. This sharing of data with consumers creates rich and purposeful solution focused dialogue about improvements. Additionally, the DCFS will continue to consult with community partners, tribes, the legal and judicial community, and those with lived experience concerning annual progress.

Feedback is received through consultation and collaboration with community and system partners at every level of the child welfare service delivery continuum, ranging from planning for allocation of funding to case level decision making, to changes in policy, practice and reporting requirements. This collaboration, consultation and feedback with other agencies and entities expands partnerships and the leveraging of available resources. It also allows for the provision of constructive feedback to the state about programs, policies, procedures and practice that may be incorporated into the state's plan. Beyond state DCFS and county child welfare agencies on statewide groups, representation includes, but is not limited to, educational/research institutions, other state agencies, data experts, community service providers, as well as juvenile court representatives and individuals with lived experience.

Statewide consultation and coordination with existing groups will continue over the next five years as the state implements the provisions of the CFSP. Membership in statewide groups includes, but is not limited to, the committees, organizations and entities listed below. These existing partnerships in statewide groups will be utilized over the coming years to monitor and assess the state's progress with the goals in its plan. Most statewide groups meet virtually, allowing for expanded participation and collaboration. Additionally, external partners provide information about program functioning, policy and practice, protocol development, and share resources and information that are used in program development and planning.

Nevada will continue to improve in its collaborative efforts with community partners, system partners, and those with lived experience over the next five years. Nevada will commence its CFSR Round 4 in 2025 and will begin work on planning for its statewide assessment in July of 2024. Part of that planning will include identifying strategies to further involve families, children, youth, tribes, courts, and other partners in reviewing current performance data, assessments of agency strengths and areas of opportunities to improve, as well as assessing the goals of the CFSP and their continued relevance once the statewide assessment is completed. Nevada will explore mechanisms to elicit feedback and input from communities, the child welfare workforce, and system partners which may include surveys, focus groups, or interviews. Another possibility Nevada will explore will be forming an Advisory Group that includes foster parents, biological parents, former foster youth, caseworkers, supervisors, and service providers. As Nevada enhances its collection of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) data, the state will be in a better position to assess how well it engages communities representing the racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ+ composition of the populations served by the child welfare system. Nevada will also explore how to capture the voice of those who have been historically underserved or marginalized, and those adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality in the child welfare system.

**Decision Making Group (DMG)** -The DMG is comprised of the DCFS Administrator, DCFS Deputy Administrator and the county child welfare agency Directors. The DMG is a collaboration in which all child welfare agencies meet to consult and discuss statewide and regional child welfare issues, statewide data, implementation of new initiatives, and statewide policies. It is a space where child welfare leaders can discuss regional challenges, share ideas and strategies, and learn from one another to inform decision making. Items such as the CFSR, the CFSP, and the APSR are regularly discussed. This group currently meets quarterly.

**Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC)** - The SQIC meets at least monthly to discuss a variety of topics including federal reporting, statewide policies, performance data, targeted review data, implementation of new initiatives, and CQI activities. Membership includes the state's Family Programs Office, the three child welfare agencies, CQI staff from across the state, the DCFS data team, the DCFS Tribal Liaison, the Nevada Partnership in Training, and the Court Improvement Program. The SQIC's purpose is to promote positive outcomes for Nevada's children through continuous oversight and analysis of state and federally identified performance measures and data relevant to continuous quality improvement. The SQIC has an established charter that was last updated in 2022.

**Family First Prevention Services Act Evaluation Oversight Committee (FFPSA EOC)** – The EOC was formed in 2023 as part of Nevada's CQI plan contained within its FFPSA Prevention Plan, approved effective October 1, 2023. The EOC reports to the SQIC and developed comprehensive CQI and fidelity monitoring plans for each evidence-based practice (EBP) to monitor effective implementation of FFPSA programs and ensure that all federal reporting requirements are met. The CQI and fidelity monitoring activities for each program will be conducted regionally by each participating jurisdiction with oversight by the EOC. Programs will vary as to whether they are implemented statewide or regionally. When implemented regionally, each region is responsible for coordinating CQI and fidelity monitoring, either internally or through a contracted entity, with DCFS FPO ultimately responsible. The DCFS FPO will provide oversight via the EOC to ensure that CQI and fidelity monitoring are designed to answer overarching questions regarding the quality of implementation and service delivery as well as the extent to which program and system-level outcomes are being reached. Overall, the goal of all CQI and fidelity activities is to ensure that youth and families receive high quality services in a timely manner that meet their needs and lead to positive outcomes.

**Nevada Quarterly Continuous Quality Improvement Reviews (foster parent, child, services providers, biological parent, relatives, legal partners, and agency staff consultation)** - Nevada conducts statewide quarterly case reviews that mirror the Child and Family Services Review. As part of these reviews foster parents, children, service providers, biological parents, relatives, legal partners, and agency staff are interviewed and consulted with about individual cases. An array of questions allowing for open and honest feedback are asked with a goal of assessing the functioning of the child welfare system.



**Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT)** – NPT is a bi-university partnership, in collaboration with DCFS FPO, the RRCW, CCDFS, WCHSA, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). The partners collaboratively work together to improve the child welfare training delivery system. The group currently meets monthly. The state training manager is also the CFSR and CFSP coordinator so there is regular discussion on all matters related to the CFSR, APSR and the CFSP.

**Children’s Justice Act Task Force (CJA)** - The CJA is a multi-disciplinary team that meets quarterly to make policy and training recommendations for systems improvements in the investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect, and exploitation cases in a manner that limits trauma to the child victims. Multiple members of the CJA Task Force are also active members of other teams such as the SQIC and the Court Improvement Program (CIP).

**Indian Child Welfare Committee (ICW)** - The Indian Child Welfare (ICW) committee meets bi-monthly and is hosted by the DCFS Tribal Liaison. These meetings are held virtually and tribal child welfare workers from the 28 federally recognized tribes, bands, and colonies in Nevada are invited to participate. Meetings provide a venue to address training, policy, and practice issues in child welfare whether ICWA applies or not. The ICW meetings are also natural feedback loops as they allow for consistent feedback from the tribal communities. Additionally, the DCFS Tribal Liaison participates in quarterly Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) meetings to discuss service and policy issues between tribal leaders and the state.

**Youth and Young Adults (YYA)** – Consultation and collaboration with youth and young adults occurs through facilitation of the statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Nevada contracts with the Children’s Advocacy Alliance (CAA) to facilitate the statewide YAB, Nevada LIFE (Leaders in Future Excellence), and meets monthly with the CAA creating a natural feedback loop to the YAB. This relationship provides an avenue to invite and include individuals with lived experience and youth and young adult involvement in policy, practice, and program development. The Nevada independent living program specialist facilitates a quarterly call with community providers from across the state, including educational providers, child welfare service providers, children’s advocates, and the CIP. Discussions related to the CFSR, CFSP, and the APSR, program enhancement and program evaluations are shared with participants.

**Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) (foster care provider engagement)** – QPI is a statewide initiative developed to ensure every child removed from their home due to abandonment, abuse, or neglect is cared for by a foster family who provides skilled, and nurturing parenting while helping the child maintain connections with their family of origin. This QPI collaborative engages foster care providers through monthly meetings in each jurisdiction. All foster parents are invited and encouraged to be at these meetings. Providing these meetings by jurisdiction allows for diverse participation of foster families

in each region. In addition to the jurisdictional meetings, there is a monthly statewide QPI meeting. This allows the jurisdictions to collaborate with one another, provides an opportunity to ensure practice is consistent, and that a continuum of services is available throughout Nevada. Nevada continues to use the support of the QPI collaboration to gain the voice of those with lived experience, including foster parents who advocate for themselves and the youth in their care.

**The Adoption Call to Action Team (ACTA)** - The ACTA team consists of members from the three child welfare agencies, Raise the Future (formally the Adoption Exchange), and the Family Programs Office. The FPO adoption specialist leads the ACTA meetings and is a participant on the CIP Select Committee. The team meets monthly to review adoption programming, address statewide needs, policies, procedures, and any progress with the goal of reducing the number of Nevada children and youth waiting to be adopted by identifying and eliminating barriers to achieving permanency.

**Child Fatality** - The child death review (CDR) process consists of the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children whose members represent Directors of the child welfare agencies, and agencies responsible for vital statistics, public health, mental health and public safety as well as local child death review multidisciplinary teams. This statewide committee consults and collaborates on public education and prevention of child fatalities.

**Nevada System of Care (SOC)** - The Nevada SOC is a DCFS program that engages a broad array of both behavioral health and support services. These services include both home and community-based treatment, as well as out-of-home treatment services that are provided when necessary.

**Court Improvement Program (CIP)** - The CIP liaison is actively engaged with efforts to improve Nevada's child welfare system as it relates to the system's partnership with the judicial and legal community. The CIP coordinates the CIP Select Committee meeting that meets quarterly. During these meetings Nevada's judicial and legal partners collaborate with the DCFS on a variety of fronts focused on improving the relationship between systems, as well as to improve the experiences Nevada's child welfare workforce, children, and families have when engaged with both systems. There is an authentic effort to align the goals of the two systems, and to evaluate the implementation of new legislation, monitor current performance, and assess the impact of new initiatives. many of its efforts on implementing the CFSP, APSR and CFSR. The CIP Coordinator is an active member on a variety of statewide groups including various workgroups, the SQIC, and planning meetings to discuss the development of the CFSP. The Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) initiative, led by CIP, is aimed at enhancing quality legal representation and improving the quality of hearings involving child welfare agency staff, children, families, and caregivers.

**Court Improvement Councils (CIC)** - The 11 judicial districts across the state have collaborative CICs which develop annual action plans to improve the judicial handling of child welfare cases. The CICs meet regularly in their communities and collectively during an annual summit. The CIP Select Committee meets quarterly and CIC Leads, as well as multidisciplinary representatives from across the state, attend to report on their activities, goals, and barriers to achieving success.

**Nevada Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)** - The Coalition's focus is to assess the existing service array in the state and to develop recommendations to expand those services, propose legislation, and identify best practices for CSEC victims in Nevada.

**Nevada Human Trafficking (HT) Coalition** – NRS 217.098 established the formation of a statewide coalition consisting of interested parties and stakeholders to assist the human trafficking specialist in carrying out their duties and maximizing resources for local human trafficking task forces. The Nevada HT Coalition was formed in 2023 and meets every other month.

**Anti-racist, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ADEI) Groups** - As outlined in NRS 232.0085, each state agency that interacts with minority groups or offers programs and services that affect minority groups shall designate a diversity and inclusion liaison to assist in promoting communication with minority groups and promoting cultural competency in providing services to minority groups. This effort by the state of Nevada is complemented by FPO's collaboration with local ADEI groups from the child welfare agencies.

In the southern part of the state, CCDFS has been actively recruiting Black and African American families to serve as foster parents. The agency regularly reviews census data and utilizes it as context to understand racial disproportionality as well as disparity in licensed family foster homes. Over the past two years, the agency has engaged local black churches and cultural hubs for foster parent recruiting events. Unfortunately, at a local level, religious, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation is not tracked with any regularity to be able to make inferences regarding disproportionality or disparity with these characteristics.

In the northern part of the state, WCHSA made changes to its mandated reporter training curriculum, to include an in-depth presentation and discussion on implicit bias and how it impacts viewpoints about children and families as it relates to child abuse and neglect reporting. Implicit bias is presented as a natural function of how the human brain has evolved over time and participants are challenged to examine their bias when making reports of abuse or neglect about families.

Additionally, WCHSA's CQI unit finalized an agency policy on providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. The policy request came out of a local

CIC group to ensure persons with disabilities have equal access to the services provided by the agency. Feedback on the policy was solicited from local legal partners and seeks to ensure people of all abilities are provided with the services they need and accommodations necessary to fully participate in all programs.

Nevada continues to work closely with Casey Family Programs on a host of goals including ADEI. The state provides representation at the National Casey Family Programs ADEI convening, and during the last convening in 2023, Nevada included attendees with lived experience. This will also occur for the upcoming 2024 convening as well. In 2024, the state received time limited technical assistance from the Capacity Building Center for States to review existing data, develop a data plan for the next couple of years, and align data collection efforts across systems and agencies. This work will build an infrastructure and create sustainability to advance race equity practices in child welfare and improve equity outcomes for children and families that are overrepresented in the Nevada child welfare system. The state began to identify and understand factors related to the overrepresentation of children and families of color in the child welfare system. Data exploration will continue in partnership with Casey Family Programs, using AFCARS data. Casey Family Programs creates and shares data reports reflecting where children and families are disproportionately represented relative to their proportion in the population.

Over the next five years, Nevada will utilize the root cause analysis and research questions provided by the CBCS, listed below. There is a commitment from all three child welfare agencies and the DCFS FPO to begin to address the questions collectively.

- How are populations faring in the Nevada system by subpopulation and more specifically by communities of color (e.g., entry, placement stability, permanency outcomes)?
- What is the role of bias in mandated reporting?
- Has Nevada considered how implicit bias might affect interpretation of the data and how the state can lessen such biases?
- What factors are contributing to overrepresentation and disproportionality?
- How are data and evidence on the contributing factors and root causes of the problem analyzed?
- What roles do systemic and historical factors play? Is there a collaborative approach to integrate input on root causes from a variety of community and system partners, including youth, and family members with lived expertise?

**Workforce Innovation Team (WIT)** - The WIT is comprised of the DCFS FPO, the child welfare agencies, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), who work collaboratively to manage and improve the child welfare training delivery system. The meeting occurs once per month. The DCFS FPO is responsible for overseeing the work of the WIT and facilitates a feedback loop on matters related to the CFSR, the APSR, the CFSP, and ongoing CQI activities. This collaborative team is charged with addressing the training needs of the child welfare workforce statewide, as well as championing CoachNV, a coaching curriculum adopted from the Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation model.

## ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PERFORMANCE IN IMPROVING OUTCOMES

Nevada's assessment of current performance in improving child and family outcomes involved utilizing a variety of quantitative and qualitative data considerations as they relate to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children as well as systemic factors impacting service delivery. These considerations included data from the state's transitional CCWIS system, UNITY, regional data reports, Census Bureau data, Casey Family Programs reports, Chapin Hall reports, statewide data indicators, quarterly case review results, focus groups, surveys, Nevada's data profile, supplemental context data, Online Monitoring System (OMS) reports, and the state's DCFS and DHHS Data Books managed by the Nevada DHHS Office of Analytics.

A description of Nevada's current performance for each item is provided below. Nevada has identified its strengths and opportunities to improve for each item, as well as provided a brief update on any current or planned activities targeted at improving performance where applicable. Also discussed are the state's planned activities to routinely monitor statewide performance and functioning where applicable. As Nevada enhances its collection of race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) data, the state will be in a better position to assess its performance on child and family outcomes and systemic factors as it relates to communities representing the racial, ethnic, and LGBTQ+ composition of the populations served by the child welfare system. Nevada's plan for the next five years includes exploring how to capture the voice of those who have been historically underserved or marginalized, and those adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality in the child welfare system.

To increase Nevada's internal capacity to monitor data, assess impacts to the children welfare system, and conduct root cause analyses, the state is committed to developing CQI staff's skills and knowledge in the utilization of data and reports over the next five years. The state plans to utilize technical assistance from the Capacity Building Center for States (CBCS), and the Children's Bureau to aid in this skills development. Nevada will utilize existing platforms such as CapLearn, CFSR Portal, and the OMS as resources to build these skills as well.

## CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

### SAFETY OUTCOMES 1 AND 2

Safety outcome 1, children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect, and safety outcome 2, children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate, are addressed by items one through three in the CF SR onsite review instrument (OSRI). According to Nevada's CF SR Data Profile from February of 2024, the state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who experience maltreatment in care is 12.68. This is measured as the rate of abuse or neglect per days in foster care in a 12-month period that children experienced while under the state's placement and care responsibility, with risk adjustment. The national performance for this outcome is 9.07. The data comes from AFCARS and NCANDS submissions from fiscal year 2021.

The state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who experience recurrence of maltreatment in care is 10.9%. This is measured as the percent of children who were the subject of a substantiated or indicated report of maltreatment abuse or neglect per days in a 12-month period and who experienced subsequent maltreatment within 12 months of the initial victimization, with risk adjustment. The national performance for this outcome is 9.7%. The data comes from AFCARS and NCANDS submissions from fiscal year 2021.

In addition to statewide indicator data, Nevada has several data reports ran monthly to assess performance on safety metrics. The DCFS FPO utilizes these monthly reports to provide statewide oversight of the child welfare agencies.

#### **Item 1: Timeliness of initializing investigations of reports of child maltreatment**

The Nevada Revised Statutes set forth parameters for developing regulations establishing reasonable and uniform standards for child welfare services across the state, to include criteria mandating that certain situations be responded to immediately (NRS 432B.260) and those determinations of abuse and/or neglect be made in cases in which an investigation has occurred. The Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) requires a process to be established when receiving a referral and determining if that referral constitutes a report of abuse or neglect.

Statewide Policy 0506 Intake outlines the expected response time for the type of child maltreatment allegation. The timeline initiates the date and time the intake report is received by the agency. The following are child welfare agency response times that are outlined in the policy. Each response type requires an attempted face-to-face contact with all alleged victims identified in the report within the assigned priority response time.

- Priority 1: within 6 calendar hours when there is present danger identified.
- Priority 2: within 24 calendar hours when impending danger is identified. A child fatality or near child fatality suspicious of, or related to child maltreatment, must be screened as a Priority 1 or Priority 2.
- Priority 3: within 72 calendar hours when maltreatment is indicated, but no safety factors are identified.
- Priority 3 Differential Response (DR): within 72 business hours when maltreatment is indicated, but no safety factors are identified.

During case reviews, item 1 is measured utilizing a state’s own policy around response time. In Nevada, statewide policy 0506 Intake frames those response times out for the child welfare workforce. Cases are applicable for an assessment of this item if an accepted child maltreatment report on any child in the family was received during the period under review (PUR). This includes reports assigned for an alternative response assessment. Reports that are screened out are not considered as accepted. Alternative response in Nevada is referred to as differential response (DR) and screened in as a Priority 3 in Clark and Washoe Counties. In the rural regions, differential response is provided only to screened-out reports and is offered to families by community-based providers.

Table 1: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 1

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>58.30%</b>	<b>83.72%</b>	<b>78.13%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The federal performance expectation for Safety Outcome 1 is 95%. Item 1 Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment is the only performance indicator for this outcome.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 1 in 78.13% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

Nevada routinely monitors data reports extracted from its transitional CCWIS system, UNITY, that capture response time and persistent efforts to ensure child welfare agencies are continuing to prioritize timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment. This data is routinely presented in Nevada's statewide SQIC meetings. The FPO reviews ongoing qualitative data within UNITY to determine why response times and/or persistent efforts were not met, and information is provided to the jurisdictional CQI units for further review.

From January 1, 2023, through November 30, 2023, RRCW received 459 reports with 693 identified child victims. Out of the 459 reports, the agency met response timeframes in 342, or 74.5% of the reports. Out of 693 child victims, the agency made initial face to face contact with the victim or sufficient persistent efforts with 526, or 75.9%. Statewide reviews of data reports tracking response times and persistent efforts are conducted monthly, and agency quality assurance staff work with caseworkers to understand errors or to identify needed improvements to data entry.

WCHSA and CCDFS both utilize ChildStat to review their respective agencies performance on different data metrics. Metrics on response time and persistent efforts and child contacts are aggregated for the three-month timeframes with some metrics covering more extensive timeframes to show trends. WCHSA also conducts targeted case reviews and looks at the completion of child contacts.

***Item 2: Services to families to protect children in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care***

Pursuant to NRS 432B.340, when an agency which provides child welfare services determines that a child needs protection, but is not in imminent danger from abuse or neglect, the agency may offer the parents a plan for services and inform the parents that the agency has no legal authority to compel the family to accept the plan or file a petition pursuant to NRS 432B.490, and if the child is in need of protection, request that the child be removed from the custody of his or her parents. NRS 432B.393 requires that the agency that provides child welfare services make reasonable efforts to keep the child safely in the home before consideration is made to place the child outside of the home.

Differential response is used for reports alleging child neglect and when a determination has been made that the report does not rise above a priority three. Through the intake process, the child welfare agencies collect as much information about the family as possible. An assessment of the family's needs and existing supports is conducted to determine what would best benefit the family. If it appears that the family is likely to benefit from early intervention, the child welfare agencies can refer the family for differential response, provide and monitor services through an in-home plan, or refer the family for FFPSA prevention services.

It is the responsibility of the agency that provides child welfare services per NAC 432B.240 to provide a range of services and commit its resources to preserve the



family and prevent placement of the child outside of their home when possible and appropriate. All cases open for service must have a written collaborative case plan (NAC 432B.240 and statewide policy 0204 Case Planning) that defines the overall goals of the case and the step-by-step proposed actions for all parties to take to reach the goals within a specified period of time.

Table 2: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 2

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>71.88%</b>	<b>84.09%</b>	<b>83.33%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 2 Services to Families to Protect Children in Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry into Foster Care is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 2 in 83.33% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

The state has CQI activities to monitor progress made on this item. Nevada runs and examines periodic data summary reports from the OMS specific to Item 2 and shares these results in Nevada’s statewide SQIC meetings. The FPO reviews ongoing qualitative data within UNITY to assess services provided to families to protect children in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care. Results are shared with the jurisdictional CQI units for further review.

CCDFS completed a large-scale training for all investigative staff to tune-up their skills regarding present danger assessments and present danger plans. Moving forward, these trainings will be held quarterly for all new investigative staff or staff identified as needing a refresher training. The agency is also pending a revision to its agency policy around safety assessments and expectations to clarify when safety assessments and confirming safe environment assessments must be completed. WCHSA is actively looking at ways to provide services to families who, at the conclusion of the investigation, are assessed as high risk, but do not cross the threshold into impending danger.

### **Item 3: Risk Assessment and Safety Management**

Per NAC 432B.150, when an agency that provides child welfare services receives a report made pursuant to NRS 432B.220, or from law enforcement, an initial evaluation must be conducted to determine if the situation or condition of the child makes child welfare services appropriate.

If an agency assigns the report for investigation, a safety assessment is required to be completed upon the initial face-to-face contact with all alleged victims in the report pursuant to NAC 432B.185. A safety assessment is required to be completed at case milestones as outlined in NAC 432B.185. Statewide policies 0508 Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) and 0510 Nevada Safety Assessment address this information.

Table 3: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 3

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>46.25%</b>	<b>70.59%</b>	<b>67.61%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 3 Risk and Safety Assessment and Management is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 3 in 67.61% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

DCFS FPO staff routinely utilize the DCFS Data Book to review the count and percent of reports screened in and screened out, the types of maltreatment allegations received in the state, the number of new investigations, closed investigations statistics, removal reasons, as well as the percent of children without recurring abuse or neglect in six months. This data informs discussions individually with a child welfare agency, or in larger CQI-focused groups such as the SQIC. Chapin Hall's Center for State Child Welfare Data available through the Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA) and Casey Family Programs systems measures data are also rich resources for safety items data of not only the

number of children experiencing contact with the child welfare system, but data broken down by race.

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## PERMANENCY OUTCOMES 1 AND 2

Permanency outcome 1, children have permanency and stability in their living situations, and permanency outcome 2, the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children, are addressed by items four through eleven, in the CFSR OSRI. According to Nevada's CFSR Data Profile from February of 2024, the state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who achieve permanency in 12 months from entry into foster care is 39.4%. This is measured as the percentage of children among those who entered foster care in a 12-month period who exited foster care to reunification, adoption, guardianship, or living with a relative within 12 months of their entry. The national performance is 35.2%.

The state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who achieve permanency in 12 months after being in care for 12-23 months is 52.8%. This is measured as the percentage of children among those in foster care at the start of the 12-month period who had been in care for 12 to 23 months, who exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months. The national performance is 43.8%.

The state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who achieve permanency in 12 months after being in care for more than 24 months is 40.6%. This is measured as the percentage of children among those in foster care at the start of the 12-month period who had been in care more than 24 months, who exited to permanency in the subsequent 12 months. The national performance is 37.3%.

The state's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for the rate of children who reenter into care is 4.3%. This is measured as the percentage of children among those discharged to permanency (excluding adoption) in a 12-month period who reentered care within 12 months of exit. The national performance is 5.6%.

Nevada's current risk-standardized performance (RSP) for placement stability is 5.13. This is measured among children who entered care in a 12-month period as the number of placement moves per day experienced within the year evaluated. The national performance is 4.48. The data for these statewide indicators comes from AFCARS and NCANDS submissions from fiscal years 2021 to 2023.

### ***Item 4: Stability of foster care placement***

Nevada statutes and regulations support the placement stability of children in foster care by requiring child welfare agencies to assess the individual needs of the child, and to place that child in the least restrictive environment that is consistent with their identified needs. Relatives are the first placement option considered for all children in out-of-home

care. Child welfare agencies are also required to place siblings together when possible. Policy requires that the agency provide the foster care provider with appropriate information about the child's family, medical, and behavioral history, as well as discuss the child's plan for permanency, and any needs prior to placement. The purpose of sharing such information is to identify and provide the most appropriate matched foster home (NRS 424.038(1); NAC 424.465).

The NAC further requires that information about the child's situation and needs be continually shared by the child welfare agency and the foster care providers in a timely manner, thereby ensuring that the child's needs are continually addressed with appropriate services (NAC 424.805 - NAC 424.810). NAC supports placement stability by requiring that a foster care provider provide the child welfare agency with 10 working days' notice of any request for the removal of the child from that home unless they have a contrary agreement, or if there are immediate and unanticipated safety issues, thus giving the agency time to respond to issues that may have caused the instability (NAC 424.478).

Placement stability is further supported by NRS, NAC, and statewide policy by encouraging child welfare agencies to attain permanency in a timely fashion. State laws and regulations require that the agencies adopt a plan for the permanent placement of the child. This plan is to be monitored by the court at the time the youth is placed in foster care and annually thereafter. The case plan is to include a statement addressing goals and objectives; a description of the home or institution where the child is placed; a description of the safety and appropriateness of the placement in order to ensure proper care and accomplishment of case plan goals; and a description of the manner in which the agency ensures services are provided to the child and foster parents, which address the needs of the child. The agencies are further required to document all progress towards permanency, and if termination of parental rights is necessary, agencies are required to identify and document the obstacles to permanent placement of the child and specific steps required to find a stable and permanent home (NRS 432B.553; NAC 432B.400; NAC 432B.2625; Policy 0204).

Statewide policy 0205 Caseworker Contact requires caseworkers to visit children in foster care once every month and a portion of this monthly visit is to be spent assessing the child's adjustment to the placement and the stability of the placement. Caseworkers are also to meet with the foster care providers and discuss the service needs of the child or provider to support the placement.

Table 4: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 4

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>72.73%</b>	<b>77.19%</b>	<b>87.23%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 4 Stability of Foster Care Placement is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 4 in 87.23% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

NRS 424.042 instructs the Division to periodically review the placement of children in specialized foster care (SFC) homes and to develop corrective action plans when placements are not appropriate. The Division’s Program and Evaluation Unit (PEU) currently collects data on the demographics of children placed in SFC homes, as well as information from clinical evaluations of children who are placed in these types of homes. The child welfare agencies in the state have internal processes to review individual cases and the appropriateness of placements in SFC homes.

The FPO plans to assess these processes over the next year to determine additional methods to monitor performance in this area as it relates to this item. Data available to assess performance on this item includes information tracked in the DCFS Data Book such as average number of foster homes and beds in the state, as well as the number of placements foster youth experience prior to exiting foster care. Chapin Hall’s Center for State Child Welfare Data available through the Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA) and Casey Family Programs systems measures data are also rich resources for permanency items data of not only the number of children experiencing contact with the child welfare system, but data broken down by race.

**Item 5: Permanency goal for child**

NRS 432B.393, .540, .553, .580 and .590 require agencies that provide child welfare services to adopt a plan for permanency in accordance with the requirements and timeframes in the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA), including periodic case review by the courts. NAC 423B.013, .1364, .1366, .160, .180, .185, .190, .200, .210, .240, .261, .2625 and .263 provide the authority and requirements for assessing the child’s safety needs, child and family strengths, needs and risk factors to determine the most appropriate permanency goal(s).

The case plan is to include a statement addressing goals and objectives; a description of the home or institution where the child is placed; a description of the safety and appropriateness of the placement in order to ensure proper care and accomplishment of case plan goals; and a description of the manner in which the agency ensures services are provided to the child and foster parents, which address the needs of the child. The agencies are further required to document all progress towards permanency, and if termination of parental rights is necessary, agencies are required to identify and document the obstacles to permanent placement of the child and specific steps required to find a stable and permanent home (NRS 432B.553; NAC 432B.400; NAC 432B.2625).

Statewide policies 0204 Case Planning, 0508 Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA), and 0509 Alternative Nevada Initial Assessment outline steps and guide caseworkers in determining the most appropriate permanency goals for a child and provide the foundation for the development of permanency planning. Statewide policy 0501 ASFA Reasonable Efforts directs the development of an appropriate and comprehensive case plan to address the safe return of the child to the family when a child cannot remain safely in their home during a crisis period. The diligent search process and relative placement considerations outlined in these policies direct the identifying, locating, and contacting of relatives regarding their interest in providing a temporary or permanent placement for or adopting a child prior to or when the child is placed in substitute care.

Table 5: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 5

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>41.82%</b>	<b>63.16%</b>	<b>82.98%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 5 Permanency Goal of Child is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 5 in 82.98% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

***Item 6: Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement.***

***Relative Placement:*** NRS 432B.390 specifically mandates that relatives of the child within the fifth degree of consanguinity be given preference for placement, when removal from the parents' home is necessary for the child's safety.

***Reunification:*** NRS 432B.393 requires agencies to make reasonable efforts to prevent a child's removal from the parents' home, or if removal is necessary, reasonable efforts to make their safe return possible. If the removal of a child from the physical custody of their parents is deemed necessary, NRS 432B.540 requires the child welfare agency to develop a plan designed to achieve placement of the child in a safe setting as near to the residence of their parent as possible and consistent with the best interests and special needs of the child. NAC 432B.190, .200, .210 and .220 outline case planning requirements with an emphasis on the ways the agency will engage the family and their existing community of support to strengthen parental capacity.

***Guardianship:*** NRS 432B.466 through .468 allow for guardianship as a permanency option. The statewide policy 1010 Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP) allows fictive kin to be considered for guardianship.

***Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA):*** Nevada statutes and statewide policy require a written case plan be developed for children. For youth in foster care who are eligible for independent living services, NAC 432B.410 requires child welfare agencies to develop a plan for transitional independent living based on the assessment of the youth's skills. Statewide policy 0801 Youth Independent Living Program Ages 14 to 17 addresses the needs of youth who are likely to remain in care until their 18th birthday and how best to prepare them for the transition into adulthood. This policy requires child welfare agencies to establish self-sufficiency goals for youth beginning at age 14. The planning process must be youth centered and driven with an emphasis on the youth's expressed interests, needs, and priorities.

***Adoption:*** NRS 432B.553 requires agencies which provide child welfare services to adopt a plan for the permanent placement of the child for review by the court. NRS 432B.390 specifically mandates that relatives of the child within the fifth degree of

consanguinity, or fictive kin, be given preference for placement, when removal from the parents' home is necessary for the child's safety. NRS 432B.580 requires a semi-annual court review of the child's placement. NRS 432B.590 mandates a court review of the progress toward achievement of the permanency goal at a minimum of six-month intervals. If a child has been placed outside of the home and has resided outside of the home pursuant to that placement for 14 months of any 20 consecutive months, NRS 432B.590 requires the best interests of the child must be presumed to be served by the termination of parental rights. This is more stringent than the federal requirement of 15 out of 22 months. NAC 432B.2625 requires the agency to identify and document the obstacles to placement of the child, and to specify the steps needed to find an appropriate home for the child in a report to the court if a child has not been placed into an adoptive home within 90 days after the termination of parental rights.

Statewide policies 0204 Case Planning, and 0103 Adoption of Children aged 12 and over, indicate that adoption is the preferred permanency goal when it is determined that a child cannot be reunited with their family of origin. The 1001 Diligent Search Process and Notice statewide policy directs agencies to begin search activities and identification of family members during the initial contact with the family and requires that they are initiated within 30 days of removal. Statewide policy 1004 Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), in compliance with ASFA, requires that adoption proceedings be completed within 24 months of the child's entry into foster care.

Table 6: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 6

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>18.18%</b>	<b>49.12%</b>	<b>61.7%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 6 Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, and APPLA is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 6 in 61.7% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.



Across the state, the child welfare agencies are turning their attention to data metrics related to permanency. In January of 2024, WCHSA conducted a Timeliness to Permanency analysis that included qualitative data collected via seven focus groups with case workers, supervisors, legal and judicial partners. Focus group participants reported that collaboration had decreased since the COVID-19 pandemic and that cases were much more litigious that they were in the past. There was much confusion from case workers and partners alike around when it is appropriate to pursue a guardianship, particularly when a KinGAP subsidy is needed. The agency identified gaps in data capturing tools used to track TPR Petitions which make it difficult to pull accurate data.

WCHSA has worked on a policy that outlines factors case workers and the courts must take into consideration make when determining which permanency plan is in the best interests of a child, guardianship or adoption. The agency is also implementing an adapted version of the Adoption and Guardianship for Children in Kinship Foster Care: Comparison Chart for Nevada, which was created by Generations United in collaboration with the Department of Child and Family Services, Family Programs office. Case Workers will receive training on how to use this tool with relatives and fictive kin to educate them about the differences between guardianship and adoption to help choose the permanency plan that is in the best interests of the child. The agency is also implementing a post-adoption subsidy and KinGap consultation meeting which will occur with the relative or fictive kin, the case worker and the supervisor to discuss the differences is post adoption and guardianship benefits. This consultation will occur prior to requesting a plan change from the court to ensure the family understands the differences in the benefits available after the child welfare case closes. The desired outcome is to move children towards permanency in a more expeditious manner.

Quarterly data meetings, and ChildStat rounds are held to review permanency and adoption data metrics. Examples of data covered include child contacts, placement with relatives, placement moves, children exiting care to what permanency plan, and timeliness to permanency metrics. Outcomes for children and families and baseline observations about how Black/African American children's permanency experience may be different that white/Caucasian children are being collected.

### ***Item 7: Placement with siblings***

NRS 432B.580, NRS 432B.390 and the statewide policy 1001 Diligent Search Process require siblings be placed together unless there is justification for not doing so based on the best interest of the child. NRS 432B.3905 specifies that a child under the age of six may not be placed in a childcare institution unless appropriate foster care is not available in the child's home county and reasonable efforts are made to place the child's siblings in the same location. Children under the age of six also may not be placed in a childcare institution unless it is required to access medical services or to avoid separating siblings. NRS 432B.550 creates a presumption that it is in the best interest of the child for siblings to be placed together and 432B.580(2)(b) requires that, if siblings are not placed together, there must be a report made to the court detailing the agency's efforts in this area, including a visitation plan for approval by the court. NRS 432.525 through .530

established a Sibling Bill of Rights. The state is committed to ensuring siblings are placed together whenever possible.

Table 7: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 7

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>87.5%</b>	<b>88.64%</b>	<b>93.1%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 7 Placement with Siblings is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 7 in 93.1% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

***Item 8: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care***

NRS 432B.550(3)(a) provides that a parent of a child that has been removed from the home retains the right to reasonable visitation with the child unless this right has been restricted by the court. NAC 432B.400(2)(o) requires that the case plan specifically provides for family visitation, including, without limitation, visiting siblings if the siblings are not residing together. NAC 432B.220 requires an arrangement of regular and frequent visits with parents and siblings for a child who is placed outside of their home.

Statewide policy 0204 Case Planning requires a plan for frequent and purposeful visitation with parents and siblings of a child in foster care for the purpose of family preservation. Visitation between children and their parents, and children and their siblings if not placed together, must be regular, frequent, and purposeful. The caseworker shall not limit visitation as a sanction for the parent’s lack of compliance with court orders or as a method to encourage a child to improve their behaviors. Visitation is determined by the best interest of the child, as well as in consideration of their health, safety, and well-being. Visitation is only limited or terminated when those things are compromised, and recommendations must be presented to the court.

Table 8: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 8

CFSR Round 3	PIP Completion	Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews
2018	September 2022	April 2024
Case Review - 80 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases
Strength rating	Strength rating	Strength rating
67.5%	65.22%	78.79%

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 8 Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 8 in 78.79% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

**Item 9: Preserving connections**

NRS 432B.390 requires that priority be given to family members for placement of children who are removed from their birth families unless doing so would not be in the best interest of the child. Statewide policy 1001 Diligent Search and 1003 Kinship Care requires workers complete a diligent search for any possible adult family members. Once located, those identified family members are assessed for appropriateness in much the same manner as regular family foster care providers. NRS 432B.560 grants a reasonable right of visitation to grandparents. NRS 432.525 through .535 establishes a bill of rights for foster children that includes reasonable participation in extracurricular, cultural, and personal enrichment activities that are consistent with the age and developmental level of the child. They may also attend religious services of their choice. Statewide policy 0213 Visitation Policy supports efforts to maintain the continuity of family relationships and preserve connections for children.

NAC 424.495 requires foster homes to give children the opportunity to invite friends to the foster home and to visit the homes of friends, if appropriate. Statewide policy 0504 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) prioritizes the recognition of a child being an Indian child and assures the child’s tribe is contacted immediately when an Indian child is taken into custody. The tribe then becomes an active participant in any further court proceedings regarding the child. Through its Just in Time web-based foster parent training platform

and the Quality Parenting Initiative program, Nevada offers training around fostering and nurturing cultural and family connections for children.

Table 9: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 9

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>74.55%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>82.98%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 9 Preserving Connections is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 9 in 82.98% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

***Item 10: Relative placement***

NRS 432B.390 and NRS 432B.480 require that priority be given to family members for placement of children who are removed from their birth families unless doing so would not be in the best interest of the children. NRS 432B.550 requires placement preference with a relative within the fifth degree of consanguinity or fictive kin who is suitable and able to provide proper care and guidance. NRS 432B.510 requires relative notification when parents are unable to be found.

Statewide policies 1001 Diligent Search, and 1003 Kinship Care, require caseworkers to complete a diligent search for any possible adult family relatives and assess their interest in becoming a placement or permanent connection for the youth. Once located, those identified family members are assessed for appropriateness in much the same manner as regular family foster care providers.

Table 10: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 10

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>52.73%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>79.55%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 10 Relative Placement is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 10 in 79.55% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

***Item 11: Relationship of child in care with parents***

Statewide policy 1001 Diligent Search emphasizes the need to preserve the parent-child relationship by requiring a diligent search for non-custodial parents when a child is removed from their home. Policy 0204 Case Planning refers to the structured, solution-focused process of considering all the information gathered through the needs assessment process when developing a strength-based case plan for the family. NRS 432.525 through .535 established a bill of rights for foster children that includes maintaining contact with parents and family. These statutes dictate a child’s right to reasonable participation in extracurricular, cultural, religious, and personal enrichment activities that are consistent with the age and developmental level of the child. Statewide policy 1011 Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard/Normalcy provides guidance to support normalcy for children. The Foster Child Bill of Rights and the Foster Youth Bill of Rights are maintained on the DCFS website. Through its Just in Time web-based foster parent training platform and the Quality Parenting Initiative program, Nevada offers training around fostering and nurturing cultural and family connections.

Table 11: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 11

CFSR Round 3	PIP Completion	Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews
2018	September 2022	April 2024
Case Review - 80 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases
Strength rating	Strength rating	Strength rating
62.07%	69.23%	72.41%

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 11 Relationship of Child in Care with Parents is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 11 in 72.41% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

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### WELL-BEING OUTCOMES 1, 2, AND 3

Well-being outcome 1, families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs, well-being outcome 2, children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs, and well-being outcome 3, children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs, are addressed by items 12 through 18 in the OSRI. Nevada’s assessment of its performance on these items is conducted through a review of existing data reports, internal review conducted by individual child welfare agencies, and the results from the state’s quarterly case reviews that emulate the CFSR.

#### ***Item 12: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents***

NRS 432B.300 and 432B.393 require child welfare agencies provide services to preserve families, prevent the placement of children outside of the home if possible, and, if not possible, provide a plan describing those services that would facilitate the safe return of the child. NAC 432B.190, .200, .210, and .240 require agencies develop case plans and agreements with parents utilizing their strengths and existing resources in the planning process. NAC 432B.400, .405, and .410 require the agency to provide inclusive and comprehensive services to address the identified needs of children in foster care and to their parents.

Statewide policies 0508 Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA), 0509 Alternative Nevada Initial Assessment, and 0211 Protective Capacity Family Assessment guide initial assessments of parents and children. Policies 0204 Case Planning and 0205 Case Worker Contact were developed to clarify case planning and frequency of contact requirements with children, parents and caregivers. Statewide policy 0502 Developmental Assessments and Services requires a referral for the developmental screening of children under the age of three. Policy 0801 Youth Independent Living Program was developed to ensure that youth aged 14 and older in foster care receive adequate case planning and services for transition to adulthood. Finally, statewide policy 1301 Training, Assessment and Licensing of Foster, Relative, and Adoptive Homes covers the assessment of the appropriateness of potential foster families, licensed relatives, and adoptive families.

Table 12: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 12

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>37.5%</b>	<b>52.94%</b>	<b>57.75%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 12 and subparts A, B, C Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 12 overall in 57.75% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

The FPO plans to assess the well-being items over the next five years to determine additional methods to monitor performance in this area as it relates to these items. Data available to assess performance on this item includes information tracked in the DCFS Data Book such as average number of foster homes and beds in the state, the number of placements foster youth experience prior to exiting foster care, youth ages 14 through 17 receiving independent living services, the number of youth served in the state’s court jurisdiction program, and caseworker contact compliance. Chapin Hall’s Center for State Child Welfare Data available through the Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA) and Casey Family Programs systems measures data are also rich resources for permanency items data of not only the number of children experiencing contact with the child welfare system,

but data broken down by race. Nevada believes there is an opportunity over the next five years to assess the intersection of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems some youth experience, as well as the impacts implementing extended foster care will have on the young adult population and well-being outcomes.

**Item 13: Child and family involvement in case planning**

NAC 432B.190 through .220 encourages the participation of parents in the case planning process and requires engagement of the child’s family in utilizing their own strengths and resources throughout the process. NAC 432B.400, .405, and .410 require the agency to provide case planning and services to children in foster care and to their parents.

Statewide policy 0204 Case Planning provides a framework to tie the findings of the child and family assessments to the identification of the permanency goal(s) and the selection of formal and informal services. Nevada utilizes a collaborative, strength based and solution-focused process that empowers and motivates families to identify solutions to remove barriers, increase functioning, and build protective capacity. The policy requires a working partnership between the case manager and the family. The agency is to assist any family in identifying its strengths, needs, cultural considerations, supports, and current resources that will affect its ability to achieve and maintain child safety, permanency for children, and child and family well-being through an individualized case plan. In the event a parent is not available or refuses to participate in case planning, the case plan team (foster parents, extended relatives, other providers, and child, if appropriate) must still be formed, and a plan developed. In all cases, ongoing efforts must be made to involve parents and children, if developmentally appropriate, in the case planning process.

Table 13: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 13

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>48%</b>	<b>56.79%</b>	<b>69.7%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 13 Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases.



The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 13 in 69.7% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

Performance on this item, as well as items 14 and 15, are also monitored and will continue to be monitored through UNITY reports tracking caseworker contacts with parents and children. The state previously conducted qualitative analysis of caseworker contact narratives utilizing a rubric created through a statewide workgroup. Nevada plans to revisit this rubric to assess its ability to be utilized as a potential tool to assess the quality of caseworker contacts with families. The state plans to reevaluate its external communication plan and explore different types of messaging aimed at improving family engagement and creating formal feedback loops. Strategies such as more targeted email through the utilization of listservs, and visually driven messaging for the workforce are being explored.

**Item 14: Caseworker visits with child**

In accordance with 45 CFR 1355.20, NAC 432B.405 and statewide policy 0205 Case Worker Contact, Nevada requires children in foster care, or children under the placement and care responsibility of a child welfare agency who are placed away from their parents, be visited by their caseworker at least once every calendar month. When a child is placed in foster care, this visit must occur where the child resides in at least 50% of those months. During caseworker visits with children, the caseworker, or other responsible party, must spend a portion of the visit with the child outside the presence of the care providers and a portion of the time alone with the care providers if requested. A visit is defined as face-to-face in-person contact between the child and the child’s case worker, or other responsible party.

Table 14: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 14

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>55%</b>	<b>72.94%</b>	<b>70.42%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for item 14 is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023,

November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 14 in 70.42% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

**Item 15: Caseworker visits with parents**

Statewide policy 0205 Case Worker Contact requires caseworker contacts focus clearly on case planning, service delivery, safety, strengths, the needs of the child and family, family progress on case plan goals, and identification of resources and services the family needs in order to achieve case plan goals.

Table 15: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 15

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>46.3%</b>	<b>56.52%</b>	<b>53.85%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 15 Caseworker Visits with Parents is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 15 in 53.85% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR; however, also reflects a slight decline from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

**Item 16: Educational needs of the child**

NAC 432B.400 requires every case plan for a child receiving foster care will include a statement indicating the proximity of the school in which the child is enrolled at the time that they were placed in foster care and if it was considered as a factor in the selection of the placement for foster care. The case plan must also include the child’s education records, to the extent available, containing the names and addresses of educational providers, the grade level at which the child performs, and other educational information concerning the child as the agency determines is necessary.

NRS Chapter 388E Education of Children in Foster Care and NAC Chapter 388E Program of School Choice for Children in Foster Care authorize the legal guardians or custodians of certain children who are in foster care to apply to the Department of Education to participate in the program which allows such children to choose the school of their choice or remain at the school they were attending prior to being removed from their caregiver.

NRS 432B.540 requires educational reports be provided to the court. NRS 432B.580 requires a copy of an academic plan or any other education records for the child per NRS Chapter 388E be included in a report to the court prior to any hearing for review of placement. NRS 432B.462 establishes an educational decision maker for all children in foster care. The decision maker shall meet with the child, address disciplinary issues, ensure the child receives a free and appropriate education, has access to special programs; and if the child is over 14, participates in transition planning. The decision maker can serve as a surrogate parent for children on an individualized education plan (IEP). NRS 432.535 establishes a bill of rights related to education and vocational training for foster children.

Statewide policy 0204 Case Planning requires the child’s educational needs be addressed in the case plan including guidelines to support educational stability and to ensure foster parents receive a child’s educational records. Policy 0205 Case Worker Contact requires caseworkers visit the youth and caregiver a minimum of once per month and, during those visits, discuss the educational progress and needs of the youth.

Table 16: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 16

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>72.31%</b>	<b>74.51%</b>	<b>85.11%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 16 Educational Needs of the Child is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 16 in 85.11% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted

its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP.

**Item 17: Physical Health of the child**

Nevada statutes outline the purpose of a child welfare agency’s involvement with families including planning and coordinating the provision of services to support families. NAC 432B.400 addresses the requirements of the child welfare agency to have a case plan that includes plans for the coordination and provision of services to children and families who need assistance relating to the care, welfare, mental and physical health of children. Statewide policy 0207 Health Services supports these mandates by outlining processes to ensure that physical, developmental, and mental health needs of custodial children are identified and diagnosed through Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic Treatment (EPSDT) standardized, periodic screenings. Children not requiring immediate medical attention or mental health treatment receive a Nevada Medicaid Healthy Kids screening exam (EPSDT) within thirty days of entering custody. EPSDT screening exams are preventative and diagnostic services designed to evaluate the general physical and mental health, growth, development, and nutritional status of children. The Medicaid Healthy Kids program encourages providers to follow the recommended periodicity schedule set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Statewide policy 0502 Developmental Services and Assessments requires, as part of the CAPTA Part-C Requirement for Custodial and Non-Custodial Children, that all children under the age of three, receive a developmental assessment where there is a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a delay. Section 422(b) (15) (a) of the Social Security Act requires states to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care.

Table 17: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 17

<b>CFSR Round 3</b>	<b>PIP Completion</b>	<b>Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews</b>
<b>2018</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Case Review - 80 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases</b>	<b>Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases</b>
<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>	<b>Strength rating</b>
<b>51.52%</b>	<b>66.67%</b>	<b>79.63%</b>

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 17 Physical Health of the Child is 95%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the

results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 17 in 79.63% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSSR Round 3 PIP.

### ***Item 18: Mental/behavioral health of the child***

NRS 432.011 indicates the Division's purpose is to provide a comprehensive state system for the coordination and provision of services to children related to their mental health. Statewide policies 0508 Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA), and 0211 Protective Capacity Family Assessment guide initial assessments of parents and children. Policy 0207 Health Services supports these mandates by outlining processes to ensure that physical, developmental, and mental health needs of custodial children are identified and diagnosed through Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic Treatment (EPSDT) standardized, periodic screenings. Children also receive a trauma screening within 48 hours of coming into care. Additionally, statewide policy 0214 Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children requires that all children involved with the agency, aged ten years and older, will be screened using the Nevada Rapid Indicator Tool (NRIT) to assess if a child is 1) a confirmed victim of commercial sexual exploitation, 2) at high risk of commercial exploitation, or 3) no indicators apply to this youth at the time of the screening.

NRS 432B.197 states that each agency that provides child welfare services shall establish appropriate policies to ensure that children in the custody of the agency have timely access to and safe administration of clinically appropriate psychotropic medication. The policies must include, without limitation, the following.

- The use of psychotropic medication in a manner that has not been tested or approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration, including, without limitation, the use of such medication for a child who is of an age that has not been tested or approved or who has a condition for which the use of the medication has not been tested or approved.
- Prescribing any psychotropic medication for use by a child who is less than four years of age.
- The concurrent use by a child of three or more classes of psychotropic medication.
- The concurrent use by a child of two psychotropic medications of the same class.
- The criteria for nominating persons who are legally responsible for the psychiatric care of children in the custody of agencies which provide child welfare services pursuant to NRS 432B.4681 to 432B.469, inclusive, and the policies adopted pursuant to this section.

Statewide policy 0209 Psychiatric Care and Treatment states that the child welfare agency will nominate a person legally responsible for the psychiatric care of a child to be appointed by the court, for any child entering custody, or currently in custody, with a

prescription for psychotropic medication, or who the child welfare agency determines may need. The statewide policy captures the statutory requirements listed above.

Table 18: Nevada OSRI Performance on Item 18

CFSR Round 3	PIP Completion	Ongoing Quarterly Case Reviews
2018	September 2022	April 2024
Case Review - 80 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 84 cases	Last 4 rolling quarters 71 cases
Strength rating	Strength rating	Strength rating
66.66%	71.11%	71.11%

Source: Online monitoring system (OMS) state rating summary reports

The overall federal performance expectation for Item 18 Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child is 90%.

Nevada conducts quarterly CQI case reviews utilizing the federal Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) and utilizes a case review process that mimics other aspects of the federal CFSR. Nevada utilizes a rolling quarter assessment period to track its performance and progress on individual items. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters (August 2023, November 2023, February 2024, and April 2024) included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 18 in 71.11% of cases reviewed. This performance reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and a maintenance of performance from 2022 when Nevada completed its CFSR Round 3 PIP

## SYSTEMIC FACTORS

### INFORMATION SYSTEM

#### ***Item 19: Statewide information system***

UNITY is Nevada’s federally mandated Statewide Automated Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) and case management tool that holds the official case record for all children and families served by child welfare agencies in the state which is a requirement of PL 103-66. UNITY (UNITY 1.0 and UNITY 2.0) were historically federally designated as a SACWIS; however, when federal child welfare information system regulations changed in 2016, making SACWIS guidelines obsolete, new regulations were released. The new regulations are known as Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) regulations, and details may be found in 45 CFR § 1355.51 through 1355.58. Nevada declared its intent to follow CCWIS regulations and transition its legacy SACWIS to CCWIS. As of June 2018, UNITY 3.0 (web application) is considered a transitional CCWIS by the Children’s Bureau.

As a transitional CCWIS, Nevada's UNITY development activities must work toward meeting CCWIS project requirements outlined in 45 CFR § 1355.52. Unlike SACWIS requirements which mandated that information systems contain certain functionality, CCWIS regulations emphasize activities that will support efficient, effective, and economical design, including the ability to collect federally required data (such as data for AFCARS, NCANDS, and NYTD). CCWIS systems must also include automated functions to support data quality and must implement certain bi-directional data exchanges. States must develop, implement, and maintain a CCWIS Data Quality plan, including it as a part of Advanced Planning Documents (APD) submitted annually to the Children's Bureau. Additionally, states must conduct biennial data quality reviews.

UNITY can identify the status, demographics, location, and goals of every child who is, or within the last preceding 12 months was, in foster care. AFCARS error reports are disseminated to each child welfare agency that flag issues in multiple areas. Multiple data reports have been developed and are currently utilized to monitor regional and statewide performance in different program areas, with new initiatives, and with child and family outcomes. In true collaboration, DCFS works with the division's data team on requests for ad hoc reports that can be ran in response to specific needs or priorities.

Improving data entry and developing processes for the validation of data were action items in Nevada's CQI Action Plan developed in 2021. This plan supported efforts to improve practice across the state to incorporate the analysis of quality data to assess, monitor, and improve performance. To support data quality improvement, information services (IS) and data team staff participate in various workgroups as requested to support bi-directional communication, information sharing, and to establish formal feedback loops.

Over the next five years, each child welfare agency and the state will continue to make efforts to improve data quality as it relates to identifying the status, demographics, and location of every child in foster care. The state will work collaboratively with the child welfare agencies and make adequate efforts to address data quality issues as they arise. Currently, specific data elements are not consistently entered accurately or timely by end users statewide, which impacts the ability to extract quality data from UNITY. Ongoing monitoring and review of data will resolve issues and inform solutions connected to data entry errors, lack of timely entry of data, resource deficiencies to support the data validation process and further system improvements, and a lack of a robust CQI system for child welfare activities that include documentation in UNITY.

Nevada is also amid the planning stage to replace its UNITY system. During the remainder of 2024, the state will conduct a needs assessment for UNITY's eventual replacement. The state contracted with KPMG to facilitate and lead the project in partnership with the DCFS Information Technology program. Multiple kick off meetings were held in May of 2024 that included executive leadership and the child welfare agencies. Statewide workshops commenced that same month that included state program staff, data experts, CQI staff, and child welfare agency staff representation.

These workshops are broken down into functional areas and are a deep dive into what would work well for Nevada in a new comprehensive CCWIS system. Workshops will continue through at least September of 2024, allowing for time at the end of 2024 for report development, alternative analysis, and cost benefit analysis.

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## **CASE REVIEW SYSTEM**

### ***Item 20: Written case plan***

In accordance with the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Family Act of 1997 (ASFA), Nevada adopted NRS 432B.540, .553, and .580 which obligate child welfare agencies to create a plan for permanency when a child is placed in foster care. This plan must include a description of the type of placement, safety and appropriateness of the home or institution including without limitation that the home or institution will comply with the provisions of NRS 432B.3905, and plan for ensuring the child's proper care, a description of the child's needs and a description of the services to be provided to meet those identified needs. The plan must also provide a description of the services to be provided to the parents to facilitate the child's return to the parents' custody or to ensure the child's permanent placement. NRS 432B.580 provides for a semiannual review of the child and family's status, progress on the written case plan, and the recommendations for the future treatment or rehabilitation of the family.

NAC 432B.190 requires that all children in foster care in Nevada have a written case plan that identifies barriers to the provision of a safe environment for the child, clarifies responsibilities of the case participants involved to help overcome those barriers, and defines the goals of the case including step-by step actions each participant must take in a designated timeframe covered by the plan. All case plans must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor and caseworker at least once every six months. Each case plan must clearly state the plan's goals, objectives, and action items including who is responsible for each. Case plans must be individualized, consider the family's situation, resources, capacities, and must safeguard the child.

Statewide policy 0204 Case Planning requires that all cases open for ongoing services have a written case plan and that the plan be developed in cooperation with family and children, when developmentally appropriate. The statewide policy 0211 Protective Capacity Family Assessment (PCFA) provides the framework from which the parent's case plan and service agreement is drafted. The PCFA policy provides a shared agreement on consistent application of the safety model across the child welfare agencies and guides staff on engaging families in meetings to develop case plan goals. The statewide policy 0212 Protective Capacity Progress Assessment (PCPA) monitors case plan progress and requires ongoing meetings with the family.

Case planning is a family-centered process that identifies family strengths and resources to assist the family or other caregivers in enhancing protective capacity and improving



overall family functioning. Case plans are intended to be flexible enough to adapt to changes in circumstances for the family, or availability of services. Ongoing evaluations of the best interest of the child, as well as assessments of the family's needs, inform the development and monitoring of the case plan. Case plans include a plan for ensuring the child's proper care, a description of the child's needs, and a description of the services to be provided to meet those identified needs. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the creation of their case plan and engage in processes for receiving services and utilizing resources. The plan must also provide a description of the services to be provided to the parents to facilitate the child's return to parental custody or to ensure permanency for the child.

Nevada utilizes the diligent search contact tracking sheet, which is completed by parents, to help identify family resources. The state also uses statewide standards and training to improve the quality and consistency of diligent search data. The parent's involvement in identifying relatives improves relative engagement and helps identify important connections for children. Diligent search efforts are attached to court reports, and judicial officers ask parents for relative information during court hearings.

Over the next five years, data will continue to be gathered to ensure efforts are enhancing practice. DCFS will partner with the CIP and participate in its JCAMP project to compare data collected through the court system with outcome data collected by DCFS. The state will assess gaps in service delivery, training, or communication, to inform strategies to improve.

The state will continue efforts to improve new caseworker training revolving around court processes. DCFS currently provides new caseworkers with case plan writing workshops at the request of the worker or the supervisor. Workers are provided with the tools to support the development of quality case plans in the field.

### ***Item 21: Periodic reviews***

NRS 432B.580 mandates the court to conduct a hearing at least semiannually and within 90 days after a request by a party of any prior hearing. NRS 432B.585 allows for the utilization of administrative reviews, comprised of a panel of at least three persons appointed by the judge, to review placements. NAC 432B.420 indicates the contents of the hearing must include evaluations and assessments of progress in carrying out the case plan goals for the child in care and address ASFA requirements on reasonable efforts.

DCFS Policy 0206 Court Hearing Notification ensures foster parents and other care providers are afforded the right to be heard in review hearings with respect to children in their care and to offer information about the services received by the child and family.

Nevada ensures periodic review hearings are held no less frequently than every six months. Jurisdictions closely track the timeliness of periodic review hearings. System partners have expressed that strong scheduling protocols contribute to the jurisdictions' adherence to the six-month deadlines.

In May of 2024, DCFS facilitated a one-day convening that brought together judicial and legal partners, child welfare agency staff and leaders, CQI staff, data team members, the CBCS, and the Children’s Bureau, to discuss the upcoming CFSR Round 4, and current collaboration and engagement between systems. Feedback from participants of this meeting was overwhelmingly positive, and people expressed a desire to build on that foundation. Over the next five years, Nevada intends to continue efforts to enhance the relationships with judicial districts across the state and dive deeper into the data available from both systems. This is an identified goal in this report. DCFS also intends to engage with families, youth, and caregivers, to determine the impact of various initiatives across the state, such as how previously developed Nevada Court Family Guide, and Nevada Courts Road Map impact their experience with the court dependency process. DCFS also intends to partner with NPT to evaluate and assess impacts the previously delivered trauma informed training to judicial and legal partners may or may not have impacted child welfare outcomes.

### ***Item 22: Permanency hearings***

NRS 432B.590 mandates a permanency hearing be held no later than 12 months from a child’s initial removal. Pursuant to NRS 432.393, when reasonable efforts are not required, a permanency hearing must occur within 30 days of the judicial finding.

Statewide policy 0206 Court Hearing Notification outlines agency requirements for providing and ensuring notification of court hearings to parents and relevant parties. Statewide policy 0204 Case Planning requires agencies make and finalize permanency plans by no later than 12 months after the child’s removal. Statewide policy 1004 Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) outlines the noticing requirements to all parties for any of the prior proceedings, for parents, and for any persons planning to adopt the child, relatives of the child or providers of foster care who are currently providing care to the child.

Nevada’s source of data for this item is UNITY and is extracted through report CFS 775. That report is shared with the CIP quarterly and aids the two systems to assess performance on timeliness of case processing for all judicial districts. Nevada’s permanency hearings occur in a timely manner in almost all cases. System partners have confirmed that initial permanency hearings occur no less frequently than 12 months from the date children enter foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter. In 2022, the median number of days to the first permanency hearing was 353, with 85% of all hearings taking place within 365 days of removal. This is compared to 82% in 2021. Over the next five years, the state will explore how to further partner with the CIP on monitoring this item. The CIP will also continue to collect data through its JCAMP project that will include elements related to this item.

### ***Item 23: Termination of parental rights***

NRS 432B.590 mandates that no later than 12 months after the initial removal of the child from their home and annually thereafter, a hearing shall be held concerning the permanent placement of the child. At these hearings, the court reviews the plan for

permanent placement of the child and determines whether the reasonable efforts required have been made. NRS 432B.590 further mandates if the child has been placed outside of their home for 14 of any 20 consecutive months, the best interests of the child must be presumed to be served by the termination of parental rights and documentation of the plan to TPR is included in the permanency plan. NRS 432B.630 requires action be taken to terminate parental rights on a newborn child who is delivered to a provider of emergency services, absent parent contact with the child welfare agency. NRS also identifies those circumstances in which the agency is not required to make reasonable efforts for reunification and addresses the issue of compelling reasons when it would not be in the child's best interest to file for TPR. Compelling reasons must be detailed in the case file and in reports to the court. If the court determines it is in the best interest of the child to terminate parental rights, the court will use its best efforts to ensure that the procedures required by NRS Chapter 128 Termination of Parental Rights are completed within six months after the petition is filed.

NRS Chapter 128 details the process of TPR, specifically who files the petitions, procedures for TPR on ICWA cases, notice of hearings (publication), testimony, appointment of attorneys, specific considerations to various circumstances and restoration of parental rights in certain situations. NRS 128.170 frames the circumstance for a child, or the legal guardian of the child, who has not been adopted, and whose parent's rights have been terminated or relinquished, may petition the court for restoration of parental rights. The biological parent(s) for whom restoration of parental rights is sought must be fully informed of the legal rights, obligations, and consequences of restoration and must consent, in writing, to the petition.

Statewide policy 1004 Termination of Parental Rights requires timely permanency planning for children in the care and custody of the child welfare agency, and that planning must therefore begin the day the child enters care. The child welfare agency is required to make and finalize alternate permanency plans no later than 12 months after the child's removal. Policy states that absent compelling reasons not to file a TPR, the petition must be filed within 60 days of the court's determination that reasonable efforts are not required. Nevada continues to strive towards filing TPR in compliance with [NRS 432B.590](#), [NRS 432B.630](#), [NRS Chapter 128](#), the statewide policy 1004 Termination of Parental Rights and the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA).

Over the next five years, the state will explore how to further partner with the CIP on monitoring this item including comparing data collected by both systems to track performance with TPR. Currently, DCFS monitors timeliness to TPRs through the statewide quarterly case reviews as well as capturing court hearing data in UNITY. Nevada intends to work towards improving the quality of data entered into UNITY for more expansive data collection and tracking purposes. Nevada will assess the need for additional training around data entry of TPRs. Nevada has an active data report in which children who have an adoption goal are captured, along with TPR information to track timeliness to TPR, both by the agency and the courts. From 2015 to 2022, Nevada saw

an overall decline in the time to TPR. The median number of days to TPR in 2015 was 635, while in 2022, it was 586.

Nevada does not have a unified court system which makes it challenging to collect and analyze data from the dependency court system. Data summaries are completed each year in September for the previous year. The data is collected from a variety of sources, such as the child welfare agencies, Chapen Hall, and the foster data archive. The CIP partners with a researcher who then synthesizes the data into one report and provides data summaries. Over the next five years, the CIP will continue to collect data through its JCAMP project that will include elements related to this item.

***Item 24: Notice of hearings and reviews to caregivers***

Notice of annual and semi-annual court hearings to caregivers must be supplied, pursuant to NRS 432B.580(6)(a)(b), to all parties to any of the prior proceedings, parents, any persons planning to adopt the child, relatives of the child, or providers of foster care who are currently providing care to the child. If a child in protective custody is determined to be of indigenous descent, the child welfare agency must notify the tribe in writing at the beginning of the proceedings. If the indigenous child is eligible for membership in more than one tribe, each tribe must be notified. Statewide policy 0206 Court Hearing Notification mandates proper notification of court hearings and court reviews regarding the status of a child in the custody of a child welfare agency and is necessary to ensure active involvement and participation of caregivers (pre-adoptive, foster parents, relative, fictive kin, etc.) in the child’s safety, permanency, and well-being.

Nevada continues to make concerted efforts to consistently provide adequate notifications to caregivers informing them of their right to be heard and their right to attend a review hearing for a child in their care. This information is currently tracked in case notes. Each child welfare agency will continue to align internal policies and practices with the stateside policy 0206 Court Hearing Notification, [NRS 432B.580\(6\)\(a\)\(b\)](#), and [Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure: Rule 5 \(a\)\(b\)](#).

Over the next five years, Nevada will explore ways to further partner with CIP to capture qualitative and quantitative data for this item for monitoring and CQI purposes. DCFS FPO will explore the ability to monitor this item utilizing data entry into UNITY. Currently, there are no CQI activities related to notices of hearings.

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**QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM**

***Item 25: Quality Assurance System***

Nevada Revised Statutes 432B.180 and 432.2155 require DCFS to monitor the performance of child welfare agencies through data collection, evaluation of services and the review and approval of agency improvement plans pursuant to NRS 432B.2155. Nevada Administrative Code 432B.030 details the activities required concerning

evaluation of services provided by the child welfare agencies and actions upon determination of noncompliance with certain provisions.

From 2020 through 2021, the state conducted a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Self-Assessment with technical assistance from the Capacity Building Center for States (CBCS). From that self-assessment, Nevada developed a CQI Action Plan it continues to utilize to improve on this systemic factor. Nevada continues to embrace a CQI culture in its statewide teams and workgroups, sub workgroups and within the SQIC.

The state utilizes a quarterly case review process that mirrors the federal CFSR case review process including the use of the federal on-site review instrument to monitor and assess its performance on child and family outcomes. This is supplemented by existing data reports from UNITY, ad hoc data requests made to the Office of Analytics, federal data reports, and regional data collected by the child welfare agencies.

Nevada received confirmation of successfully completing its Round 3 CFSR PIP on September 29, 2022. From October of 2022, through March of 2023, Nevada paused its statewide quarterly case reviews to update its training for new case reviewers, and to assess its case review processes so that it could improve the case review experience through a CQI lens. In April of 2023, Nevada restarted its statewide quarterly case reviews, continuing to utilize the federal review tool, the OSRI, for Round 4. Review results from the last four rolling quarters are included in this report. The state continuously assesses its case review processes, and the application of the federal tool when conducting case reviews. To assess its performance on the child and family outcomes over time, the state looked closer at its performance since the 2018 CFSR, while comparing any progress made through its completion of its PIP in 2022, to current statewide performance.

Nevada's next statewide quarterly case review will occur in August of 2024 and the state will partner with the Children's Bureau who will provide secondary oversight as part of TA in preparation for the CFSR Round 4. Nevada has submitted its request to conduct a state-led review for the CFSR. Nevada has worked to expand its pool of case reviewers and QA staff and to elicit feedback from case review participants. New reviewers are provided with a survey upon completion of new case reviewer training ahead of their first case review. Once a review is completed, an additional survey is disseminated to both reviewers and QA staff. Reviewer surveys are aimed to elicit feedback on observations during the review, their experience with their review partner, and their QA staff, also to determine what gaps in learning or tools they could identify. Surveys for QA staff are aimed at eliciting feedback about their general observations of the review process and any emerging trends they noticed during the review. QA staff are also asked to evaluate the skill level and tool mastery of individual reviewers. Additionally, at the conclusion of every review, a debrief is held with all case review participants aimed at creating a space to elicit additional feedback and to share case review results. The child welfare agencies conduct individual debriefs with case review participants and their supervisors following a case review in their jurisdiction.

The requirements for this systemic factor and the state's QA/CQI system, as well as any updates to progress in this area are described further under Goal 5. Additionally, please refer to Nevada's CQI Action Plan attached to this report.

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## **STAFF TRAINING**

### ***Item 26: Initial Staff Training***

NRS 432B.195, 432B.397, and NAC 432B.090 require the state to provide a full staff development and training program which includes a minimum of 40 hours of training related to the principles and practices of child welfare services. This includes specific training related to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and cultural competence in working with LGBTQ+ youth. Statewide policy 1402 Child Welfare Training specifies the pre-service training requirements for all case-carrying child welfare staff and direct supervisors in the first year of employment.

Pre-service training is provided statewide through the Title IV-E funded Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT), which consists of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). The universities also partner with the child welfare jurisdictions to deliver specific content along with coordinating on-the-job-training. This partnered approach to facilitate the training of new case managers allows for the integration of theory, jurisdictional agency policy, practical information, skill demonstration, and simulated skill practice. Content is delivered in a modular format along the trajectory of the life of a family through the system, and trainees complete pre- and post-tests at each module, along with satisfaction surveys. In addition, efforts have been made to provide a standardized assessment and feedback structure for written assignments and simulation experiences.

To monitor the completion of training and to support the workforce, the state utilizes its Learning Management System (LMS), NPTEarn, which has been in use since 2018. NPTEarn is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation, and delivery of child welfare educational and training courses. The universities have been standardizing their systems in partnership with the child welfare agencies to maintain timely workforce data and host in-house training registration and maintain records. The statewide Workforce Innovation Team monitors the utilization of the system including report development, monitoring of staff training and licensure status and increased access to training modules. This monitoring will continue over the next five years.

Nevada uses the peer/social networking and analytic capabilities of the system to bolster professional development beyond single training events and support transfer of learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, compliance reports can be utilized in which the system can automatically email the jurisdictions to monitor training attendance. A dashboard was created in NPTEarn so that executive leadership and managers can monitor the completion of these post training activities and post training supports of their staff.

NPT evaluates the pre-service training through pre- and post-tests, along with course evaluation surveys. These are distributed to participants at the end of each module so that they can self-report their abilities across the training learning objectives, increase in understanding, instructor effectiveness, curriculum effectiveness, and overall perception of the training. Although rubrics are used for simulation and mock case components, these currently are only shared with the individual learner. NPT is exploring incorporating pre-service rubrics into NPTLearn so that aggregate data can be used for training evaluation. Local jurisdiction training teams and the universities meet regularly, and test scores along with focus group and survey data are made available to maintain a CQI feedback loop and revisions are made on a regular basis.

For more information regarding training for the child welfare workforce and the utilization of NPTLearn, please refer to Nevada's Training Plan attached to this report.

### ***Item 27: On-going Staff Training***

Statewide policy 1402 Child Welfare Training requires all staff engaged in child welfare services and their supervisors or managers meet the minimum requirements for ongoing training set forth in NAC 641B.187 which requires completion of at least thirty hours of continuing education in the field of child welfare practice every two years from date of hire. The policy includes both first year and second year training requirements which dictate specific courses to be taken in these first important years on the job for child welfare staff.

Ongoing training is accomplished through the Title IV-E funded Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT) and is provided statewide by University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) in partnership with the child welfare jurisdictions. Through NPTLearn, NPT utilizes the software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation, and delivery of child welfare educational and training courses. The universities have standardized their systems in partnership with the child welfare agencies to maintain timely workforce data and host in-house training registration and maintain records.

NPT has developed efficient ways to track new employees' first- and second-year training requirements, as well as ongoing training requirements for the workforce. The statewide Workforce Innovation Team (WIT) has and will continue to monitor a plan to improve the utilization of the system including report development, monitoring of staff training, licensure status and increased access to training modules.

Nevada uses the peer/social networking and analytic capabilities of the system to bolster professional development beyond single training events and support transfer of learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, compliance reports aid in monitoring of training attendance. A dashboard in NPTLearn allows executive leadership and managers to monitor the completion of post training activities and training supports of their staff. Ongoing, in-service training is delivered live, asynchronous on-line, and synchronous to the statewide child welfare workforce.

NPT delivers an entire asynchronous, online mental health series that meets first- and second-year training requirements. Following completion of a foundational course, staff take an additional course exploring more in-depth information about mental health disorders, as well as an array of shorter courses (17 total) designed to provide more specified detail about mental health diagnostic categories.

Meeting the second-year requirement, the NPT developed a worker well-being training, Self-Care in Stressful Times. This instructor-led course provides ways to manage stress in different situations, how to identify and work through burn-out, how to develop a good self-care plan, and the ethical responsibilities of having self-care in the field. Additionally, asynchronous online courses were developed for LGBTQ+ and CSEC as part of annual requirements.

Additional in-service training topics developed by NPT include topics related to trauma, child sexual abuse, engaging youth and building resilience, ethics, mandated reporting, motivational interviewing, suicide prevention, and others under development. Nevada Juvenile Dependency Mediation Training which educates child welfare staff to effectively participate during court-ordered dependency mediation and Trauma, Court, and Engagement – Using Communication Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families which informs caseworkers about the court process and the transition toward trauma-informed care in the courtroom are available through the LMS. These trainings were developed as a companion piece to the judge’s trauma-informed care training and is meant to support the overall court process by helping caseworkers identify how to model and encourage trauma-informed care.

NPT is currently piloting a modified and improved supervisor training which is discussed as a standing agenda item during WIT meetings. Attention and focus were placed on this series of training in response to feedback received from the child welfare agencies. CoachNV was integrated into this supervisor training as it focuses on instilling a coaching framework into practice. CoachNV standalone has been delivered to executive leadership, managers, and supervisors statewide. Currently, the state is refining a fidelity tool for CoachNV to utilize moving forward.

For more information regarding training and the utilization of NPTLearn, please refer to Nevada’s Training Plan attached to this report.

***Item 28: Foster and adoptive parent training***

NAC Chapter 424 outlines the minimum standards for foster homes, specialized foster homes, group foster and independent living foster homes. NAC Chapter 432A includes the minimum standards for childcare facilities and childcare institutions. Childcare facilities refer to temporary care provided for five or more children and institutions are facilities serving 16 or more children who do not routinely return to the home of their parents or guardians. NAC 127.485 outlines training requirements for the adoption of children with special needs.



NAC 424.270 states an applicant for a license for a foster home must have at least eight hours of training in foster parenting provided or approved by the agency that provides child welfare services in the subjects described in NRS 424.0365. If the home has a pool, hot tub, or other free-standing body of water, or a sauna, the applicants must also obtain information on water safety, pool safety and the risk of drowning. Annually, each foster parent must complete a minimum of four hours of advanced training in foster parenting provided or approved by the agency that provides child welfare services.

NAC 424.712 requires specialized foster homes or a foster care agency to have a minimum of 40 hours pre-service training and NAC 424.714 requires an additional 20 hours of continuing education training annually. NRS 424.0365 also requires that anyone who operates a family foster home, a specialized foster home, an independent living foster home or a group foster home shall ensure that each employee who comes into direct contact with children in the home receives training within 90 days after employment and annually thereafter. Such training must include, without limitation, instruction concerning: (a) controlling the behavior children; (b) policies and procedures concerning the use of force and restraint on children; (c) the rights of children in the home; (d) suicide awareness and prevention; (e) the administration of medication to children; (f) applicable state and federal constitution and statutory rights of children in the home; (g) policies and procedures concerning other matters affecting the health, welfare, safety and civil and other rights of children in the home; and (h) working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning children, such other matters as are required by the licensing authority or pursuant to regulations of the Division. NRS 432A.177 requires childcare facilities staff to receive the same training, within 90 days of employment.

Statewide policy 1306 Kinship Licensing Standards allows for a separate set of licensing standards for relatives and fictive kin. The kinship licensing minimum requirements include, (1) criminal background check and clearance including a child abuse and neglect (CANS) check and clearance; (2) a caregiver suitability assessment; (3) a home safety and needs assessment, and (4) meet the minimum eight hours of training standard. NAC 424.165 requires at least one visit by a licensing authority representative to the foster home to determine if the home is safe. The licensing authority representative will include a caseworker or their designee, for the purposes of approving a relative license.

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and identify ways the state can track and monitor the completion of training requirements. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to existing training to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities served.

### ***Initial Foster and Adoptive Parent Training***

NAC 424.270 states an applicant for a license for a foster home must have at least eight hours of training in foster parenting provided or approved by the agency that provides child welfare services in the subjects described in NRS 424.0365. Statewide policy 1306 Kinship Licensing Standards allows for a separate set of licensing standards for relatives

and fictive kin. The kinship licensing minimum requirements for training is the same eight-hour training standard for regular foster homes.

Although child welfare agencies in Nevada use different approaches to licensing foster and adoptive homes, they all meet the minimum requirements of Nevada regulations: completion of pre-service and ongoing training; background checks; suitability assessment; and home inspection requirements. Each region utilizes pre-service training curriculums that exceed the minimum eight-hour state regulation requirement in NAC 424.270, providing 15 to 30 hours of training. The curriculum consists of training around trauma informed care, reasonable and prudent parent standards, mandated reporting, understanding the foster care licensing process, understanding how a child becomes involved in the child welfare system, and obligations of a foster parent.

Nevada utilizes a community partner, Fostering Connections, to provide specialized training for relative and fictive kin caregivers, and to provide specialized training sessions for pre-adoptive parents. This training is approximately 15 hours in duration and is geared toward the needs of families who are fostering relatives or fictive kin, to prepare them to take in a child or sibling group. The training is geared toward and driven by trauma informed care and provides information on other aspects of fostering tailored to the specific needs of these parents. The state's partnership with Foster Kinship adds additional support to families, such as assistance with TANF or SNAP applications, and access to the in-home navigator program.

Nevada utilizes a hybrid training model offering both in person and online training for foster and adoptive parents, offered in both English and Spanish. In addition to scheduled trainings, agencies have prerecorded on-demand trainings in both English and Spanish for foster parents to view at their convenience. When transitioning to a hybrid model, agencies updated training information and materials and the process for tracking and monitoring the initial training and licensing process.

Nevada developed and is allowing for a different set of foster care licensing standards for relatives. Statewide policy 1306 Kinship Licensing Standards follows the federal rule and provides requirements for the child welfare agencies. Child welfare agencies statewide partner with the Foster Kinship Program to provide additional education and support, including technology, to kinship and relative caregivers. Training for relatives differs from non-relative training in the number of hours that the caregiver needs to become licensed, requiring only eight. The training offered is tailored to relatives providing care and includes topics such as navigating familial relationships and family dynamics.

### ***Ongoing Foster Parent Training***

The statewide Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) program's vision is for every child living in foster care is to be cared for by a caregiver (foster, relative, fictive, and/or adoptive) who provides skilled, nurturing parenting while helping the child maintain connections to their family <https://www.jitnevada.org/>; [www.qpinevada.org](http://www.qpinevada.org). As part of the QPI program, each region has a collaborative QPI committee with foster caregivers and child welfare

staff that addresses the training needs of foster parents, as well as the recruitment and retention of foster homes.

Nevada uses a web-based training and service program, called Just-In-Time training to connect foster parents, kinship or other caregivers with training, peer experts and other resources. The state holds a contract, using adoption incentive funding, with the University of South Florida to maintain the QPI/Just-In-Time website which includes data extraction and technical support. Nevada will continue to support the online platform based on the needs articulated by foster parents.

### ***Specialized Foster Care (SFC)***

Specialized foster care and advanced foster care programs are implemented in all child welfare agencies to serve children with significant emotional and behavioral problems. NAC 424.712 requires 40 hours of training to be provided to caregivers before providing direct care. Foster parents are required to receive advanced training in an evidenced based foster care treatment model, Together Facing the Challenge. They also receive trauma informed care and medication administration training. Foster parents receive in-home weekly coaching, direct support, and coaching in utilizing the tools learned in the advanced training, ongoing phone support and crisis response when needed. With specialized foster care homes, the support services are provided by a contracted foster care agency and with advanced foster care homes, services are provided by staff employed by a child welfare agency. The DCFS is legislatively mandated to measure outcomes of these programs to determine the success and wellbeing of the higher-need children placed in these homes. This is satisfied through an annual report to the DHHS Director, the Legislative Counsel Bureau, and the Governor.

### ***Foster Care Agencies: Contracted Foster Homes***

Foster care agencies have the same minimum training requirements as specialized foster care homes; however, the foster care agencies are responsible for providing and ensuring their contracted foster homes have met the training requirements outlined in NAC 424.712 and NRS 424.0365. They are required to submit the curriculum to the licensing authority for approval per NAC 424.212(5). Each member of the direct care staff of a foster care agency must complete training before providing supervision or direct care of a child or beginning any other responsibilities related to the supervision or direct care of children.

### ***Child Care Institutions***

Requirements for training are identified within NRS 432A.177, and NAC 432A.323, .326. Completion of training requirements are monitored through the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) Child Care Licensing (CCL), DHHS. The CCL inspects these facilities in-person, twice a year at which time CCL assesses facility compliance with state laws and regulations.

For more information related to foster and adoptive parent training, please see attachment F, Nevada's Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan. Observations made during a review of this plan include Nevada does not track the delivery of training at a

statewide level, although the child welfare agencies track the completion of training hours. Pre- and post-tests are administered for any training taken through the Just in Time website; however, no additional evaluation of training, or follow up surveys are administered. Over the next five years, the state will work to include these types of assessments and evaluation into existing CQI activities.

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## SERVICE ARRAY

### ***Item 29: Array of services***

NRS 432.011(a) states that the purposes of DCFS include ensuring that a sufficient range of services is available to provide care and treatment to children and families in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs.

The Department of Health and Human Services promotes the health and well-being of its residents through the delivery or facilitation of a multitude of essential services to ensure families are strengthened, public health is protected, and individuals achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency. The Department is the largest in state government, comprised of five divisions along with additional programs and offices overseen by the DHHS' Director's Office. The five divisions include Aging and Disability Services (ADSD), Child and Family Services (DCFS), Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP; Medicaid), Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) and Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS). DHHS is the lead agency for the community-based child abuse prevention programs in Nevada and leads the child maltreatment prevention activities in Nevada.

The DCFS oversees the administration and management of all child welfare federal grants. In addition, the DCFS is responsible for administering Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) funding to identified child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault victims, as well as to underserved populations such as commercially sexually exploited children. The DCFS is also responsible for administering family violence and prevention services, victims of domestic violence services, and VOCA training, as well as technical assistance grants focused on meeting national certification standards.

DCFS FPO is responsible for the CFSR, subsequent PIPs, the CFSP, subsequent APSRs, Title IV-E and Title IV-B funding, as well as the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds, also known as CAPTA Title II. The Office of Community Partnerships and Grant (OCPG) in the Director's Office is responsible for the Children's Trust Fund (CTF). These programs provide families with access to information and resources, classes designed to strengthen and support families, and offer opportunities for assistance available within the communities where they live. The CBCAP lead and FPO meet regularly, and this ongoing partnership focuses on the integration of resources and services in the spectrum of child welfare.

In the northern part of the state, Washoe County Human Services Agency Clinical Services Team (WCHSA-CST) has three paths to assist clients in getting needed services. The clinical unit supports case workers in referring clients to community

providers or offers direct clinical services to clients. The child welfare agency has contracts with 23 community providers.

In FY24, the agency submitted 1,175 vouchers or referrals for services. Although some contracts offer expedited access for various services, other providers and services such as Functional Behavioral Assessments and Play Therapy have longer wait times, influenced by high demand or relatively low reimbursement rates from Medicaid. Certain services, including psychiatric evaluations and ADHD assessments, are extremely limited or unavailable through contracted providers, leading to prolonged wait times.

The WCHSA-CST completes assessments, including level of care and services recommendations, of all children placed in foster care within 14 days from date of placement. In FY24, they completed 164 assessments and 325 therapeutic interventions, with an average service duration of 45 days. WCHSA-CST also offers an Intensive In-Home Services (IIHS) program that works closely with families facing substantial challenges, aiming to prevent out-of-home placements, reduce re-entry into the child welfare system, and support family reunification. The program successfully offered a variety of services to 41 families over FY24.

WCHSA-CST collaborates and supports community clinicians to build community capacity to provide a variety of clinical modalities. To support community providers, the agency offers enhanced rates for evidence-based modalities and collaborates with trainers to provide community-wide training. When funding permits, these trainings are offered at no cost. Additionally, WCHSA facilitates bi-weekly EMDR and play therapy consultation groups for internal and community clinicians to discuss intervention implementation and case consultation.

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and partner with the DCFS Grants Management Unit (GMU) and the child welfare agencies to identify ways the state can track and monitor the array of services available. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to services to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities served. Nevada's use of service array screens in its current transitional CCWIS system is not consistent across the state. The state will assess how to approve this over the next couple of years. Also planned in the northern part of the state, is the development and dissemination of a strengths and needs assessment using surveys of families, providers, and community partners.

### ***Item 30: Individualizing Services***

NRS 432.011(a) states that the purposes of DCFS includes ensuring that a sufficient range of services is available to provide care and treatment to children and families in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs.

Improvements in this area are supported by the activities outlined in the [Collaboration](#), [Item 28](#), and [Item 29](#) sections of this report. Progress includes continued collaboration

with community partners to ensure knowledge and responsiveness to community needs and expansion of the service array through FFPSA planning and the System of Care grant.

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and identify ways the state can track and monitor the array of services available and how responsive those are to the identified needs of youth and families. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to services to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities served.

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## AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

### ***Item 31: State Engagement in Consultation with Stakeholders***

NRS 432.0305 requires the DCFS to observe and study the changing nature and extent of the need for child welfare services and to cooperate with the federal government in adopting and completing state plans that will assist the DCFS in providing services for children and families. This is accomplished through coordination and collaboration with other public and private agencies and entities in developing the five-year Child and Family Services Plan and ongoing annual updates required by Title IV-B. The DCFS collaborates with a variety of entities in this process, including the examples listed below.

- The Systems Advocate assists constituents regarding complaints and concerns regarding the programs the Division oversees. This advocate also serves as the Public Information Office, public record request officer, and hearing officer.
- The Quality Parenting Initiative is a statewide effort and was developed to ensure that every child removed from their home due to abandonment, abuse, or neglect is cared for by a foster family who provides skilled, nurturing parenting while helping the child maintain connections with their family.
- The Nevada Office for Victims of Crime (VOC) manages the funding and service delivery for victim services throughout Nevada. VOC strives to continuously improve access for all victims and survivors through strategic planning, communication, and resource sharing among the state agencies that support and fund victim services.
- System of Care is a family driven and youth guided program to serve children who have serious emotional disturbance while also providing support and services to their families. Currently the focus is on expansion of services to the rural counties.

The state continues to make progress with this item by encouraging participation from youth, families, caregivers, individuals with lived experience, as well as community and system partners by providing the opportunity to join meetings and workgroups. These partners also support agency program improvements by implementing changes within their respective systems. This engagement and collaboration will continue over the next five years to advance the child welfare system.

Additional information regarding this item can be found in the Collaboration section of this report.

### ***Item 32: Coordination of CFSP Services with other Federal Programs***

The state follows the requirements to submit the CFSP, as well as requirements to annually submit the APSR in accordance with the Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, Section 477 of Title IV- E of the Social Security Act, CAPTA, and federal regulations at 45 CFR Part 1357. Nevada has remained in compliance each year with these requirements and has received approval on all plans and reports since the requirement was established in 2005.

The State of Nevada has a system in place to coordinate services under the CFSP with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. The DCFS relies on close relationships with a wide range of partners and interdependencies to coordinate services and benefits to overlapping populations. The divisions listed below fall under the umbrella of the DHHS and receive federal funding in which active coordination efforts are ongoing.

- The Division of Health Care Financing and Policy works in partnership with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide medical services to Nevada families.
- The Division of Public and Behavioral Health works to protect, promote, and improve the physical and behavioral health of the people of Nevada. This includes overseeing and administering clinical and community-based services.
- The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services provides quality, timely and temporary services enabling Nevada families to achieve their highest levels of self-sufficiency.
- The Aging and Disability Services Division delivers comprehensive support to elders, adults and children with disabilities or special health care needs.

Nevada DCFS recognizes the importance of coordination with other federal programs, including the federally funded initiatives in the planning of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), to prevent duplication of efforts and to leverage funding and collaborative efforts. This item is supported by activities outlined in [Collaboration](#), and [Item 29](#).

***Item 33: Standards Applied Equally***

NAC Chapter 424 Foster Homes for Children serves as the overarching standards for foster homes in Nevada. NAC 424.250 specifies staffing ratios in specialized foster homes, family and group foster homes. Statewide policy 1305 Waivers Foster Care and Adoption outlines procedures for requesting a waiver for certain foster care licensure or adoption standards. It also identifies the fiscal ramifications of using a waiver, which can affect Title IV-E eligibility for reimbursement of funding through the federal government.

The 2018 Family First Prevention and Services Act (FFPSA) requires child care institutions (CCI), which includes group homes, residential treatment centers, shelters, qualified residential treatment programs (QRTP), and other congregate care settings, in Nevada that provide placement to children in foster care, meet the same federal Title IV-E Criminal History and Child Abuse and Neglect Screening (CANS) background checks as foster homes. Statewide Policy 1606 Child Care Institution – Criminal Background Checks/Out-of-State Central Registry Checks further outlines this requirement.

NAC Chapter 424 incorporates the National Model Foster Family Home Licensing Standards; however, Nevada’s standards deviate slightly from the national model. The state submitted the Title IV-E Plan amendment, Family First Prevention Services Act: Deviation from Model Licensing Standards and Waivers for Foster Family Homes outlining where Nevada’s standards deviate from the national model.

On September 28, 2023, Administration for Children and Families issued a final rule amending the regulations at §1355.20 to allow Title IV-E agencies to claim Title IV-E federal financial participation for the cost of foster care maintenance payments on behalf of an otherwise eligible child who is placed in a relative or fictive kin kinship licensed or approved foster family home when the agency uses licensing or approval standards for relative or kinship foster family homes that differ from the standards used for non-relative foster family homes.

DCFS requires child welfare agencies meet at least the following minimum standards to approve a relative or fictive kin home as a licensed relative foster home. The kinship licensing minimum requirements include (1) criminal background check and clearance including a child abuse and neglect (CANS) check and clearance; (2) a caregiver suitability assessment; (3) a home safety and needs assessment; and (4) meet the minimum eight-hour training requirement.

Issuing a waiver to license a foster home in Nevada is a broader process requiring multiple levels of oversight, through the local child welfare agency and DCFS. Monitoring and oversight is provided to ensure adherence to the statewide policy 1305 Waivers Foster Care and Adoption and to ensure consistent application of the criteria used for non-safety related waivers. DCFS FPO tracks waivers statewide and can easily identify the number and types of waivers approved, as well as the circumstances around the need for a waiver. The state periodically assesses the need to update regulations and policy



in response to new federal legislation, changes in state statutes, or to incorporate practice changes. The information tracked includes approvals, denials, agency, name, relative or non-relative, NAC requesting to be waived, the reason for request (safety or non-safety), and Title IV-E eligibility. DCFS FPO provides technical assistance as needed.

Data from July 1, 2023, through May 31, 2024, is outlined below and includes 25 approved waivers and 0 denials.

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Relative</u>	<u>Non-Relative</u>	<u>Non-Safety related</u>	<u>Safety related</u>
<u>Clark</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Washoe</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Rurals</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Statewide</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>9</u>

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and identify ways the state can enhance its tracking of waivers. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to the waiver process to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities we serve.

***Item 34: Requirements for Criminal Background Checks***

NRS Chapter 424 outlines the requirements for criminal background checks for anyone employed as staff or director of a group treatment home, or anyone applying to be a foster parent. Statewide policy 0515 Child Abuse and Neglect (CANS) and National Criminal Investigative Database (NCID) Requirements for Prospective Foster and Adoptive Parents, in response to the Adam Walsh Act of 2006, sets forth procedures for conducting and responding to CANS checks. The policy also covers conducting and establishing statewide standards for authorizing placement of children with caregivers who have undergone a NCID and CANS check. No foster home or adoption applicant is issued a foster home license until all criminal background checks have been completed.

Information collected by DCFS ensures criminal background checks are completed as required for all licensed and unlicensed foster caregivers. This item is supported by statewide policy 1606 Child Care Institution – Criminal Background Checks/Out-of-State Central Registry Checks which incorporates the Family First Prevention and Services Act requirement of child care institutions meeting the same Federal Title IV-E Criminal History and Child Abuse and Neglect Screening (CANS) background checks as foster homes. The requirement dictates that no adult, paid or unpaid, is allowed to work in a child care institution until all criminal and CANS checks have been completed and it is verified the applicant is cleared.

***Item 35: Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes***

NRS 424.087 requires the development of regional plans around the recruitment and retention of foster homes. NAC 127.480 requires the development of a plan to recruit prospective adoptive parents for children with special needs in the custody of the agency awaiting adoption. The plans should include a determination of the number of children in the geographic area, the demographic information of those children, and addresses the

need of children in foster care to receive care provided in a racially and culturally competent manner. The plan developed should also address serving children who have intellectual or developmental disabilities, children who have other special needs, and the importance of maintaining siblings together. The purpose of the plan is to develop a service array that reflects the diversity of the children in care. Refer to the Nevada Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan attached to this report for more information.

The Adoption Call to Action (ACTA) team is a resource for Nevada and has improved practice across the state. Nevada collaborates with other states to research and identify strategies to increase the number, and diversity of, foster homes across the state, especially in the rural regions. The strategies listed below are being targeted through the Adoption Call to Action Plan.

- Review adoption programming and address statewide needs with the goal of reducing the number of Nevada children and youth waiting to be adopted by identifying and eliminating barriers to achieving permanency.
- Review initial and ongoing data to inform interventions.
- Collaborate to problem solve, share ideas, and develop policies and procedures.
- Collaborate and participate in targeted recruitment strategies.
- Retention strategies for adoptive homes.
- Regional differences and changes in demographics.

Since July 1, 2023, DCFS RRCW has completed licenses for 23 general foster homes, and 33 additional families through relative or fictive kin, child-specific, intrastate, or ICPC. Northern Nevada issued 33 new family foster licenses, 5 adoption-only licenses, and 32 licenses for relatives or fictive kin, for a total of 70 new licenses. There were eight new higher level of care homes licensed (six specialized foster care and two enhanced foster care), five of which obtained this level of licensure specifically to support the recruitment plan and placement of a specific child. Additionally, 12 new mentors were onboarded and nine youth in care were matched with mentors. 54 new applications for family foster care were received, which is an increase of 15 from the same time frame the previous year.

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and identify ways the state can track and monitor how recruitment and retention efforts have impacted available foster homes in the state. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to foster care licensing to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities served. Nevada will also focus efforts to implement the Final Rule on Designated Placement Requirements under Title IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQ+ children (89 FR 34818) published on April 30, 2024. Statewide forms, policies, and practice will be updated to incorporate the case plan and case review requirements outlined in the rule.

### ***Item 36: State use of cross-jurisdictional resources for permanent placements***

The state follows the federal requirements in accordance with P.L. 109-239, P.L. 109-248, 42 U.S.C. 670-679(b), as well as the statutory and regulatory requirements captured in NRS 127.330, NAC 432B.430, NAC 432B.435, NAC 432B.440, NRS 424.033 and NAC 127.235. In addition to federal and state laws, the state's Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) program also has a Safety Assessment and Family Evaluation (SAFE) policy, which serves as the primary means of evaluating and assessing the appropriateness of potential family foster care and licensed relative and adoptive families.

#### ***Interstate placements***

Nevada ICPC provides ongoing training and consultation to jurisdictional staff and is available via telephone, email, and virtually to answer questions regarding new and ongoing requests and general questions regarding ICPC from in-state and out-of-state providers, ICPC offices, and jurisdictional staff. Discussions typically involve the ICPC process and time frames for home study completion.

Nevada ICPC utilizes a Preliminary Home Study Report template that is sent to each staff completing home studies. The template is sent in conjunction with the Safe and Timely Act reminder. This form is fillable and easy to complete. It was created to allow the completion of the Preliminary Report at the 50-day mark of the 60-day timeframe. The report identifies missing or incomplete items and requests an anticipated date of completion thus meeting the definition of a preliminary report per regulation number 27(a).

Nevada ICPC tracks both in and out of state home study requests to monitor the rate of completion within the 60-day time frame. Utilizing the NEICE tracking system and through contact with jurisdictions, Nevada ICPC monitors the Safe and Timely Notifications and remains vigilant in requesting updates, preliminary and final reports to meet the federal time frame for home studies. CCDFS has designated staff for completion of home studies, while RRCW and WCHSA rely on contractors to complete home studies.

To ensure safe and permanent placements are achieved, Nevada ICPC has an internal tracking system to request quarterly reports to ensure the safety and well-being of the children placed out of state. ICPC asks for additional updates to cases whenever they are requested and makes every effort to get the requested information as well as providing workers with contact information for other assigned staff so they may collaborate with each other. The following is data collected since 2022 around incoming and outgoing requests related to ICPC.

From January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022, for regulation two (parent, relative, foster & adoptions) requests, Nevada as the sending state sent 822 requests. As the receiving state, Nevada received 398 requests. During this same time period, for regulation one (parent, relative, foster and adoption) intact family relocation requests, Nevada as the sending state sent 39 requests. As the receiving state, Nevada received 11 requests.

From January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, for regulation two (parent, relative, foster & adoptions) requests, Nevada as the sending state sent 830 requests. As the receiving state, Nevada received 463 requests. During this same time period, for regulation one (parent, relative, foster and adoption) intact family relocation requests, Nevada as the sending state sent 16 requests. As the receiving state, Nevada received 16 requests.

### ***Intrastate placements***

DCFS FPO periodically collaborates with the regions to assess cross-jurisdictional needs within the state. They all indicated they have a good working relationship with each other and were not in need of a third party to facilitate the intrastate movement of children. Additionally, no concerns have been identified in the current process, therefore, the state ICPC office will not be assuming specific oversight responsibilities. Nevada ICPC maintains an internal list of contacts for this purpose and shares the contacts when requests come through the ICPC office. Jurisdictional caseworkers collaborate to resolve conflicts around case management or services. Statewide policy 0201 Intra-state Courtesy Supervision does not identify the state ICPC office as the gatekeeper of the policy or the program. Nevada ICPC assists state partners in connecting with the appropriate parties when the need arises. Each jurisdiction completes the necessary documents and works collaboratively with one another to ensure proper supervision of the children in the receiving jurisdiction. All jurisdictions use the UNITY system of record and can read case notes and access legal documents to ensure coordination of services. Regions use child contact reports to monitor the supervision of children in their custody.

Nevada ICPC is an active participant in the statewide workgroup that is updating statewide policy 0201 Intra-State Courtesy Supervision, to remain abreast of any changes in policy and procedure for intra-state placement of Nevada children. This policy update is expected to be finalized later in 2024. We will continue to update our internal documents to assist with intra-state contacts statewide.

Over the next five years, DCFS FPO will dive deeper into data collection for this item and identify ways the state can track and monitor the utilization of intrastate and interstate placements. Nevada will also assess its accessibility to intrastate and interstate placements to ensure it is inclusive and reflective of the race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and abilities of the communities we serve.

## PLAN FOR ENACTING THE STATE'S VISION

### GOAL 1: ENHANCE NEVADA'S CAPACITY TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES TO PREVENT MALTREATMENT.

**Rationale for this goal:** Multiple statewide groups consisting of representatives from each child welfare agency have been actively working on the implementation of Nevada's Family First Prevention Plan (FFPSA) that was approved by the Children's Bureau in 2023. Continued action planning for expansion of prevention services in Nevada, FFPSA and beyond, are necessary to continue the shift of child welfare in Nevada and its service array towards an evidenced based prevention focused system. Nevada strives to have child welfare in the state focused on the safety and well-being of children and keeping families intact if safe to do so. Nevada aims to assess and understand the predictive risk factors of its communities that lead to child welfare involvement. The state wants to explore potential primary and secondary prevention efforts to connect families to needed resources and supports within their own communities and prevent child abuse and neglect. Nevada's differential response (DR) program varies by jurisdiction and there is desire to standardize the use of differential response in Nevada to ensure that Nevada's children and families can be provided this service when needed. Differential response in Clark and Washoe counties is funded through DCFS Director's Office Funds for Healthy Nevada (funded by tobacco funds). This same Fund supports a portion of RRCW DR, and the rest is supplemented with Title IVB1 funding.

Improved outcomes: Safety Outcome 1 and 2

#### **Strategy 1: Develop a Prevention Data Dashboard for planning primary and secondary prevention.**

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will be utilizing a data dashboard that will inform the child welfare agencies and community partners of relevant data points that can be accessed in one location, and on a public facing website. Data will inform decision making for primary and secondary prevention. Primary prevention connects families to needed resources and supports within their community. Secondary prevention provides families with services to address family needs and prevent child abuse and neglect.

#### **Measures of Progress:**

- DCFS will collaborate with DHHS Office of Analytics and the child welfare jurisdictions to develop data dashboards.
- Present data dashboards to child welfare jurisdictions and relevant community partners to explain the purpose of the data and how it will be used in evaluating risk factors on child abuse and neglect to prevent child welfare involvement.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need for training for this strategy and will receive technical assistance from the state's Office of Analytics in the development and use of data dashboards.

**Implementation Supports:** Currently, there are no identified implementation supports for this strategy.

### **Strategy 2: Collaborate with existing prevention programs.**

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will be utilizing the data dashboard to guide what activities are funded by Title IV-E prevention programs, Title IV-B programs, and CAPTA programs.

#### **Measures of Progress:**

- This will occur once the data dashboards are developed. Staff who oversee the aforementioned programs will utilize the data dashboard while collaborating with community partners to guide funding activities aimed at providing primary and secondary prevention to Nevada’s children. Rationale can be provided that explains how the data dashboards were utilized to make funding decisions.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need for training for this strategy and will receive technical assistance from the Nevada DHHS Office of Analytics in the development and use of data dashboards.

**Implementation Supports:** Currently, there are no identified implementation supports for this strategy.

### **Strategy 3: Increase Differential Response Services throughout Nevada.**

**Objective:** By year five, there will be an increase in the use of standardized differential response in Nevada to provide support to families who need resources and services to prevent children from entering foster care.

#### **Measures of Progress:**

- Collective understanding of current differential response services offered in Nevada.
  - Explore, research, and assess the current differential response services provided to Nevada’s families and identify strengths and needs in services.
  - Assess the capacity of the DCFS RRCW and community partner capacity to provide differential response in the rural areas of Nevada.
  - Identify and review funding sources, and how funding is currently being utilized.
- Develop a plan to maximize the use of differential response in Nevada
  - Develop a statewide differential response policy to standardize differential response in Nevada.

- Develop a framework to increase the use of differential response across Nevada, including connecting families with community providers for prevention.
- Develop evaluation and continuous quality improvement process for differential response services to determine effectiveness of preventing children from entering foster care.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need for training for this strategy and partner with NPT if appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Currently, there are no immediate implementation supports for this strategy. Nevada will develop a policy to support implementation of DR and identify the need for funding to fully implement this strategy. The state will determine what CQI activities will be needed, including the development of data reports to monitor and sustain any progress with this strategy.

#### **Strategy 4: Enhance Nevada’s Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) program**

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will align efforts across the state’s child welfare agencies to address the needs of CSEC victims or children at risk of becoming victims. DCFS will partner with the state’s Human Trafficking Coalition and collaborate with agency and community partners to identify priorities for this population, identify service needs, create a repository of education and training materials, develop uniform data definitions, and continue to facilitate Nevada’s Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

#### **Measures of Progress:**

- Update and enhance Nevada’s CSEC state plan.
- Update the CSEC Coalition’s bylaws and formalize processes within the group.
- Partner with other state departments to develop processes and regulations for receiving centers.
- Explore funding options for receiving centers in Nevada.
- Identify a public facing location for online repository of information and training on this population of youth.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need for training for this strategy and partner with NPT if appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Currently, there are no immediate implementation supports needed for this strategy. Nevada will update state plans and Coalition bylaws and assess the need for any funding. The state will determine what CQI activities will be needed,

including the development of data reports to monitor and sustain any progress with this strategy.

## **GOAL 2: ENHANCE PERMANENCY SERVICES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES.**

**Rationale for this goal:** As Nevada moves to extend foster care services to youth and young adults to the age of 21 and looks to simplify the path to foster home licensure for relatives and kin, it is critical child welfare works with agency, system, and community partners to standardize and streamline processes. It is beneficial to the state to align resources and supports and create sustainable and collaborative relationships. The strategies described below will naturally improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for the children, families and communities.

### **Strategy 1: Implementation of the Extended Young Adults Support Services Program (EYASSP).**

**Objectives:** By year five, Nevada will have an extended foster care program which will provide support and services to young adults who have aged out of care up to the age of 21. Nevada will increase the inclusion of youth perspective and lived experience when assessing and evaluating the state's service delivery for this population and the implementation of EYASSP. Continued evaluation of EYASSP will assess any inequities or disparity for youth accessing these resources.

- Continue planning for Extended Young Adult Support Services Program (EYASSP)
  - Improve provider capacity by assessing the capacity of the child welfare agencies and community service providers to serve the young adult population. Develop and implement recommendations.
  - Develop jurisdictional programmatic procedures including processes for activities that intersect with the court system.
  - Create and provide training to the child welfare workforce and community partners.
  - Empower youth and young adults (YYA) by placing a high importance on incorporating YYA voice and needs into the program. Their voice will drive and support the alignment of the program and best practice.
- Implement the Extended Young Adult Support Services Program beginning July 1, 2025
  - Transfer court jurisdiction participants to EYASSP.
  - Engage and enroll eligible young adult participants.
  - Utilize community partner input to promote and support the EYASSP. This will support a strong transition.
  - Finalize the process and begin claiming for reimbursement.
  - Continue training for staff and community partners.



- Develop evaluation and continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities.
  - Create data reports to monitor program performance.
  - Develop monitoring and compliance activities with procedures.
  - Create feedback loops with child welfare agencies, community partners, the CIP, and young adults.
  - Utilize the CQI process to evaluate program practices and procedures through quantitative and qualitative data to inform program improvement.
  
- Continuing evaluation and continuous quality improvement process.
  - Monitor and evaluate data reports.
  - Monitor program and policy and procedure compliance.
  - Reevaluate feedback loops to child welfare agencies, community partners, the CIP, and young adults.
  - Utilize the CQI process to reevaluate program practices and procedures through quantitative and qualitative data to inform program improvement.

**Measures of Progress:** The EYASSP core team will collaborate and lead the implementation of EFC. DCFS FPO will utilize quarterly case reviews to assess progress with this population and report on outcomes during recurring workgroups, the SQIC, and ad hoc meetings with community partners, the young adult advisory board, and other interested organizations.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP as appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy is currently in place. Nevada is developing training for the child welfare workforce, as well as judicial and legal partners. DCFS is submitting budgetary requests for the upcoming 2025 Legislative Session to enhance existing programming with additional staff, and funds to cover increased costs of the program. EYASSP policies and processes are in different stages of development and by year five, will be finalized and implemented.

**Strategy 2: Maximize the use of the Kinship Navigator program across Nevada and increase Nevada’s access to and use of KinGAP.**

**Objective:** By year five, there will be an increased use of the Kinship Navigator program to make the program more accessible to kinship families across the northern and rural areas of Nevada. Increasing the use of KinGAP will allow youth in care to remain with family members, achieve timely permanency, and will provide relative and fictive kin additional support to maintain the placement. Continued evaluation of the utilization of KinGAP will assess inequities and disparities for families accessing these resources.

## **Strategies:**

### **Kinship Navigator**

- Increase programmatic understanding of the federal funding streams for Kinship Navigator, including the use of Title IV-E and Title IV-B funding, as well as usage allowability through FFPSA to support families that get involved with child welfare and families that do not.
  - Identify final steps to implement federal Title IV-E funding for the Kinship Navigator program.
  - Determine if Nevada will receive additional Title IV-B funding.
  - Identify what is needed to grant access to UNITY, or replacement CCWIS system, to Kinship Navigator agency employees so they can access reports for Title IV-E reporting or to enter data.
    - Assess the need to have a service window created for Kinship Navigator service array so that information about services provided can be extrapolated easily for monitoring and CQI purposes.
  - Identify funding source for ongoing evaluation of the Kinship Navigator program for Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse if Nevada does not receive additional Title IV-B funding to pay for a follow-up study.
  - Maximize the use of federal funds for Kinship Navigator.
- Engage parents and caregivers who receive Kinship Navigator programming, or who are navigating child welfare services for their family, or have a child placed in their home to gain lived experience perspective and to inform improvement efforts.
  - Gather data to support planning efforts, and to deliver services to families in an equitable manner.
  - Gather referrals for all families instead of just those who only need training in the northern region of the state.
  - Develop a plan to use the information gathered.
  - Identify training and education needs and develop as necessary.
- Follow up with the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse regarding rating additional services previously submitted in the two Kinship Navigator studies, which include:
  - Access to services and increase TANF need follow-up and a rating. Clearinghouse has not responded.
  - For kinship disruptions, surveys were completed and accepted by the Clearinghouse and rated as promising.
  - Complete the additional studies on Kinship Navigator services to the Clearinghouse to move the Kinship Navigator program from promising to well supported.
    - Identify a study method and plan to examine if the use of Kinship Navigator services decreases entry or re-entry into foster care 12 months after services were received compared to families who did not access Kinship Navigator families.
  - Provide training to staff and community partners as needed.

- Develop an evaluation and CQI process.
  - Create data reports and monitor program.
  - Create compliance standards and procedures.
  - Create feedback loops for child welfare agencies, community partners, the CIP and kinship families.
  - Reevaluate program practices and procedures utilizing data to inform any changes.
  - Monitor Clearinghouse until the program becomes well supported.
  - Assess and reevaluate progress to monitor the utilization of the program and to inform needed changes.

### **KinGAP**

- Conduct an analysis of the use of KinGAP by the three child welfare agencies.
  - Consider post-petition guardianships that are not subsidized.
  - Assess any inequalities and disparities families experience when accessing KinGAP across the state due to lack of state funding for the subsidy.
  - Increase programmatic understanding of funding streams for KinGAP.
- Develop and implement an action plan based on assessment of the utilization of KinGAP.
  - Implement any identified action items.
  - Identify data and reports to evaluate utilization and monitor the program.

**Measures of Progress:** DCFS FPO will lead the increased utilization of Kinship Navigator and KinGAP. The state will develop data reports, monitoring and CQI activities to assess progress with utilization and report on outcomes during recurring workgroups, ad hoc meetings with community partners, the SQIC, and other interested parties. The state will utilize quarterly case reviews as a mechanism to assess progress with this strategy.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need to develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP if appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy includes developing training for the child welfare workforce, as well as judicial and legal partners. The state will develop any needed policies and establish processes to increase utilization of these programs.

### **Strategy 3: Increase pre and post adoptive services throughout Nevada.**

**Objective:** By year five, there will be an expansion of pre- and post-adoptive services so that they are more accessible to adoptive families throughout Nevada. Increasing services provided for pre- and post-adoption will provide additional support to adoptive families to maintain placement, increase stability of adoptions and decrease adoption disruptions. Continued evaluation of the pre and post adoption services will assess inequities and disparities for families accessing these resources.

### **Strategies:**

- Understand current pre- and post-adoption services offered in Nevada, including the use of adoption incentive funding and other funding sources that may be available to support families.
  - Explore, research, and assess the current pre- and post-adoption services provided to Nevada families and identify strengths and gaps in services.
  - Determine the need for additional policies and procedures.
  - Identify and review funding sources, and how funding is currently being utilized.
  - Engage with families and community partners who are receiving pre- or post-adoption services to identify strengths and gaps in services. Include tribes, Raise the Future, Adopts US Kids, individuals with lived experience, and community partners.
- Develop a plan to maximize the use of pre- and post-adoption services and funding available in Nevada.
  - Develop jurisdictional procedures if a need is determined.
  - Develop a plan to address any gaps in services or funding.
  - Create training, as needed, and provide consultation for staff and community partners in identified areas of need for pre- and post-adoptive services.
  - Utilize the Children's Bureau post-adoptive team and revamp the Adoption Call to Action Plan goals to include new objectives.
  - Create a process for continued engagement with families and community partners who are receiving pre- or post-adoption services to assess and address inequities and disparities for families accessing these resources.
  - Deliver training to child welfare staff, community partners, as well as judicial and legal partners.
- Develop evaluation and CQI processes.
  - Create data reports.
  - Create feedback loops to child welfare agencies, community partners, tribes, Raise the Future, and the Court Improvement Program.
  - Include a reevaluation of the program practices and procedures utilizing data to inform modifications to the program.

**Measures of Progress:** DCFS FPO will lead the assessment of current pre- and post-adoptive services in the state. The state will develop data reports, monitoring and CQI activities to assess progress with service expansion and report on outcomes during recurring workgroups, ad hoc meetings with community partners, the SQIC, and other interested parties. The state will utilize quarterly case reviews as a mechanism to assess progress with this strategy.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need to develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP as appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy includes developing training for the child welfare workforce, as well as judicial and legal partners. The state will develop any needed policies and establish processes to increase utilization of these programs.

**GOAL 3: ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES AND COURT PARTNERS RESULTING IN IMPROVED COURT PROCESSES AND INCREASED TIMELINESS TO PERMANENCY.**

**Rationale for this goal:** As Nevada moves to shift its culture to one with a greater emphasis on prevention, it is critical child welfare works with the court dependency system. It is beneficial to the state for these systems to align resources and supports and create a sustainable collaborative relationship. Child welfare along with their judicial and legal partners can work towards shared goals and on common activities that will inform the development of strategic plans. The increase in transparency between the systems, as well as shared learning will naturally improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for the children, families and communities both systems touch.

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will have implemented a plan to improve the existing relationships between the child welfare agencies and court partners within each judicial district to improve outcomes for youth and families. There is an identified need to assess how the child welfare system and the court system are currently working together and to improve collaboration between the two systems.

**Strategies:**

- Collaborate with the CIP to determine common goals and better understand the intersection of the child welfare system with the dependency court system.
- Increase communication and engagement between DCFS FPO, child welfare agencies, the CIP, judicial and legal partners, and CASA.
- Understand the needs of both the child welfare agencies and the dependency courts.
- Assess existing data collection efforts and identify opportunities to improve. Determine what monitoring and evaluative activities can be developed.
  - DCFS FPO will continue participation on CIP's JCAMP project.
  - CIP will continue participation on various child welfare workgroups and on the SQIC.
- Conduct surveys and focus groups if needed with child welfare agencies and judicial and legal partners to understand any issues that may be adversely affecting efforts to strengthen the relationship between the systems. Determine if the CICs could facilitate collaboration.
- Identify existing feedback loops and develop a mechanism to authentically capture the voices of individuals with lived experience, the child welfare agencies, and judicial and legal partners.
- Evaluate information and feedback collected.
  - Share the findings with local CICs, the CIP, and child welfare agencies.

- Engage judicial and legal partners and the child welfare agencies in discussions around data to identify possible potential actionable steps.
- Develop an action plan in partnership with the CIP and judicial and legal partners.
  - Create unified goals.
  - Consider current funding streams including Title IV-E funding for legal representation, and the Children’s Justice Act (CJA) taskforce.
  - Consider training needs.
  - Utilize Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) data to further assess family’s experience with the dependency court system.
- Implement the created action plan.
- Evaluate and assess the impact of activities on improving and enhancing the relationship between the child welfare agencies and judicial and legal partners in the state.
  - Assess the impact of the plan on improving dependency court processes and evaluate child and family outcomes as they relate to this strategy
  - Utilize a collaborative process to develop an evaluation process.

**Measures of Progress:** DCFS FPO will lead the efforts to initially facilitate conversations between the child welfare agencies, and legal and judicial partners to determine common goals around increased collaboration. Feedback from partners across the state, along with child welfare data and JCAMP data, will inform the development of an action plan to improve communication between systems. The state will utilize data reports, monitoring and CQI activities to assess any impact on child and family outcomes. FPO will report on outcomes during recurring workgroups, ad hoc meetings with community partners, the SQIC, and other interested parties. The state will also utilize quarterly case reviews as a mechanism to assess progress with this strategy.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need to develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP as appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy includes developing any needed training for the child welfare workforce, as well as judicial and legal partners. The state will develop any needed policies and establish processes to increase engagement and collaboration with judicial and legal partners.

#### GOAL 4: HEALTHY WORKFORCE

**Rationale for this goal:** Having a healthy workforce was a part of Nevada’s 2020-2024 CFSP. Although some of the strategies identified in that plan were implemented, partners across the state agree this is still an important initiative for the child welfare agencies. Agencies are consistently challenged by recruiting and retaining a competent, skilled, and better supported workforce. Adequate training, improved culture, reasonable workflows, and reduced stress have been areas identified with opportunities to improve. Input and feedback has been received through statewide workforce surveys, regional focus groups, and training evaluations. Nevada believes that having a satisfied, highly trained, and

supported workforce will naturally improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families.

Improved Outcomes: Safety 1 & 2, Permanency 1 & 2, Wellbeing 1,2,3, Systemic Factors 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, and 35.

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will have developed a plan to improve the recruitment and retention of its child welfare workforce. It will refine activities to assess workforce satisfaction and utilize results of these assessments to inform future initiatives. There is a current need to improve and adapt the state's child welfare working environments to meet emerging trends not only in child welfare in Nevada, but what child welfare systems across the nation are facing. Nevada believes being responsive to current employees, and being forward-thinking with recruitment efforts, the state will foster a collaborative environment that allows for individual development, growth, and ultimately satisfaction. Increased workforce satisfaction and confidence will naturally improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families.

**Strategies:**

- Coach NV
  - Assess impact of CoachNV implementation through refinement of fidelity tool
  - Data analysis of implementation and fidelity data
  - Continue to build community of practice
  - Formalize feedback loops
- WIT team
  - Evaluate how to leverage existing workgroup to provide oversight of work towards this goal.
  - Determine defined benchmarks and reporting cadence to leadership.
  - Assess current training policy periodically to determine when updates are needed.
  - Identify additional data that will inform assessment and prioritization of needs.
  - Provide technical support to NPT in the northern region, WCHSA, and RRCW, in their common goal of reviewing, revising, and updating Academy curriculum.
- Supervisor Training
  - Partner with NPT to evaluate new supervisor training delivery
  - Data analysis of implementation and fidelity data
  - Build community of practice
  - Formalize feedback loops
- Workforce data
  - Partner with HR programs across the state to identify demographic data that can be shared. This data will be utilized to determine how well Nevada's child welfare workforce reflects the communities we serve.
  - Determine if exit survey data can be shared and analyzed.
  - Develop a communication plan for disseminating workforce data.

**Measures of Progress:** DCFS FPO will lead the efforts to facilitate conversations between the child welfare agencies, NPT, judicial and legal partners when applicable, the child welfare workforce, and child welfare leadership. Feedback from partners across the state, along with child welfare data, human resources data, Census bureau data, and JCAMP data, will inform the development of an action plan to better address this goal.

The state will utilize data reports for monitoring and CQI activities to assess any impact on child and family outcomes. FPO will report on outcomes during the WIT meetings, ad hoc meetings with system partners, the SQIC, the DMG, and other interested parties. The state will also utilize quarterly case reviews as a mechanism to assess progress with this strategy.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need to develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP as appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy includes developing any needed training for the child welfare workforce, as well as judicial and legal partners. The state will update any needed policies and establish processes to increase engagement and collaboration across systems. The state will continuously evaluate the need to pursue additional funding to increase staffing or implement initiatives.

## GOAL 5: CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

**Rationale for this goal:** Nevada is committed to continuing to improve its existing CQI system. The state has found that although it has improved greatly in this area over the past few years, CQI is still viewed as an activity limited to select program areas or units. The state recognizes that this is an area of opportunity to further a CQI culture across the state and to enhance the comprehensive understanding of CQI processes. Nevada also aims to strengthen internal capacity for the utilization and analysis of data to inform decision making. Increased data competency and confidence will improve Nevada's ability to assess performance on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families.

Improved Outcomes: Systemic Factors –Statewide Information System and Quality Assurance

**Objective:** By year five, Nevada will have further refined its statewide CQI system. The state will revisit its existing CQI Action Plan and External Communication plan and update as needed. Nevada will formalize processes around policy and regulation development, review, and approval. The DCFS FPO will work with the child welfare agencies, and the CIP, to create a community of collaboration where it can engage and collaborate with youth, families, and caregivers, as well as with community, and other system partners. The state will utilize the CQI process to inform action planning and change implementation activities. Enhancement of Nevada's CQI system will improve the state's ability to assess performance on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families. Ultimately, Nevada wishes to see a child welfare system, made up of individual disciplines, who have respect for the roles they each play, and who can work



together to achieve common goals focused on improving the experiences and outcomes for the youth and families we serve.

***Strategy 1: Enhance existing CQI system***

- CQI Action Plan
  - Revisit CQI Action Plan developed in 2022 and assess completion of activities.
  - Evaluate the impact of conducting a subsequent CQI self-assessment for comparison.
  - Identify activities for updated Action Plan.
- CQI Policy development
  - Nevada will explore developing a statewide CQI policy.
- Formalize statewide activities and policies
  - The state will develop formalized processes for policy and regulations development, review and approval.
  - This formalized process will include feedback loops that include the child welfare agencies, the CIP, judicial and legal partners, and other state divisions or departments when necessary.
- Increase Nevada’s utilization of data reports from UNITY, OMS, statewide indicators, contextual data, Census Bureau, national organizations, regional partners, and JCAMP measures.
- Develop and refine activities to monitor compliance and performance on child and family outcomes.
- Develop a CQI process for Title IV-E eligibility
  - Convene a statewide workgroup to prepare for Nevada’s Title IV-E Review in December of 2025.
- Refine Nevada’s quarterly case review process in preparation for CFSR Round 4.
  - Assess existing case reviewer training and identify gaps.
  - Partner with Nevada’s DCFS data team to determine if any updates to sampling methodology are needed.
  - Update the state’s case review manual.

***Strategy 2: Create a community of collaboration with agency, community, and system partners.***

- In preparation of the statewide assessment and the CFSR Round 4, DCFS FPO will lead the effort to bring the voices of individuals with lived experience and the voices of those historically underserved and overrepresented in the child welfare system to the table.
- Nevada will solicit participants for various workgroups, focus groups, surveys, or interviews that are cross-representational of the state’s population.
- The state will work collaboratively with child welfare agencies, legal and judicial partners, the CIP, as well as other systems that intersect with the child welfare system.

**Measures of Progress:** DCFS FPO will lead the efforts to facilitate conversations between the child welfare agencies, NPT, judicial and legal partners, the CIP, the child welfare workforce, and child welfare leadership to enhance its existing CQI system. Feedback from partners across the state, along with child welfare data, Census Bureau data, and JCAMP data, will inform updating Nevada’s CQI action plan to better address this goal.

The state will utilize data reports, quarterly case reviews, monitoring and CQI activities to assess any impact on child and family outcomes. FPO will report on outcomes during ad hoc meetings with system partners, the SQIC, the DMG, and with other interested parties.

**Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation:** DCFS FPO will assess the need to develop training for this strategy and partner with NPT and CIP if appropriate. The Family Programs Office will provide technical assistance as needed.

**Implementation Supports:** Implementation support for this strategy includes developing any needed training for the child welfare workforce, youth and families, caregivers, as well as judicial and legal partners. The state will develop or update any needed policies and establish processes to increase engagement and collaboration across systems. The state will continuously evaluate the need to pursue additional funding to implement initiatives.

## SERVICES

### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES CONTINUUM

Nevada strives to offer a service array to meet the needs of children and families that is responsive and adaptable to changing needs.

Prevention and intervention services include child abuse and neglect prevention services; intensive family preservation; case management services; family assessment services; family coaching; parent education; family group conferencing; family support services; psychosocial rehabilitation; behavioral health counseling; mental health assessment services; and pharmacological management services.

Out of home placement services include foster care; medical services management; specialized foster care; family foster care; mother and infant foster care; developmental delays foster care; transitional living; emergency shelter; respite care; adoption services; and group homes.

Reunification and after care services include intensive family reunification; independent living; case management; post adoption services; psychosocial rehabilitation; behavioral health counseling; mental health assessment services; and pharmacological management services.

These services are delivered by providers in a way to meet the clinical, behavioral and medical treatment needs of children. Contracts developed with providers are outcome oriented. Communities in Nevada provide different types of treatment programs and services for children, adolescents and families involved with the child welfare system. The complete range of programs and series is referred to as the continuum of care. Not

every community in the state has every type of service or program on the continuum so collaboration between agencies, including through the sub grantee process, is critical.

### **SERVICE COORDINATION**

DCFS consistently seeks out ways to continuously assess and improve the state's service array. The Family Programs Office meets monthly with the division's fiscal and grants management units to discuss all federal grants, state grants and other funding streams. Prior to each funding cycle, representatives from each child welfare agency work with agency leadership, DCFS, and the Grants Management Unit (GMU) to identify funding priorities. These priorities are incorporated in Request for Applications (RFA) and funding announcements and are used to evaluate proposals so that funded projects are closely aligned to agency identified service needs and priorities. Scopes of work and needs assessments are reviewed at least annually to ensure activities continue to support the original needs.

Collaboration occurs with federal and state programs involved with Medicaid, juvenile justice, mental health, Child Support Enforcement, tribal programs, health and education. The DCFS has numerous contracts with agencies that are funded through the federal government. Ongoing collaboration with the Executive Team to Review the Death of Children, Differential Response, the Regional Partnership Grant, the Children's Behavioral Health Consortium, the Youth Advisory Boards, the Citizen's Review Panel (CRP), the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force, and the Court Improvement Program (CIP) further inform identifying needs and priorities.

There are current Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) between various agencies and the DCFS. The Division of Mental Health (MHDS) and the DCFS have an MOU concerning coordination and provision of services to children and families. Also, there is a current MOU between the Federal Nevada Rural Housing Authority and the DCFS for targeting youth who have left foster care and experience a lack of available housing. The DCFS has executed a MOU and protocols for the social workers to implement the placement of children onto tribal land with the Elko Band Council, Walker River Paiute Tribe, and Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe which remains in effect. A series of meetings with tribal social workers, tribal leadership and the DCFS have occurred and continue to occur with Nevada Tribes. The DCFS Tribal Liaison continues to work on MOU drafts with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, and the Duckwater Indian Reservation for specific children to be placed on tribal lands and in accordance with ICWA placement preference, ICWA 25 U.S.C. §§ 1915 and NRS 432B.

The Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant falls under the Division of Child and Family (DCFS) Grants Management Unit (GMU). This relationship benefits the service coordination of the grant through a more meaningful collaboration. The Children's Justice Act (CJA) and the Court Improvement Program (CIP) work collaboratively to ensure coordination and support of mutual goals and strategies to prevent child abuse, protect children and improve safety, permanency and well-being of children and families involved in the child welfare system.

## Children’s Justice Act (CJA)

The Nevada CJA Task Force meets quarterly each year. Task force members have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and have diverse backgrounds. Membership includes representatives from community advocacy and non-profit organizations, public agencies serving children, law enforcement, parent advocates, attorneys, judicial partners, individuals with lived experience, mental health providers, physical health providers, education professionals, individuals who have experience with working with children who are unhoused and individuals who have experience with working with children with disabilities. The CJA Task Force participates in other state activities as much as possible, including the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP), the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), the Court Improvement Program (CIP), and the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children. Members of the CJA Task Force actively participate in the decision making for projects that utilize CJA funding. The CJA grant funds various activities including multidisciplinary training (MDT), policy development, and pilot programs. The subrecipients of funding are expected to provide updates throughout their project, including evaluations and outcomes.

The CJA Task Force has five goals charged with developing, establishing, and operating programs designed to improve the assessment and investigation of suspected child abuse and neglect cases with a special emphasis on sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child fatalities, and cases involving children with disabilities or serious health-related problems who are suspected victims of child abuse or neglect. Below are the most recent goals for the CJA Task Force.

- **Goal 1:** Provide child protection workers and partners front end specialty, discipline specific, and advanced training. Training should be prioritized, but not limited to, training requirements of Comprehensive Addictions and Recovery Act (CARA) and Juvenile Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA) Program Improvement Plans, child protection model assessments, ICWA, sexual abuse, reducing trauma for victims, interpersonal violence, forensic interviewing, trauma-informed practices, and training needs identified in collaboration with Court Improvement Program.
- **Goal 2:** Support the implementation of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Model Coordinated Response Protocol by providing training and support for the formation of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT) and task forces.
- **Goal 3:** Support the establishment of new Children’s Advocacy Centers (CAC) or other multidisciplinary team approaches. Improve the capacity of existing CACs to provide a multidisciplinary response for victims of child sex abuse and exploitation, witnesses to interpersonal violence, physical abuse, and child victims with disabilities.
- **Goal 4:** Fund technology requests to improve the investigation, assessment and prosecution of child abuse and neglect using the latest technology and to support the use of new and existing training technologies.
- **Goal 5:** This task force will monitor policy, regulation and legislation regarding child abuse and neglect trends and when appropriate collaborate with other parties or entities to support new or revised policy, regulation, and legislation.

## SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The Department of Health and Human Services is the lead agency for the Community-Based Child Abuse and Prevention (CBCAP) programs in Nevada and is leading the child maltreatment prevention activities in Nevada. DHHS promotes the health and well-being of Nevadans through the delivery and facilitation of essential services to ensure families are strengthened, public health is protected, and individuals achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency. The DHHS and its units and divisions contribute to the leadership of child maltreatment prevention activities in Nevada. These include: The DCFS, the DPBH, DWSS, ADSD, and the Office of Community Partnerships and Grants (OCPG). The DCFS Grants Management Unit (GMU) manages grants to local, regional, and statewide programs serving Nevadans. The GMU is responsible for the state and federal initiatives listed below which are also identified as child abuse prevention services. These programs provide families with parent education, access, information and resources. Classes are designed to strengthen and support families and offer opportunities for assistance available within the communities where they live. To provide these child abuse prevention services all providers must partner with Prevent Child Abuse Nevada (PCANV) on strategies for the implementation of public awareness campaigns and activities in the grantee's community, participate in child abuse prevention activities during Child Abuse Prevention month, and collaborate with other family support organizations and agencies in the community.

The Children's Trust Fund (CTF): The fund contains state and federal monies (CBCAP funds) that are reserved for primary and secondary child maltreatment programs. Most of the CTF funds are awarded through competitive applications.

Family Resource Centers (FRC): There are 21 FRCs in Nevada that provide information, referrals, and case management to at-risk families. FRCs collaborate with local and state agencies and is the only family-centered network that covers the entirety of Nevada, providing a much-needed presence for hard to reach or underserved communities, especially in rural areas.

Social Services Block Grant, Title XX programs: Assists persons in achieving or maintaining self-sufficiency and/or prevents or remedies neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children and adults.

Community Services Block Grant: Promotes economic self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization in each of Nevada's 17 counties.

Fund for a Healthy Nevada – Master Tobacco Settlement funds: Grants improve health services and the health and wellbeing for all Nevadans. This fund is managed by the DCFS Director's Office and wholly or partially funds the DR programs for CCDFS, WCHSA, and RRCW.

Fund for a Resilient Nevada - Opioid litigation recovery funds: Grants to address priorities related opioid-related risk, harms and impacts while utilizing a data-driven and evidence-based approach. This fund is managed by the DCFS Director's Office.

Revolving Account for Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention: Provides funding for problem gambling treatment, prevention, and related services

Contingency Account for Victims of Human Trafficking: The Contingency Account for Victims of Human Trafficking was created by NRS 217.500 and became effective July 1, 2013. The legislation authorizes the DHHS Director to allocate money from the account to nonprofit corporations and agencies and political subdivisions of Nevada for the purposes of providing programs and services to victims of human trafficking.

The Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling (ACPG) oversees the Revolving Account for the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling. The Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) provides input to the Director for the other grant funds mentioned above. The DHHS Director appoints the following 15 members to the GMAC and ensures that, insofar as practicable, the members appointed reflect the ethnic and geographic diversity of Nevada.

- A superintendent of a county school district
- A director of a local agency providing services for abused or neglected children
- A representative of a community organization involved with children
- A representative of the Department of Juvenile Justice
- A member who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in providing services to senior citizens
- Two members with knowledge, skill, and experience in finance or business
- A representative of the Nevada Association of Counties
- A representative of a broad-based nonprofit with knowledge, skill, and experience in community partnerships
- Two members with knowledge of services to persons or families who are disadvantaged or at risk
- A representative who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the provision of services relating to the cessation of the use of tobacco
- A representative who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the provision of services to persons with disabilities
- A representative who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the provision of health services to children
- A representative who is a member of the Nevada Commission on Aging

### **Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)**

The assigned CBCAP Program Specialist provides direction to the network of statewide child abuse prevention and family strengthening programs by promoting collaborative efforts and soliciting input from the community, including agencies, service providers, parents, and other interested individuals.

GMU has partnered with Prevent Child Abuse Nevada (PCANV) to become a united force in the prevention of child abuse and neglect in Nevada. Our subgrantees are our biggest

partners, but as we all know the key to successful program service planning is to have parents/families/caretakers' input on what they need.

PCANV oversees the Parent Advisory council project and support the following leadership activities which allow for the success for Nevada Parent Advisory Council.

- Recruit a diverse parent group that accurately reflects our community.
- Parents will receive training from PCANV staff and gain knowledge on child abuse prevention and policies to strengthen families in Nevada.
- Parents will meet at least quarterly to discuss current prevention in our state and provide feedback from their experiences and knowledge.
- Parents will have active participation in the development and review of PCANV written materials and prevention efforts as well as provide feedback to staff on effectively meeting the needs of parents in Nevada.

In 2022, DCFS's Grants Management Unit DCFS tasked Prevent Child Abuse Nevada (PCANV) housed under the UNLV Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) to conduct a needs assessment to identify key priority areas to be addressed in the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

A community needs assessment is a tool that can be used to identify priorities, barriers, and needs to develop a plan that will foster sustainable and impactful changes. Qualitative and quantitative data collected in this needs assessment indicate an urgency for change in prevention practices in Nevada. There is a high need for a coordinated public health approach to reduce the risk of familial exposure to toxic stress and increase protective factors through early access to concrete supports, evidence-based parenting education, and social supports for parents and children.

The Nevada Needs Assessment on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect was developed using the following activities:

- Analysis of Existing Needs Assessments and Strategic Plans in Nevada
- Secondary Data Review
- Provider Focus Groups
- Caregiver Focus Groups
- Provider Surveys
- Caregiver Surveys

Collaboration, sincere feedback, and meaningful conversations are necessary in the process of creating a needs assessment. For this reason, we conducted diverse activities that allowed for communities across the state to have a space to share their experiences, needs, and their vision for a Nevada where all children are thriving in safe, stable, and nurturing environments. See Attachment R Needs Assessment on the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect in Nevada.

Nevada's strategic plan identifies the importance of providing services in settings that are culturally representative of the people being served such as having an accessible location, inclusive outreach and marketing materials, and participation in community cultural events. See Attachment S Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect in Nevada.

Outreach participation in our schools have become our strongest outreach partners. Our service provided identified the following categories served.

- Parents and Parents with disabilities
- Children with disabilities
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Members of underserved or underrepresented groups
- Fathers
- Homeless families/risk of homelessness
- Other identified populations serviced during the reporting period: o Parents who are overcoming substance.

The DCFS's Grants Management Unit (GMU) manages the grants related to Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), working with agencies that serve Nevadans through local, regional, and statewide programs.

The primary goals of Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) are to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families, improve the quality of care and services to children and their families, and ensure permanency for children by reuniting them with their parents, by adoption or by another permanent living arrangement.

For more information, please see the Service Array section above.

### **STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM (TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 1)**

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#### **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES TO BE OFFERED UNDER TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 1**

Title IV-B 1, the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program, is managed by Nevada's Fiscal Department and its services are directed to accomplish the following purposes:

- Protect and promote the welfare of all children.
- Prevent the neglect, abuse or exploitation of children.
- Support at-risk families through services which allow children, where appropriate, to remain with their families or return to their families in a timely manner.
- Promote the safety, permanence and well-being of children in foster care and adoptive families.
- Provide training, professional development and support to ensure a well-qualified workforce.



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## SERVICES FOR CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES (SECTION 422(B)(11) OF THE ACT)

Children who are adopted from other countries have access to the same support services as other adopted children. Over the next five years these support services will continue to be funded using the Adoption Promotion/Support funds and the Adoption Incentive funds which are distributed to sub-grantees. Depending on community needs, services may include but are not limited to those listed below.

- Information and referral to post adoptive services including community resources is offered statewide.
- Educational programs (parent training) are offered statewide for prospective adoptive parents.
- Support groups for post adoptive families.
- Family Preservations for adoptions completed in Nevada can be made through the Nevada Adoption Reunion Registry (ARR).
- Case management from public child welfare agencies is offered to pre-adoptive families statewide until the adoption is finalized.
- Therapeutic interventions/counseling information is offered to post adoptive families.
- Search registries from AdoptUsKids and Raise the Future work with DCFS to promote children available for adoption statewide.

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## SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE (SECTION 422(B)(18) OF THE ACT)

The State of Nevada has several efforts underway to address child abuse prevention, including the implementation of its Families First Prevention Plan. Nevada's data shows that infants who come to the attention of child welfare prior to the age of two often end up in protective care within two to four years if families do not receive support and treatment services early on. As such, many of our initiatives, services, and interventions have an early intervention/prevention focus and work to reduce the length of time children under the age of five are in foster care. Activities to reduce the length of time children under the age of five are in foster care include the following discussed below.

**Safe Babies Court** – a collaborative initiative Nevada utilizes aimed to provide intensive case management and service provisions with increased court oversight to families with children under the age of three. In this initiative families are randomly selected to participate in the program and are provided intensive services to increase parental capacities while reducing long-term trauma for children and families. Examples of services provided are Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) by Northern Nevada Child and Adolescent Services (NNCAS) clinicians, increasing contractor capacity, respite care for participating families, communication enhancements, and transportation services for participating families. The success of the program is reported to the Safe Babies Court Team national database to monitor outcomes. This program has been incredibly successful and ways to expand these services, including allowing more families to fit criteria to participate, and expanding to other areas of the state, are being explored.

***The Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)*** - is a statewide program that works to expand QPI knowledge and skill development for staff and resource families to promote family reunification, permanency, and reduce the length of time that children under five are in foster care. QPI concepts and language are applied to policy and concepts are supported in everyday child welfare practice.

***Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS)*** – targets children from birth to age three. At the time of a substantiated removal for a child aged 36 months and under, an Early, Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) exam is provided via NEIS. If additional services are recommended, children are referred for further assessments and/or services provided by NEIS, Child Find, NNCAS, or other community providers. In addition to EPSDT screens, each child coming into care will receive a trauma screening.

***Child Find and Northern Nevada Child and Adolescent Services (NNCAS)*** – the school district’s Child Find program targets children aged three to five, while NNCAS ensures children with known or suspected developmental disabilities are assessed and provided appropriate services. Children over the age of 36 months who have been assessed to show developmental delays, or have suspected developmental delays, are referred to the school district’s Child Find Program or NNCAS for additional assessment and implementation of services. Coordination between the child welfare agency, resource families, birth families, and service providers is important to ensure recommended services are being provided and the child’s progress is being monitored.

***Nevada Early Head Start*** – and Parents as Teachers (PAT), the FFPSA well-supported EBP assist families with children under the age of three by enhancing their parenting skills. Referrals are made to Nevada Early Head Start for families currently involved with child welfare as well as families who come in from information only reports where resources may benefit the family. Nevada is exploring expanding the utilization of Parents as Teachers in the rural regions of the state.

***Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) and Sobriety Treatment and Recover Teams (START)*** – are being implemented in regions in Nevada that will support families with children under age five.

***Multidisciplinary staffing*** – is used to regularly review the cases of children under the age of five in foster care. These meetings are future focused with the intent of identifying barriers to reunification with family, permanency, placement stability, and services to address solutions to support timely permanency.

***Data relating to children under age five*** – is reviewed regularly for trends in entries into care, the number of children placed outside the home, length of time in care, length of time a case remains open, and data around reunification and permanency. Trends inform and drive practice change.

Activities to address the developmental needs of children under five years of age who are in foster care or are receiving in-home services include those listed below.

- As part of FFPSA, zero to five is a priority population and there is a concerted and collaborative effort to expand early intervention services throughout the state.
- Evidenced-based early childhood programs such as Parent-Child Interaction Therapy and Child Parent Psychotherapy are offered through DCFS Mental Health Services and promising practices such as Positively Kids Wrap Program are offered through contract providers.
- All child welfare agencies participate in the statewide collaborative Perinatal Health Network which continues to develop strategic approaches to provide outreach, identification and treatment for postpartum women using evidenced based interventions. This collaborative supports families with substance misuse disorders and substance affected infants. See the CAPTA State Plan for more details.
- Children under the age of five are referred to specialized providers such as Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS), Child Find, or Northern Nevada Adolescent and Child Services for screening and assessment of developmental status when:
  - The child is a substantiated victim of child abuse or neglect and is under three-years-old (per CAPTA requirements);
  - The infant was affected by substances in utero; or
  - There is concern about the child’s developmental status.
- Development of enhanced and enriched visitation and attachment of parents with children aged five and under.

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#### **EFFORTS TO TRACK AND PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS (SECTION 422(B)(19) OF THE ACT)**

Nevada makes every effort to reduce the number of preventable child fatalities and near fatalities through prevention messaging, training and other initiatives. Nevada’s child fatality review process includes local multi-disciplinary teams reviewing all deaths of children, ages 0-17 years of age, within their own communities and making recommendations to the Executive Team to Review the Death of Children.

**Data Collection** - Data from the National Center for the Review and Prevention of Child Death’s database is used by the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children to complete an annual report which is disseminated statewide to community partners and posted on the DCFS website. The current report is informed by the National Center’s data, which has been historically more accurate when compared to vital statistics’ data. Nevada is currently exploring how to obtain information from Vital Statistics timely and how to best use the data in its reporting to NCANDS regarding child fatalities as a result of child abuse or neglect.

Child fatalities because of child maltreatment are captured in UNITY and reported to NCANDS. Child welfare agency staff use a variety of sources to capture and record this data which includes information from child death review teams, law enforcement reports and medical examiners or coroner’s reports. Fatalities identified in the information system as maltreatment deaths are reported in the child file. Deaths not included in the child file,

for which substantiated maltreatment was a contributing factor, are included in the agency file as an unduplicated count. Reported fatalities can include deaths that occurred in prior periods, for which the determination was completed in the next reporting period.

**Steps to track and prevent child maltreatment deaths** - Nevada's primary goal is to reduce the number of preventable child fatalities by conducting systematic, multi-disciplinary reviews of child deaths. Nevada utilizes a daily report and a manual review by staff to ensure that there are no missed fatalities or near fatalities. All identified fatalities and near fatalities are tracked to ensure public disclosures are provided according to NRS 432B.175, and to ensure the case receives administrative review by the Family Programs Office. Nevada has enhanced its CQI process to include providing the results and any recommendations back to the child welfare agencies. The recommendations for areas needing improvement include actionable items for the agency to take to prevent future maltreatment, including child fatalities and near fatalities, and to improve practice. Additionally, the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau reviews all child fatalities and near fatalities when a child welfare agency had prior contact with the child or family according to NRS 218G.550, and provides a report detailing their review of cases, including any concerns where the child welfare agency's actions prior to the fatality or near fatality did not comply with regulations or statewide policies. The Legislative Counsel Bureau meets with the child welfare agency to discuss concerns, and the child welfare agency communicates what corrective action has been performed to reduce the risk of the issues occurring in the future.

**Child Death Review Data** - Nevada maintains detailed step by step procedures describing exactly how to get the data reported.

- Data is gathered using report CFS742 Child Fatality Report.
- A manual review is then completed by data and field staff to ensure there are no missed fatalities or near fatalities.
- The CFS742 is run for a federal fiscal year and displays all child fatalities that occurred in the year. Results are filtered to see only fatalities due to maltreatment.
- Results are compared to the NCANDS child file for the submission year and all those already included in the child file are removed from the list.
- The remaining cases are researched in UNITY by data staff and field staff to check various criteria so that can get the final list of fatalities that will be included in the agency file for this element.
- The final number reported for this field is the sum of the decreased youth determined to be eligible who are not already included in the child file.
- More data is gathered manually based on research using internal reports and by coordinating with program staff for review.
- When the list is compiled, FPO staff research each child's record in UNITY to find out if the circumstance of this element pertains to that youth. The final number reported for this field is the sum of the decreased youth with this condition.

**Operating Manual** - Nevada has a comprehensive statewide operating manual that describes strategies for developing and managing a regional CDR team, conducting

effective reviews, and making recommendations that translate the understanding of how a child died into action to prevent future deaths. Nevada is working towards converting this statewide manual into its official state plan to track and prevent child maltreatment fatalities.

**Collaboration** - Nevada is engaging in conversations about how child death review teams can collaborate with Fetal, Infant and Mortality Review (FIMR) teams and with vital statistics to improve data collection all of which will enhance Nevada’s child death review practices.

**Public disclosures** – Disclosures concerning a fatality or near fatality of a child who is the subject of a report of abuse or neglect are posted on the DCFS website at the initial 48-hour notice and after appropriate updates in compliance with CAPTA and NRS 432B.175. The public disclosures are submitted from the child welfare agencies and include the information listed below.

- The cause and circumstance regarding the child fatality or near fatality.
- The age and gender of the child.
- Previous reports of child abuse or neglect that are pertinent to the abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality.
- Previous investigations pertinent to the abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality and results of investigations.
- The services and actions provided by the child welfare agency on behalf of the child that are pertinent to the abuse or neglect that led to the child fatality or near fatality.

#### **MARYLEE ALLEN PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES (PSSF) (TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2)**

DCFS operates the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families program throughout all seventeen counties in Nevada. All services contribute to the safety, permanency and well-being of children and their families. The DCFS Grants Management Unit (GMU) ensures services funded through the MaryLee Allen Promoting Safe and Stable Families program are evidence-based programs. GMU continuously works on updating and enhancing data collection from the IVB-2 funded subrecipients to better align the service array. In addition, IVB-2 funded subrecipients from non-profit agencies are required to administer the Protective Factors Survey (PFS) to all families they serve. The PFS is designed for use with parents and caregivers participating in family support and child maltreatment prevention services. The data collected from these surveys inform improvements with the services the state offers including prevention services. Nevada’s goal is to provide agencies with a snapshot of the families they serve, measure changes in family protective factors, and help identify areas where staff can focus on increasing protective factors for each family.

The target population for the family preservation and family reunification programs are children and families within the child welfare system. The target population for the family support program are vulnerable families with children that are at risk of abuse or neglect and/or families that have already demonstrated the need for intervention and have an

open child welfare case. The target population for the adoption promotion/support program are adoptive and prospective adoption families.

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**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES THE STATE OFFERS UNDER EACH CATEGORY IN TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2**

***Family preservation*** - Family preservation services programs are characterized by high intensity, immediately accessible treatment and ancillary services for at-risk children and families. These services are designed to help families alleviate crises that might lead to out-of-home placements for children because of abuse, neglect, or parental inability to care for them. They help maintain the safety of children in their own homes, support families preparing to reunify or adopt, and assist families in obtaining other services to meet multiple needs.

Nevada utilizes an array of prevention services to help children at risk of abuse and neglect remain safely with their families. These services include flexible funding to support families in areas such as rent, utilities, apartment deposit, bus tokens, food vouchers and other basic needs, and contract services with community agencies. Intensive case management services provide parenting classes that incorporate family strengthening techniques to strengthen the family and home to prevent removal. Substance abuse in-home services are offered as are mental health and substance abuse assessments and treatment in a variety of settings to meet the specific needs of the family.

Medical training and rehabilitative support services allow medically fragile children to remain in their home and prevent removal. Medical wraparound, medical daycare, respite care and home health services continue to be provided to children in the southern region. The goal of these services is to increase support to caregivers to meet the medical needs of their children at home or in alternate placement. In the southern region of the state, a contract maintained with a non-profit pediatric home health agency to provide intensive medical case management serves an average of 45 medically needy/fragile children per month.

The family preservation services in the northern region include strength-based treatment utilizing pro-social adaptive behavior modification techniques to teach caregivers to change socially and personally maladaptive behavior; individual and group counseling to assist clients and their children to adopt strategies and behaviors that sustain recovery and maintain daily functioning including conflict resolution; couples and family therapy; supportive and instructive interventions to address life management needs. Case management will continue to be available over the next five years and is designed to assist families who were involved with or at-risk of becoming involved with child welfare agencies. Assessments to identify strengths and service needs of clients related to life and home management skills will also be available in addition to mental health assessments and services.

Over the next five years, Family Resource Centers (FRC) and rural community providers receiving IV-B funds will continue to be a primary source for pre-placement services for the DCFS Rural Region Intensive Family Services staff, which provide both clinical

assessments and home-based family preservation services. Parenting classes are available in-home as well as in group settings to meet this critical need. Case management, including home-maker skill building continues to be available through the rural FRCs. Mental health and substance abuse assessments are also available. Most of the funded rural providers cover large areas of rural Nevada and often must travel long distances to provide services for families to prevent removal.

**Family support** - FFPSA revised the definition of family support services at Section 431(a)(2)(B)(iii) of the Act to include community-based services to support and retain foster families so they can provide quality family-based settings for children in foster care. The change in the statutory definition became effective upon the enactment of FFPSA on February 9, 2018. Family support services promote the well-being of children and families and ultimately increase the ability of parenting to strengthen and stabilize the family unit.

The goal of family support services is to increase the parents' competence and confidence in parenting, so children are in a safe and stable environment. These services are voluntary, preventive activities to help families nurture their children. In Nevada, they are often provided by community-based organizations and are designed to alleviate stress and help parents care for their children's well-being before a crisis occurs. They connect families with available community resources and supportive networks which assist parents with child rearing. Family support activities include respite care for parents and caregivers, early development screening of children to identify their needs, tutoring health education for youth, and a range of center-based activities.

Family support services in the southern region include an intensive in-home parenting program that addresses parenting and home-maker issues; programs which offer activities and supervision to school-aged children in a safe environment while their parents are at work, which enable parents to achieve and maintain better job performance in knowing that their child is in a safe environment; case management; parenting classes; budgeting classes in both English and Spanish and computer skills classes and developmental screenings. These programs are anticipated to continue over the next five years, as more community providers are solicited.

Family support services in the northern region include in-home family and individual counseling; mental health and substance abuse assessments; case management and linkage with supportive services; home visits; budgeting classes and goal planning.

Family support services in the rural region of the state include in-home parenting; parenting groups; specialized parenting classes for parents of infants; first time parenting classes, mental health and substance abuse assessments and treatment; and home-maker classes. Parenting classes and in-home services for babies and toddlers 0-5 years of age are available in several counties in the rural region. In-home services include nutrition, housekeeping and developmentally appropriate parenting for children of all ages. Additional services utilized in the rural region include services available through community based non-profit agencies to provide substance abuse counseling, domestic violence interventions, truancy, tutoring, parenting and other prevention programs for children. County welfare programs and/or other community-based resources are frequently accessed for temporary housing, vouchers for clothing, food, gas, utilities,

transportation and other needed services. Community coalitions exist in many rural communities that increase availability and accessibility through coordinated efforts between public and private agencies.

**Family reunification** - FFPSA revised the definition of family reunification services (formerly time-limited family reunification services) through section 431(a)(7)(A) of the Act. The change in definition removed the time limit for providing reunification services to the family of a child in foster care and allows reunification services to be provided for a period of up to 15 months once the child is returned home. These services and activities are provided to children who have been removed from home and placed in a foster home or a childcare institution and to their parents or primary caregivers. The goal is to facilitate reunification in a safe and appropriate manner within a timely fashion, but only during the 15-month period that begins on the date the child is returned home. In the case of a child who has been returned home, the services and activities shall only be provided during the 15-month period that begins on the date that the child returns home. The services and activities are described below.

- Individual, group, and family counseling.
- Inpatient, residential, or outpatient substance abuse treatment services.
- Mental and behavioral health services.
- Assistance to address domestic violence.
- Services designed to provide temporary child care and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries.
- Peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers.
- Services and activities designed to facilitate access to and visitation of children by parents and siblings.
- Transportation to or from any of the services and activities described above

Reunification services in the southern region include comprehensive assessments for both mental health and substance abuse issues for individuals and groups as well as individual and family treatment; safety team meetings facilitated within 48 hours of referral from the child welfare agency; and in-home parenting training and home maker skills training.

Reunification services in the northern region include mental health and substance abuse assessments and treatment; psychiatric evaluations for adults; group counseling for drug and alcohol, sessions on depression, parenting, stress management, family violence, sexual and physical abuse, loss and grief and marital and couple issues; and foster parent mentoring and relationship building with biological parents to facilitate timely reunification.

Reunification services in the rural region include in-home parenting training as well as group parenting classes; infant parenting classes; first time parenting classes; and mental health and substance abuse assessments and treatment.

**Adoption promotion and support services** - Adoption promotion and support services and activities are designed to support and facilitate permanency for children in Nevada's foster care system. Funding for these services allows Nevada to educate the public,



community leaders, policy makers and child welfare administrators by providing informative feedback on the foster parent perspective on adoption recruitment issues to better serve the foster parent community's needs and training, for mental health professionals to help them understand why treatment strategies must be different for adoptive families. Funding also supports diligent search activities which focus on identifying and locating parents and relatives who might be placement resources for children utilizing multiple resources such as Accurint, Internet sources, telephone books, Department of Motor Vehicles information and diligent search programs in other states.

Adoption promotion and support services funding contribute to the completion of social summaries and home studies in the southern region leading to adoptions being finalized in a timely manner. Agencies work diligently to eliminate the barriers that prevent children from being adopted.

Adoption promotion and support services funding to sub-grantees in the northern region has enhanced their collaboration with agencies to produce child/ family matching events where children in foster care awaiting adoption were exposed to potential adoptive families; provision of series of training workshops for foster and adoptive parents; awareness promotion of special needs adoptive homes for children 12 years and older and sibling groups; and increase interest in special needs adoption, ultimately impacting the number of finalized special needs adoptions.

Nevada utilizes trained clinical staff to support families' adoption of children with emotional/behavioral needs. This combined with the development of a transitional case plan is a promising practice designed to better support and prepare both foster-adoption and stranger adoptions; and to increase the success of the child's placement.

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## **CFS-101, PART I**

Nevada's CFS-101, Part 1 is attached to this report submission. The document contains the percentage of FY 2025 title IV-B, subpart 2 funds Nevada plans to spend on actual service delivery of family preservation, community-based family support, family reunification and adoption promotion and support services, and on planning and service coordination.

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## **SERVICE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (45 CFR 1357.15(R))**

Funding constraints and provider retention and availability continue to present two of the most serious barriers across the state. However, despite these challenges, ongoing efforts continue to increase the accessibility of services. Priority service needs of each child welfare agency are outlined below.

- CCDFS: Family preservation services, homemaker services, substance abuse assessment and treatment, mental health assessments, medical case management, domestic violence response, home studies and social summaries.

- WCHSA: In-home family crisis stabilization services and support services, updating home studies and social summaries, comprehensive substance abuse and mental health assessments, family counseling, substance abuse treatment, and parenting groups.
- DCFS RRCW: In-home family crisis stabilization services, in-home mental health assessments and treatment, community based and in and in-home substance abuse assessment and services, community based and in-home parenting training, community based and in-home homemaker classes, and training for potential adoptive families.
- Through Title IV-B, service providers across the state have been funded to provide family preservation, family support, family reunification and/or adoption support services. Collaboration with partner agencies, sub grantees and families all assist in deciding future courses of action for family support services.

A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released in February of 2023 to award funds to community-based subrecipients for the performance period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. The NOFO was for competitive applications and the funding process combines application review with grant allocation. Applications were accepted to provide services in all geographic areas of the state. DCFS believes that the most effective services are in the communities where families live, where they are easily accessible, and culturally responsive. Applications had to describe community needs and address services to be provided to meet these needs. DCFS' Grant Management Unit (GMU) was able to recruited new volunteers to be a part of the evaluation committee this year to review and score all of the submitted applications. These volunteers were made up of individuals from different backgrounds and experiences and the feedback we received from them was insightful and invaluable. GMU staff will be utilizing the feedback received from the evaluation committee to enhance the next application cycle.

DCFS' GMU collaborates with FPO and subrecipients to ensure family support services are evidence-based, accessible, and that families' needs are being met through community-based programs such as: in-home family crisis stabilization services, in-home mental health assessments and treatment, substance abuse assessment and services, and in-home homemaker classes.

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**POPULATIONS AT GREATEST RISK OF MALTREATMENT (SECTION 432(A)(10) OF THE ACT)**

Through a review of available data and feedback loops in existing statewide workgroups, Nevada identified statewide populations at the greatest risk of maltreatment. These families include those who have had prior involvement with the state's child welfare agencies, those living in poverty, those that experience homelessness, and those that have histories with law enforcement, incarceration, substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. Of the populations at greatest risk of maltreatment, priority populations have been identified in partnership with community and system partners. These populations include CSEC victims, or those youth at risk of becoming a victim, and youth with behavioral and emotional problems. Specialized teams in each region provide

crisis intervention, screening and assessments to families who fall into the populations at greatest risk of maltreatment.

Over the next five years Nevada will continue to monitor these populations and apply CQI principles to continuously reassess priority populations for the state. In preparation for Round 4 of the CFSR, the state will convene community and system partners to collectively develop strategies for this population and to ensure we are identifying a population of children who are truly at the greatest risk of maltreatment and not only at greater risk for being reported for suspected abuse or neglect.

Nevada will engage communities across the state, the child welfare agencies, the CIP, legal and judicial partners, youth, families, caregivers, and other system partners. This engagement, coupled with data analysis, will allow Nevada to consider how and where to target family support and child abuse prevention resources. It will also provide the state with an opportunity to determine how conditions of poverty contribute to the reporting of families to the child welfare agency and actions the agency can take to ensure that poverty is not equated with neglect.

#### **MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISIT FORMULA GRANTS AND STANDARDS FOR CASEWORKER VISITS**

The standards for caseworker visits are discussed more extensively in the well-being items listed above.

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#### **PLAN TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF CASEWORKER VISITS**

Statewide over the next five years the state plans to use the Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant to support each jurisdiction throughout the state in ensuring children are seen monthly. Nevada has children out of state in some residential treatment centers (RTC) that are not covered under the Interstate Compact for Placement of Children (ICPC). Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant dollars are used to travel to other states to see children in these placements. Additionally, dollars are used to pay staff to see children when caseloads are high, and time does not permit them to be seen in a 40-hour work week. To improve the quality of the visits, funding will be used to purchase meals or activities for children in care to promote child centered, age-appropriate visits.

The Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) has made caseworker visits with children a priority for many years. Efforts have included providing each jurisdiction caseworker visit data to improve the frequency of visits. Data concerning the quality of visits is discussed using Nevada's quarterly case review results and item specific OMS reports. Over the next five years, Nevada will continue to develop strategies to improve the quality of caseworker visits with case participants including revisiting existing policies.

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## **PLAN TO IMPROVE CASEWORKER DECISION-MAKING ON THE SAFETY, PERMANENCY, AND WELL-BEING OF FOSTER CHILDREN**

Improving individual caseworkers' decision-making on the safety, permanency, and well-being of children remains a focus for Nevada and is rooted in quality training and agency support of caseworkers. DCFS FPO will work with NPT and the child welfare agencies to continuously monitor and assess the state's performance on child and family outcomes and utilize this in conjunction with any data available from the child workforce directly to inform modifications to this plan. Over the next five years, Nevada will continue to develop a new supervisor training series and its two-year supervisor training plan to better prepare supervisors for their role in providing better support to caseworkers with decision-making. The plan has been adopted statewide and utilizes a combination of existing courses, newly developed courses, and courses available through OpenSesame to meet a comprehensive array of competencies for child welfare supervisors.

With the addition of OpenSesame courses in Nevada, the state continues expanding their catalog of courses and is meeting the identified need to provide training support for supervisors and other agency leaders. OpenSesame is an e-learning vendor with more than 20,000 online courses applicable to the child welfare workforce, including topics related to supervision and management, coaching, critical thinking, problem solving, time management, well-being and stress management, effective communication, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The state also plans to enhance and update its new worker Academy training in the northern part of the state, aligning it with the curriculum delivered in the southern region, and better preparing workers new to the agencies. Nevada will continue to expand its utilization of NPTLearn and use the peer and social networking, analytic capabilities, and workspaces within the system to bolster professional development beyond single training events and support transfer of learning outside of the classroom, specifically in the sustaining of CoachNV. Enhanced CQI activities over the next five years, paired with intentional and thoughtful communication and messaging, will provide extra support to the child welfare workforce and naturally improve their confidence when making case decisions.

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## **PLAN TO IMPROVE CASEWORKER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND TRAINING**

Nevada is committed to enhancing its child welfare workforce over the next five years. Having a healthy workforce was a part of Nevada's 2020-2024 CFSP. Although some of the strategies identified in that plan were implemented, partners across the state agree this is still an important initiative for the child welfare agencies. Agencies are consistently challenged by recruiting and retaining a competent, skilled, and better supported workforce. Adequate training, improved culture, reasonable workflows, and reduced stress have been areas identified with opportunities to improve. Input and feedback received through statewide workforce surveys, regional focus groups, and training evaluations support these goals. Nevada believes that having a satisfied, highly trained, and supported workforce will naturally improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families.

This is a goal outlined in the Plan for Enacting the State’s Vision section of this report. By year five, Nevada will have developed a plan to improve the recruitment and retention of its child welfare workforce. It will refine activities to assess workforce satisfaction and utilize results of these assessments to inform future initiatives. There is a current need to improve and adapt the state’s child welfare working environments to meet emerging trends not only in child welfare in Nevada, but what child welfare systems across the nation are facing. Nevada believes being responsive to current employees, and being forward-thinking with recruitment efforts, the state will foster a collaborative environment that allows for individual development, growth, and ultimately satisfaction.

#### **JOHN H. CHAFEE FOSTER CARE PROGRAM FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD (SECTION 477 OF THE ACT)**

Nevada’s independent living (IL) program provides youth individualized case management, workshops, funding for secondary and post-secondary education, job seeking services, employment services, and helps build skills that promote self-sufficiency as youth transition into adulthood. IL youth are supported utilizing CFT meetings throughout their participation in the program to ensure the development of a supportive relationship between the youth and their IL worker.

Nevada remains committed to improving the quality of services and support offered through its IL programs. FPO conducts ongoing evaluation to monitor and track service provision and outcomes, utilizing this information to tailor programs to meet the needs of older youth.

Nevada is in the planning stages to extend Title IV-E foster care for young adults to the age of 21. Nevada is working on improving its existing statewide IL program, as well as how best to adapt its existing state funded court jurisdiction program for this population. Nevada’s extended foster care (EFC) program is formally called the Extended Young Adult Support Services Program (EYASSP) and will be implemented fully beginning July 1, 2025.

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#### **AGENCY ADMINISTERING CHAFEE**

Nevada’s DCFS RRCW delivers, facilitates, and administers its own IL program in the 15 rural counties with the assistance of public and private partnerships, while CCDFS, and WCHSA facilitate their own programs with oversight provided by the Family Programs Office. While each jurisdiction develops a service array unique to its community, the child welfare agencies work collaboratively to implement statewide policies and programming.

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#### **DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

Nevada strives to administer an independent living program that is well integrated with resources, programming, and internal and external partnerships to meet the needs of youth and young adults (YYA) aging out of care and transitioning into adulthood. A goal

for the next five years is for the state's child welfare agencies to improve their engagement and partnership with youth and young adults and their families when assessing and planning for their transition out of care.

From 2022 through 2023, with technical assistance from the CBCS, Nevada assessed its statewide IL programs, services, and available funding (e.g., state funding, Chafee, ETV and Medicaid) to determine the state's readiness to implement EFC. The assessment of current programs and services involved participation from regional YABs. Nevada conducted deep problem exploration which involved gathering and analyzing secondary data (NYTD, AFCARS), as well as collecting and analyzing primary data via interviews with key informants. Following the interviews, two statewide focus groups were conducted with youth and young adults. Focus group data was analyzed using content and thematic analysis, and a summary matrix of findings was developed. The summary matrix was also used to develop a summary visual that was disseminated to focus group participants and others including the SQIC, and YABs. Nevada identified barriers to improving the statewide IL program and to implementing EFC in the state. The state developed theories of change to address the barriers and to guide the work over the next five years. Nevada is committed to the following.

- Ensuring youth and young adult engagement in IL and EFC program development and case planning is authentic.
- Ensuring the service array for housing, behavioral health, and financial support is sufficient for this population.
- Ensuring information about IL and EFC is consistent and better retained across all jurisdictions and that the program data is reliable and valid.

In the northern part of the state, WCHSA has a Prior Authorization Request process it utilizes ensure a youth is Chafee eligible and the funds that are requested are distributed in a fair and equitable manner. The agency maintains a master spreadsheet to track youth who receive funding, the amount of funding, and the reason for the funding. This data is reviewed yearly to ensure the funding remains equitable and in line with annual Chafee goals.

Over the next five years, Nevada will continue to make improvements to the IL program and prepare for EFC implementation. Nevada will identify intersecting areas between projects and outline opportunities to leverage the work being done and that is planned. The state will ensure ongoing collaboration with YYA, agency, community, and system partners. A timeline outlining the project's deliverables is attached to this report.

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## **NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE (NYTD)**

In 2022, NYTD data was analyzed as part of the IL work plan with Capacity Building Center for States (CBCS) to help improve data quality and identify gaps in program information. Through the work with CBCS, as well as other data analytics experts, Nevada identified strategies to improve data quality, collection, analysis, and looked at potential interfaces with other state systems. Nevada infuses CQI principles when looking at NYTD data and provides learning opportunities to staff around CQI and data literacy.

Incorporating discussions around NYTD data into existing statewide meetings gives the jurisdictions a supportive space to share successes and challenges throughout the NYTD cohorts. In 2023, the state was found non-compliant for the FFY2023 Cohort 5A reporting period. The state learned of gaps in NYTD training which affected this six-month period. As a result, more concentrated efforts were incorporated to ensure that agency staff were aware of the compliance requirements for NYTD. FPO IL specialists increased monitoring efforts, and offered TA or training as needed. As a result, the FFY 2023 Cohort 5B file was submitted and found to be compliant. Over the next five years, Nevada will explore expanding its existing contract with FosterClub to include the Peer Navigator program. This program has been successfully piloted in other states and if brought to Nevada, would offer employment opportunities for young people with lived experience, as they would serve as the main point of engagement for survey completion.

NYTD does not provide the state with region specific information, only snapshots from a state perspective. As a state, Nevada has struggled to identify services, or gaps in services by region. Over the next five years Nevada will look for ways to improve data collection in this area.

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## **SERVING YOUTH ACROSS THE STATE**

Findings and recommendations from the state's assessment of its IL program were shared with community, agency, and system partners to inform ongoing program development and improvement. With youth and young adults, this is primarily accomplished through the state's efforts to grow its youth advisory board. Nevada has contracted with the Children's Advocacy Alliance (CAA) since 2021 to facilitate and support the work of the statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Responsibilities of CAA include, but are not limited to, facilitating, and coordinating virtual meetings, strengthening relationships with agency, community, and system partners, leadership training opportunities, and ensuring YAB members are compensated for their participation.

Increasing participation in Nevada's statewide YAB, Nevada LIFE, is an area of high focus for CAA as the state had been experiencing barriers with increasing the engagement and participation of geographically diverse YYA. In August of 2023, the state in collaboration with CAA sub-contracted this role to Foster Kinship, a local non-profit organization. Foster Kinship immediately established their presence by meeting with IL staff in each of the three child welfare agencies, attending jurisdictional YAB meetings, connecting with local community partners, and hosting youth town halls. These efforts have helped reduce barriers and increase YYA participation from across Nevada in the statewide YAB. Since contracting with Foster Kinship, YAB participation increased from 5 participants in August of 2023, to 17 participants in April of 2024. Included in these participants are some of Nevada's young adults who live in other states.

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**SERVING YOUTH OF VARIOUS AGES AND STAGES OF ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE  
(SECTION 477(B)(2)(C) OF THE ACT)**

Nevada has built a statewide IL program that invites the participation of young people in all aspects of our work. Young people continue to be a part of our work plans, participate in focus groups, work sessions and surveys. Their input and perspectives have been vital in assessing existing processes, developing planned activities, and framing out the implementation of EFC. Young leaders have expressed great enthusiasm to affect programmatic changes via these continued partnerships. In February of 2024, a local Assemblywoman attended one of the YAB meetings for an engaging session with participants. She shared insights into the legislative process, drew from her own personal experiences, and resulted in an invaluable experience for Nevada’s young people.

Nevada offers individualized case management and workshops that include topics and speakers who are selected by youth and young adults. Topics include education and employment preparation, substance abuse prevention, preventative health activities, physical and mental health, budgeting, tax preparation and cooking. Youth and young adults are encouraged to provide feedback regarding activities and programming to ensure they receive information they feel is beneficial to their transition to adulthood. Nevada fosters mentorship opportunities via peer-to-peer interactions with aged out young adults helping younger youth in care navigate being in care. This opportunity has cemented the importance of age-appropriate relationship building for meaningful interactions and experiences.

Nevada’s Extended Young Adult Support Services Program (EYASSP) will be implemented July 1, 2025. This state legislation was enacted to enhance Nevada’s existing court jurisdiction program. The state recognizes that when youth age out of care at 18, youth often lose access to familiar services and supports, funding, educational opportunities and connections. These same youth often face more barriers on the road to adulthood when compared to their peers and run a greater risk of experiencing the following.

- Housing instability and homelessness
- A shorter or unfulfilled academic trajectory
- Unemployment and unstable employment
- Physical, mental and behavioral health issues
- Loss of health care access
- Involvement in the criminal justice system

Chapin Hall has identified that extending foster care to youth until the age of 21 helps young people of color with employment and educational attainment and that they are less likely to experience homelessness or young parenthood.

Nevada has an opportunity to assist this age group that historically was not part of the foster care system. It builds on efforts made in 2011, which established NRS 432B.591 that changed the definition of child and allowed youth to stay in foster care until the age of 21 voluntarily. As of March of 2024, there were 336 children statewide enrolled in the



state's court jurisdiction program. These statistics will be used in the formula for the fiscal impact analysis of extending Title IV-E foster care. Nevada has administered a state funded program; however, effective July 1, 2025, the state will be able to claim Title IV-E reimbursement for those eligible in this population. Over the next five years, Nevada will reevaluate the use of Chafee funding to determine how Chafee services can be better utilized to support successful transition to adulthood. Nevada will continue report on the EYASSP population through CFSP 2025-2029 Goal 2.

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**COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC AGENCIES (SECTION 477(B)(2)(D) OF THE ACT)*****Coordinated Efforts Public and Private Sectors***

Child welfare agencies collaborate with public and private entities to ensure youth and young adults in care are supported in a manner that best fits their needs. Community providers participate in workshops and designated IL meetings, creating a feedback loop for the YYA they serve. The northern part of the state has partnered with Nevada PEP and Youth MOVE. Youth MOVE is a youth led organization that aims to help other youth develop self-advocacy skills, create systems change and remove the stigma placed on mental health. In addition to their active social media presence, Youth MOVE holds weekly virtual meetings and podcasts.

The Court Improvement Program (CIP) plays a significant role in several areas of the current IL program as well as with the planning and implementation of EFC. Beginning in 2023, the CIP brought on a young person with lived experience to participate in their Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance (JCAMP) project. This opportunity allows for the young person to work alongside lawyers, judges, CASAs and the FPO. In this position, the young person helped identify priority measures and was included in the data collection process. Additionally, they are part of the CIP Select Committee and the JCAMP Leadership Team. As a CIP representative, they will also be involved in workgroups and committees where youth and young adult voice and perspectives are needed.

In December of 2022, a local donor contacted the state and expressed interest in financing a scholarship for current and former foster youth and young adults in the northern and rural regions of the state. In collaboration with the northern and rural region IL supervisors and staff, the state created a scholarship review committee, an application, the application scoring procedures as well as promotional materials which were distributed via various social media outlets. The Sergott Family Scholarship funded seven \$1,000 awards in 2023. The family hopes to finance this as an annual scholarship.

Over the next five years, Nevada will continuously explore opportunities to further collaborate with public and private systems, while identifying new ways to expand the state's service array in a diverse, equitable and inclusive way.

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## **LGBTQ+ SUPPORTS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS**

Over the next five years, Nevada will continue its commitment to ensuring LGBTQ+ youth and young adults in care feel supported and are provided with services aligned with their unique needs in a safe and affirming manner. DCFS through NPT, and the state's child welfare agencies offer ongoing staff trainings and have collaborated with local LGBTQ+ organizations to help cultivate a positive environment for young people that identify as LGBTQ+. These organizations are an essential part of supporting youth and young adults. In 2022, some parts of the state hosted panels with LGBTQ+ organizations to help educate foster parents on how they can best support this population. Additionally, speakers have been invited to IL meetings and workshops where resources are also regularly distributed. Statewide policy 0216 Non-Discrimination of LGBTQ+ Individuals was implemented in 2022 to ensure this population, when under the custody of a child welfare agency, receive non-discriminatory, safe, affirming, and non-detrimental services and interventions. Services available include but are not limited to mental health, substance abuse, foster care, adoption, and mentoring services without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression (SOGIE). In 2023, the FPO updated all internal statewide forms and policies to include SOGIE information. Over the next five years, Nevada will focus efforts on foster care recruitment and retention to provide safe and stable placements for this population. As data collection for this population improves, the state will utilize the information to inform expansion of the IL and EFC service array.

Nevada will also focus efforts to implement the Final Rule on Designated Placement Requirements under Title IV-E and IV-B for LGBTQ+ children (89 FR 34818) published on April 30, 2024. Statewide forms, policies, and practice will be updated to incorporate the case plan and case review requirements outlined in the rule.

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## **PROMOTING WELLNESS & PROACTIVELY ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Nevada remains committed to ensuring young people have access to mental health resources, wellness resources, and additional supports. Nevada YYA can be referred to services, and the child welfare agencies host workshops that focus on mindfulness, nutrition for a balanced mind, exercise, realistic self-care and self-growth. Even with these resources, Nevada has learned about barriers that prevent youth and young adults statewide from fully accessing needed mental health services. In 2022, the northern part of the state partnered with Nevada PEP and the Youth MOVE program, which is youth led and aims at empowering young people in areas including removing the stigma of mental health. In 2024, access to mental health services was assessed by a provider capacity assessment in preparation of the implementation of extended foster care. Some of the barriers identified include but are not limited to lack of funding to sustain partnerships, absence of acute need service providers for transitioning youth and lack of housing equipped for youth and young adults with a higher level of need. Mental and behavioral health wellness will remain a high focus area for the state over the next five years.

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## COORDINATED EFFORTS WITH FEDERAL AND STATE PROGRAMS

### ***Housing***

In coordination with the Nevada Housing Division (NHD), which is partially funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the state refers IL youth and young adults to NHD for multiple programs. NRS 319.143 requires NHD to create and maintain a state-wide low-income housing database.

The Nevada Housing Division provides a comprehensive on-line locator list of affordable housing options at <http://nvhousingsearch.org/> or by calling 1-877-428-8844. NHD also offers emergency solutions through grants such as rapid rehousing and homeless prevention, weatherization assistance for child welfare families who have a need in this area, as well as multiple homebuyer programs for child welfare families who qualify.

Over the next five years, Nevada will continue to collaborate with regional housing authorities to revise or create the MOU's for both the Family Unification Program (FUP) and the Foster Youth Initiative (FYI) program. Each year, vouchers are awarded statewide; however, the application process is lengthy and difficult for young people to navigate without considerable assistance. Once awarded the voucher, young people have a short timeframe for it to be used, which has been a cause for concern given the limited housing resources throughout the state. In 2022, the northern part of the state introduced a Housing Specialist position that provides individual assistance to young people with applying for and obtaining housing. Housing continues to be an area of high focus for the state via targeted planning. Since 2022, targeted workgroups have regularly met to learn more about the state's housing capacity, barriers and potential solutions moving forward. The young leaders that participate have been especially vocal about the need for housing supports and services to improve statewide.

### ***Education***

The IL program specialist continues to participate in the Nevada Foster Youth Higher Education Committee and the Nevada Foster Youth Education Data Subcommittee. These meetings are designed to partner with community and system partners, including former foster youth, legal advocates, local child welfare agencies, and ETV providers to identify supportive activities for this population and to eliminate financial barriers while increasing the number of youth pursuing higher education.

### ***Medicaid***

Nevada continues its efforts in understanding gaps in Medicaid coverage for eligible youth and young adults. In 2020, an analysis of NYTD surveys resulted in Nevada identifying that Medicaid applications for young adults 18 years and older were routinely denied. As a result, the state's process is now more streamlined and ensures any issues with the submission of applications are addressed promptly. Effective January 1, 2023, the SUPPORT Act, Pub. L. No. 115-271, expanded eligibility of Medicaid for youth formerly in foster care (FFCC) to individuals who were in foster care from other states and simplified eligibility determinations and the enrollment processes for this population. In 2023, DWSS modified its system to allow former foster youth who aged out on or after

January 1, 2023, in any state to receive Aged Out Medicaid through the age of 26. Former foster youth who have aged out of care in Nevada remain eligible through the age of 26.

Former foster youth and young adults frequently experience barriers to accessing their Medicaid benefits when they move to a different state. When young people that experienced care in a different state move to Nevada, they receive assistance accessing Medicaid and/or a referral to access Medicaid through DWSS, if they are under the age of 21. When an aged out young person in Nevada expresses plans to move to another state, they are provided with enrollment information for that state, a proof of wardship letter for eligibility and encouraged to contact that state's Medicaid division. The DCFS continues to collaborate with DWSS to discuss needed changes to processes and systems to ensure compliance with the new expanded eligibility. Nevada will cooperate with and participate in any national evaluation of the effects of programs in achieving the purposes of Chafee.

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### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS (ETV) PROGRAM (SECTION 477(I) OF THE ACT)**

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program in Nevada has consistently supported youth and young adult's pursuit of their education goals by providing funds to meet their needs around housing, transportation, childcare and additional areas. Historically, the Children's Cabinet was the sole agency administering the ETV program statewide. At the onset of FY2023, Clark County Social Service (CCSS) began administering the program alongside the Children's Cabinet. CCSS administers the ETV program for CCDFS while the Children's Cabinet administers the ETV program for the remaining regions of the state. Both agencies manage eligibility requirements, program compliance, and connect recipients to services needed to aid in successful education completion.

Over the next five years, CCSS and the Children's Cabinet will collaborate with the child welfare agencies, the legal community and the higher education institutions located throughout Nevada by regularly attending ad hoc meetings, quarterly IL meetings and policy workgroups. Both entities have partnered with the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Foster Youth Success Initiative with the primary mission to recruit, effectively support, and retain students who have been dependents of the child welfare system. The collaboration allows Nevada to comprehensively track the long-term educational achievements of foster youth. This initiative has also established direct contacts in financial aid and enrollment officers across Nevada's NSHE institutions listed below. To ensure Nevada's ETV program is successful and inclusive, the state routinely assesses the program and implement changes when appropriate.

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno
- Nevada State College
- College of Southern Nevada
- Great Basin College

- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Western Nevada College

In December of 2022, the state conducted an analysis of the ETV data collection process and its effectiveness. As a result of this analysis, the state began collecting ETV data via a platform used by the DCFS Grants Management Unit (GMU) as it would streamline the process. The platform provides comprehensive reports that can be easily accessed and captures characteristics that were not available using the previous report out formats. The FPO and GMU collaborated with ETV providers to develop the data collection process, identify data collection variables, and determine reporting cadence. The report collects ETV participant application and program participation criteria which will be used to better inform young people's needs when pursuing post-secondary education as well as speaking to the gaps in services and resources in the state. The first reporting period was initiated in January of 2024.

While establishing the data collection process, Nevada also updated the ETV application by adding questions around the young person's permanency outcome upon exiting care at 18, state in which they experienced care in, application status (new, ongoing, or returning) as well as whether they are a first-generation college student. Additionally, using an ADEI lens, a review was conducted on the existing questions around SOGIE to ensure they are being asked in a non-discriminatory and affirming manner. Due to southern Nevada's population being significantly higher than the northern part of the state CCSS hired an ETV Coordinator who provides direct outreach to YYA and helps identify any eligible students.

Over the next five years efforts around ETV will include increased outreach and engagement of YYA, as well as increasing training opportunities statewide. Outreach efforts will include collaborating with higher education institutions, participation in education outreach events at high schools, sharing program information with caseworkers, foster parents, guardians, and utilizing social media to post information. These efforts will create awareness for populations of YYA that have previously not known of their eligibility like youth and young adults that achieved guardianship or adoption after 16 years of age. These efforts will also assist in promoting enrollment, retention, and graduation. The ETV providers and FPO IL specialists will continue to attend training, peer-to-peer events, and webinars to increase knowledge around strategies and best practices for working with this population.

Nevada developed a statewide ETV policy utilized by the agencies that provide ETV services. As part of the application process each academic year, applicants must complete the ETV application, which includes documentation each semester confirming enrollment, the cost of attendance (COA), and any unmet financial needs. The ETV Coordinator utilizes this information to determine eligibility and before any Chafee ETV funds are dispersed.

On December 27, 2020, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act. The law contains provisions that amend the Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act and includes the FAFSA Simplification Act, a sweeping redesign of the processes and systems used to award federal student aid.

Students can be awarded up to \$5,000 in Chafee ETV funding, per academic year for qualifying education or personal expenses, funding availability permitting. This is regardless of how much room they have within their annual cost of attendance that is determined by their institution. ETV payments will be excluded from the need analysis and total aid formulas when calculating a student's financial need.

In the statewide ETV policy, under the funding guidelines, the ETV provider must avoid duplication of benefits. Students cannot claim for the same expense under multiple federal programs. The ETV Coordinator works with each individual student to ensure there is no duplication of benefits. This is achieved by requiring students provide proof of an educational expense that shows that expense has not already been paid for by another source. The ETV Coordinator submits payments directly to the financial institution whenever possible. If a student is seeking to use their ETV funds to reimburse for an eligible educational expense they paid for themselves the ETV Coordinator verifies the request for reimbursement was not already paid for by another source. If the ETV Coordinator identifies that there would be a duplication, they will deem the request ineligible and ETV funds are not allocated.

Nevada has opted to offer ETV to all eligible students to the maximum age range, until age 26. All students are eligible for the full \$5,000 award, which Nevada breaks down to \$2,500 for the January to June session, and \$2,500 for the July to December session. There was no wait list for ETV awards in 2023-2024 in the southern part of the state. Every student that completed their ETV application, and found to be eligible, received assistance. In the case where a waitlist may occur due to funding constraints, Clark County would serve students in the order of application received and work with DCFS for additional direction. Students accessing ETV are all eligible for the same benefits and services that are offered.

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## **CHAFEE TRAINING**

Nevada has IL specific training available statewide to caseworkers and supervisors in a variety of formats, and in person technical assistance when requested. The training curriculum includes Chafee and FAFY funding, the availability of additional financial assistance streams depending upon the youth's age and eligibility, and the use of general funds to support Normalcy for Foster Youth. In 2021, Motivational Interviewing and Positive Youth Development trainings were launched and continue to be training requirements when working with YYA. The FPO continues to review and update the IL training to ensure the information presented is relevant. Over the next five years the state will develop and deliver a curriculum specific to EFC as part of the implementation of EYASSP.

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## CONSULTATION WITH TRIBES (SECTION 477(B)(3)(G) OF THE ACT) – SPECIFIC TO IL

A subaward with a tribal entity has not been established in Nevada; however, targeted efforts continue to ensure this population is aware of the services available to them and how to access them. The FPO IL specialist collaborates with the DCFS Tribal Liaison to inform tribes of the Chafee program and to facilitate access to Chafee benefits and services through the Indian Child Welfare (ICW) meetings. Nevada Tribes have been informed of Chafee and ETV opportunities and services through DHHS Tribal Consultation, and individually through discussions with DCFS Tribal Liaison. As with all other IL program areas, Nevada has included this population in the IL work plan to ensure the state’s understanding of their needs aligns with available programming.

The Chafee program is discussed with tribal partners in DCFS hosted bi-monthly Indian Child Welfare (ICW) meetings, DHHS Tribal Consultations, and on a tribal road trip across Eastern and Western Nevada facilitated by multiple DHHS tribal liaisons.

Previously, the Tribal non-profit ran by the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe, also known as FPST Stepping Stones, was the administrator of the Chafee funds for Indian children and youth. In 2019, FPST decided to no longer be the Chafee provider of the Chafee funds due to the high expenses and low financial award. No other Nevada tribal entity since has come forward to be the coordinator of Chafee funds. Currently, there are no Nevada Tribes utilizing Chafee funds for Indian children and youth. No Nevada Tribes have requested to develop an agreement for Chafee or an ETV program, even when presented the information.

DHHS assigns a tribal liaison to each division including DCFS. The DHHS tribal liaisons work together to coordinate services for all of Nevada’s Indian children living both on and off sovereign land by visiting tribal clinics and sharing information on state services for youth and families, by meeting monthly to discuss the needs of tribal communities across the state, providing technical assistance to tribes via email or phone calls, and presenting to tribal leaders at various meetings hosted by tribes.

## CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN STATES AND TRIBES

The state of Nevada has 28 tribal entities that include federally recognized tribes, bands, and colonies. These entities are listed below.

- Battle Mountain Band Council
- Carson Colony Community Council
- Dresslerville Community Council
- Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe
- Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
- Elko Band Council
- Ely Shoshone Tribe
- Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe
- Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe
- The Fort Mojave Reservation
- The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation
- Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
- Lovelock Paiute Tribe
- Moapa Band of Paiutes
- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony

- South Fork Band Council
- Stewart Community Council
- Summit Lake Paiute Tribe
- Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone
- Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
- Walker River Paiute Tribe
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- Wells Band Council
- Winnemucca Colony Council
- Woodfords Community Council
- Yerington Paiute Tribe
- Yomba Shoshone Tribe

To gather input from the Nevada tribes, the DCFS Tribal Liaison conducts Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Committee meetings every other month. The meetings are open to all tribal entities and the tribal community. The DCFS tribal liaison co-facilitates the ICW Meetings in collaboration with the local Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) social workers. Agenda items are driven by tribal requests for program information.

To encourage statewide participation, meeting notifications are disseminated through a listserv. Communications include the minutes from the prior meeting and an agenda for the upcoming meeting. ICW Committee membership includes representatives from Nevada tribes, Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITCN), Nevada Indian Commission, CIP, Bureau of Indian Affairs (eastern and western Nevada agencies), State of Nevada Attorney General’s Office, WCHSA, CCDFS, Nevada Legal Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Nevada Early Intervention Services, The National Council of Judicial and Family Court Judges, and DCFS RRCW. The purpose of the committee is to provide an opportunity for consultation and collaboration between state, tribal and county entities. This collaboration provides a forum for discussion and recommendations between state, tribal and county entities for improving the child welfare system. This forum is where policies, procedure and practice can be discussed and where the group can confer on topics of interest to the tribes. Speakers may be added to the agenda to address ongoing Indian child welfare issues and provide opportunities for trainings and listening sessions between jurisdictions and Nevada tribes on statewide child welfare issues and updates.

In addition to the ICW meetings, the DCFS Tribal Liaison gathers input, collaborates, and coordinates with the tribes through individual consultations and other ongoing state or tribal meetings. Individual consultation focuses on developing and updating MOUs to ensure culturally appropriate cross-jurisdictional placements and to ensure adherence to ICWA.

The DCFS Tribal Liaison participates in tribal consultations through the Department of Health and Human Services and the Nevada Indian Commission. Tribal leaders are invited to both meetings to discuss issues within Indian Country. DHHS Tribal Liaisons are required to give updates within their divisions (e.g., Medicaid, Welfare, Aging and Disability) to support cross-collaboration and information exchange.



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## BARRIERS TO COORDINATION/COLLABORATION

In Nevada, individual tribal elections take place at different times of the year, so leadership may continuously change. This impacts the validity of existing MOUs which are subject to change upon new tribal leadership. The DCFS Tribal Liaison uses virtual platforms and travels to meet tribal representatives in person as needed to engage tribal leaders regarding MOU development. Tribal input and feedback is always encouraged and noted as well as sharing of available resources to allow for the provision of constructive feedback between the state agency and the tribes.

Per the 2023 report from the Nevada Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Office, each tribal social service agency can license foster homes. The barrier Nevada tribes see consistently is the lack of tribal families wanting to apply to become licensed foster parents and with the few who are interested, they do not pass background or safety checks. BIA Human Services Agency representatives meet quarterly with tribal social service teams in their designated regions who report no current licensed tribal foster homes on tribal land. This makes it difficult to place Indian children in state or county custody per placement preference when following ICWA.

The DCFS Tribal Liaison collaborated and shared with tribes the development of the 2025-2029 CFSP in the following ways:

- Meet and consult with other state agency tribal liaisons monthly to continue the discussion of current needs for Nevada tribes.
- Attend quarterly Tribal Consultation meetings and give updates on DCFS services per request.
- Attend quarterly Nevada Indian Commission (NIC) meetings to stay updated on tribal community issues across the state.
- Participate in a quarterly national ICW manager's calls with other ICWA specialists in other states where ideas from each state are discussed and shared regarding ICWA.
- Attend monthly Tribal Health Director's meetings and give updates regarding DCFS-ICW issues involving the tribes.
- Monitor and update the ICWA page on the DCFS website which is made accessible to all Nevada Tribes via the internet.
- Provide training opportunities, announcements, and meeting information from various sources through the Nevada tribal listserv.  
[nvdcfstribalcomm@listserv.state.nv.us](mailto:nvdcfstribalcomm@listserv.state.nv.us)
- Continue to participate in quarterly case reviews and case consultations when available.
- Assist state and tribal partners in the identification of appropriate actions surrounding ICWA.
- Participate in Casey Family Program's Mechanisms of AIAN Inequality in Child Welfare: A Race Equity Improvement Collaborative Conversation.

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## ICWA

In Nevada's 2023 Legislative Session Assembly Bill 444 was approved. The bill established various provisions governing proceedings relating to the custody, adoption or protection for Indian children, including Tribal Customary Adoptions, or the termination of parental rights to provide additional protections for Indian children in state law. The bill updates Nevada Revised Statutes in chapters 432B and 127.

The statewide policy 0504 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was last updated in 2020 to include the new federal regulations which provided ICWA definitions. The policy provides detailed information on who is responsible for providing child welfare services once it is determined ICWA is applicable. DCFS Tribal Liaison is contacted by the child welfare worker from either the state or county once an inquiry has been made with possible Native American or Alaskan Native ancestry. Tribal Liaison assists throughout the case to ensure ICWA is followed.

DCFS develops and implements MOUs with Nevada tribes for the culturally appropriate placement of children across jurisdictions. The MOUs outline protocols coordinating the placement of foster children into tribal licensed foster homes located on tribal land. The establishment of the MOU between the Nevada tribes and DCFS allows for greater collaboration between the state, tribe, and counties for better provision of services on and off the tribal communities in the state, and the reduction of trauma to Indian children by placing them within their own culturally appropriate communities. The MOU is created through state and tribal consultations in face-to-face meetings or via phone consultations between the DCFS Tribal Liaison and tribal social services. A complete draft is then presented to the tribal council before being submitted to the state's Attorney General's Office for review. The MOU gives specifics to who is responsible for providing child welfare services and outlines protections for tribal children. Tribes can personalize a MOU to meet the needs and expectations to best represent the sovereignty and individuality of each tribal entity. MOUs provide descriptions and details after consultations on role each person and/or agency has throughout the process. It is up to individual tribes to participate in the MOU process with DCFS.

Tribal and state or local social workers work together with the DCFS Tribal Liaison to collaborate, gather, and share the best resources for tribal children. DCFS ensures that active efforts are adhered to by attempting to keep sibling groups together; engaging the age-appropriate child, parents, extended family and tribal agencies in case planning and Child and Family Team meetings; identifying appropriate services and helping parents to obtain such services; monitoring progress and participation services; conducting diligent searches for the child's extended family members; supporting regular visitation with parents, siblings and extended family including providing transportation for such visits; and providing post-reunification services through monitoring.

DCFS continues to provide training to tribal, state, and county workers to ensure active efforts are taken to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when a child may be placed in foster care or for adoption. For new state and county social workers, the mandates of

ICWA are included in the mandatory Nevada Academy Training. The Nevada Partnership for Training offers an online ICWA training that is open to all jurisdictions. The desired outcome is to promote and support positive relationships between Nevada tribes with state and county workers for the benefit of tribal children and families. Additionally, the DCFS Tribal Liaison coordinates and provides refresher training on ICWA and MOUs upon request.

The Indian Child Welfare Resource Guide for Nevada was designed to assist state and county child welfare agencies on the law and tribal contacts within Nevada tribes. DCFS Tribal Liaison updates the ICW Resource Guide which is available on the DCFS website. DCFS Tribal Liaison shares opportunities with Nevada tribes to receive funding to include Title IV-E and Title IV-B opportunities. It is up to individual tribes whether they wish to apply or not for any funding sources. No tribal entity is currently interested in becoming Title IV-E eligible due to infrastructure challenges.

DCFS monitors compliance with ICWA through case compliance and quality assurance review, training, and through individual continuous quality improvement case reviews with the Deputy Attorney Generals who represent DCFS.

Once approved, the DCFS tribal liaison or administration will share the most recent CFSP and future APSRs with Nevada Tribes via state website and the DCFS ICWA listserv. DCFS tribal liaison will request to be on future agendas and present the most recent reports at future DHHS Tribal Consultation and ICW meetings. Hard copies can be sent via mail or email to tribes per request.

## **TARGETED PLANS WITHIN THE 2025-2029 CFSP**

### **FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT DILIGENT RECRUITMENT PLAN**

The mission of the DCFS is that together in genuine partnership with families, communities, and other governmental agencies, DCFS provides support and services to Nevada's children and families in reaching their full human potential. DCFS recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and children, youth and families thrive then they live in safe, permanent settings, experience a sense of sustainable emotional and physical well-being, and receive support to consistently make positive choices for family and the common good.

Nevada's Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan outlines statewide efforts to reach all parts of the community for recruitment of foster and adoptive families. Each child welfare agency in Nevada utilizes specific strategies to meet the needs of their communities. The attached plan outlines Nevada's statewide goals around the themes described below and provides more detail on specific activities for each theme.

### ***Characteristics of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed***

Data of characteristics of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is provided both regionally and at the statewide level. The state of Nevada will focus its efforts to recruit foster and adoptive families that can meet the needs of sibling groups, children with behavioral health or mental health needs, and those children in geographical areas with the highest removal rates. Nevada's goals include keeping children who have been placed in foster care living in the same geographical area from which they were removed from. The state will also strive to improve data collection and data quality of children in care, so that recruitment activities include efforts to have homes that reflect the diversity of children in Nevada, including their racial, ethnic, cultural and SOGIE identities.

### ***Specific strategies to reach out to all parts of the community.***

Recruitment efforts to increase the number of foster and adoptive homes across the state are inclusive of all parts of the community. Each child welfare agency in Nevada utilizes specific strategies to meet the needs of the communities in their region. Specific strategies are outlined in the attached Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan.

### ***Diverse methods of disseminating both general information about being a foster/adoptive parent and child-specific information***

Nevada utilizes diverse methods of disseminating general information about being a foster and adoptive parent, as well as child specific information. Examples of how general information is disseminated throughout the state are included in the attached Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan.

### ***Strategies for assuring that all prospective foster/adoptive parents have access to agencies that license/approve foster/adoptive parents, including location and hours of services so that the agencies can be accessed by all members of the community***

Nevada ensures foster and adoptive parents have access to agencies that license or approve foster and adoptive parents through access to the DCFS website, child welfare agency websites, QPI Nevada website and additional targeted approaches used by the child welfare agencies. Specific strategies are included in the attached Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan.

### ***Strategies for training staff to work with diverse communities including cultural, racial, and socio-economic variations***

Nevada provides initial and ongoing training for staff through the Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT). NPT manages the online learning management system that most training is available through. NPT also partners with the local child welfare agencies to provide in person and hybrid training opportunities to the child welfare workforce. Through the Nevada Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) website and Nevada's statewide and local race

equity workgroups, additional training opportunities are available to prepare staff to work with the diverse communities across the state.

### ***Strategies for dealing with linguistic barriers***

Nevada employs multiple strategies to overcome linguistic barriers and allow for people who speak a language other than English or who are hearing impaired to become a foster and or an adoptive parent. Specific strategies are included in the attached Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan.

### ***Non-discriminatory fee structures***

Nevada participates in a non-discriminatory fee structure. Foster and adoptive parents may be asked to pay the cost of their FBI criminal background check but are not charged any other fees.

### ***Procedures for a timely search for prospective parents for a child needing an adoptive placement, including the use of exchanges and other interagency efforts, provided that such procedures ensure that placement of a child in an appropriate household is not delayed by the search for a same race or ethnic placement.***

Nevada utilizes various procedures to ensure timely search for prospective parents for a child who needs an adoptive placement. Nevada utilizes diligent search, and concurrent planning, early on and throughout the life of a case to assist with achieving timely permanency for children.

### ***Efforts to support and retain foster caregivers***

Nevada believes that supporting and retaining foster caregivers leads to better outcomes for Nevada children. The state's child welfare agencies employ various strategies aimed at providing support to foster caregivers, one of which is QPI Nevada and all the resources provided within that movement. These resources include training, information, comfort calls for children and birth families at removal, implementation of the ice breaker process between foster families and birth families, and the Caregiver Courier newsletter which provides information to caregivers on topics such as caregiving, community events, activities and other types of meetings. QPI Nevada strives to provide messaging and create a culture in which the foster parents are an integral part of the child welfare team.

Additional efforts to support and retain foster caregivers are included in the attached Foster and Adoptive Diligent Recruitment Plan.

## **HEALTH CARE OVERSIGHT AND COORDINATION PLAN**

Nevada has strong statutory requirements for all youth receiving psychotropic medications; the court of jurisdiction appoints a Person Legally Responsible (PLR) for the oversight and management of psychotropics. Nevada statutes encourage PLRs be the biological parent; however, if they are not able or willing, the court may appoint the

caregiver, court appointed attorney, guardian ad litem, substitute care giver or the child welfare agency as the PLR.

Currently in parts of the state, information related to psychotropic medication use with children in custody is tracked and kept on spreadsheets through internal clinical programs and is sent out monthly to all district offices for review and updates. If changes occurred during the month, those changes are appropriately entered into UNITY. The regions do not have child welfare staff enter psychotropic medication information in those UNITY windows to minimize data entry errors.

Nevada has not developed a statewide approach to monitoring the impact of the PLR programs, or health care services for youth overall. The state currently utilizes its quarterly case reviews to monitor the appropriate utilization of PLRs. Over the next five years, Nevada will work collaboratively with agency and system partners to develop a statewide CQI process, including evaluating data quality and the uniform tracking of data.

Without qualified professionals, such as psychiatrists, the state has not been able to do formal Psychotropic Medication Reviews. In recent years, progress was made on this front through options to use an APRN, with specific qualifications, in addition to a psychiatrist. Efforts to fill positions with qualified professionals will continue over the next five years. In lieu of Psychotropic Medication Reviews, some parts of the state utilize clinical program staff to review the list of children on medications, and their medications, monthly. They then request additional information from child welfare workers and/or PLRs for consideration at upcoming psychiatric appointments. Quarterly review panels are utilized in other parts of the state to do the same.

Statewide, child welfare agencies partner with their local health districts; however, Nevada continues to be challenged with an insufficient service array to meet the needs for those youth with intensive emotional and behavioral issues. Child welfare agencies' clinical teams provide a variety of assessments and services using robust telehealth clinical options for children and families to ensure a continuum of care. These clinical teams continue to meet the increased need for mental and behavioral health needs by providing clinical consultation, behavioral consultation, therapeutic referrals, direct crisis intervention, supportive therapeutic services, and referrals for higher levels of care.

In parts of the state, Nevada has also implemented processes such as consultation and staffing opportunities prior to children being referred for psychiatric evaluations to manage symptoms and/or outpatient counseling. These processes are utilized to determine what services can be provided in-home through interventions such as additional training, coaching, etc., to keep children from being referred for medication without trying other interventions first.

Nevada utilizes quarterly case review data to assess its ability to meet the physical and dental health needs of youth in care. In review of Item 17 data over time, Nevada's current performance on this well-being item reflects an improvement from 2018 when Nevada conducted its Round 3 CFSR, and an improvement from 2022 when Nevada completed

its CFSR Round 3 PIP. At the time of the writing of this report, the results of case reviews conducted during the last four rolling quarters included an assessment of 71 cases. The results reflected the state achieved a strength rating for item 17 in 79.63% of cases reviewed.

Nevada currently utilizes a statewide report to monitor EPSDT screening at a child level. Some jurisdictions in the state utilize an electronic file system that includes UNITY and internal scanning systems. This has helped the jurisdictions with tracking services, data entry and access to medical records. Over the next five years, Nevada will work to assess its statewide transition policy which provides guidance on information sharing and activities that must occur to support children and families when placement changes are made. Over the five years, Nevada will assess data quality in UNITY and the effectiveness of data reports being utilized to track services for children in care.

Statewide policy 0802 Youth IL Program 17 Years and Older is used for youth who are aging out of foster care. The policy provides guidance that the youth's Independent Living Transitional Plan (ILTP) will be updated twice in the youth's last year in care, at or following their 17th birthday, and again no less than ninety days prior to exiting foster care. ILTP goals should center less on the initial training and acquisition of independent living skills, and more on encouraging the youth's demonstration of these skills to assess whether further training is needed before the youth can achieve competency in these areas. Statewide policy 0807 EYASSP Case Management provides guidance for young adults 18-21 who remain in the care and responsibility of the child welfare agency, including developing the Young Adult Self-Sufficiency Plan (YASS Plan) to assist the young adult in transitioning to self-sufficiency. The YASS Plan must be completed within 30 calendar days of the VSSA being signed by the young adult or upon their 18th birthday. These plans include options for health insurance, information about a health care power of attorney, health care proxy, or other similar document recognized under state law, and to provide the child with the option to execute such a document, and ensure other goal are being met.

Further details can be found in the Nevada Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan attached to this report.

## **DISASTER PLAN**

Nevada is a uniquely diverse state with respect to its geography, population concentrations, and weather patterns. As such, natural disasters such as severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, fires and mudslides are experienced in the northern counties. The southern part of the state can experience earthquakes, flash floods, power outages, and extreme heat. These natural disasters can elevate events to be categorized as major disasters at times.

Although Nevada has experienced major disasters in recent years, these events did not impact the delivery of child welfare services to children, families, and foster homes in the state. While some remote child welfare offices in affected areas are closed briefly at times, the directives of the Disaster Plan itself have not been activated.

Over the next five years the state will develop a more effective communication system to ensure quick and accurate information is coordinated between the state and the child welfare agencies concerning counts and information about children and families affected during an event, including updates from affected areas about displacements, locating children in care, services the jurisdictions provide and assistance they may need from the state level to assist in emergencies. This information will be utilized to share information across systems and with federal partners, and to ensure a timely response to meet identified needs.

Nevada will also work over the next five years to identify and address any disparities in the accessibility of services for marginalized groups, including people of diverse racial, ethnic, and SOGIE identities, or those with differing abilities. While the current Disaster Plan is designed as a comprehensive plan that should be applicable to any situation, Nevada will review the plan through an ADEI lens.

Further details can be found in the Nevada Disaster Plan attached to this report.

## **TRAINING PLAN**

The Training Plan, attached to this document, is updated to include any changes to training activities paid for with Title IV-E funds. The plan includes training activities planned for the upcoming year to be paid for with these funds. The plan includes discussion of first- and second-year training requirements, as well as the ongoing utilization and evaluation of CoachNV. Nevada continues to increase the utilization of its LMS for training delivery, peer networking, and as a resource repository.

Over the next five years, Nevada will continue to work on enhancing the current curriculum provided to new caseworkers, as well as to new supervisors. The Workforce Innovation Team provides monitoring and oversight of the training plan and meets monthly to discuss progress on the development of new training, data around the workforce, and to identify gaps in training or training needs. With new initiatives such as FFPSA and EFC being implemented in the coming years, Nevada efforts will focus on the development, delivery, and evaluation of training specific to those areas. Any needs around the development of training for system partners will also be considered over the next five years. The goal is to align the efforts of NPT, local child welfare agencies, contractors, and the Family Programs Office, in training activities.

Further details can be found in the Nevada Training Plan attached to this report.



## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **PAYMENT LIMITATIONS**

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#### **TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 1**

Nevada is submitting all required financial information with this report. This includes information on the amount of FY 2005 title IV-B, subpart 1 funds that the state expended for childcare, foster care maintenance, and adoption assistance payments for comparison purposes. States may not spend more than the state expended for those purposes in FY 2005. This report submission also includes information on the amount of non-federal funds that were expended by the state for foster care maintenance payments and used as part of the title IV-B, subpart 1 state match for FY 2005 since there are limitations on spending more than that. Any estimated expenditures for administrative costs are captured the CFS-101s.

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#### **TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2**

Nevada spends a significant portion of their title IV-B, subpart 2 PSSF grant for each of the four service categories of PSSF: family preservation, family support, family reunification, and adoption promotion and support services. The amount allocated to each of the service categories only includes funds for service delivery, and Nevada reports the amount to be allocated to planning and service coordination separately. The estimated expenditures for the described services, as well as any administrative costs, are on the attached CFS-101s. Nevada has considered as part of this budget, travel for representatives to attend annual grant recipient meetings in Washington, D.C., as directed by the Children's Bureau. Also included are the state and local share expenditure amounts for the purposes of title IV-B, subpart 2 for comparison with the state's 1992 base year amount, as required to meet the non-supplantation requirements in section 432(a)(7)(A) of the Act.

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#### **CHAFEE PROGRAM**

Nevada certifies that no more than 30 percent of its allotment of federal Chafee funds will be expended for room and board for youth who left foster care after 18 years of age and have not yet attained age 21 (section 477(b)(3)(B) of the Act).

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#### **REALLOTMENT OF FY 2024 (CURRENT YEAR) FUNDING**

Any reallocation requests for FY 2024 (current year) funding are included on the attached CFS-101, Part I.

**FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST – CFS-101, PARTS I AND II**

Please see attached CFS-101, Parts I and II.

**FY 2022 TITLE IV-B EXPENDITURE REPORT – CFS-101, PART III**

Please see attached CFS-101, Part III.

**EXPENDITURE PERIODS AND SUBMISSION OF STANDARD FORM 425 (SF-425)  
FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT**

Separate SF-425 forms for each program and for each fiscal year that report expenditures under title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, CAPTA, Chafee, ETV, the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentives Payment Program, and the Family First Transition Act are attached to this report.

## ACRONYMS

AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics
AB	Assembly Bill
ABA	Applied Behavior Analytics
ACTA	Adoption Call to Action
ACF	Administration for Children and Families
ADA	American Disabilities Act
ADEI	Anti-racist, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ADSD	Aging and Disability Services Division
AFCARS	Adoption Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
AI	Adoption Incentive
ANI	Area Needing Improvement
AOC	Administrative Office of the Court
APD	Advanced Planning Document
APRN	Advanced Practice Registered Nurse
APSR	Annual Progress & Service Report
ASFA	Adoption and Safe Families Act
ASQ	Ages and Stages Questionnaire
ASTHO	Association of Health and Territorial Health
BDR	Bill Draft Request
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
CAC	Child Advocacy Center
CAHS	Consolidated Agencies of Human Services
CANS	Child Abuse and Neglect Screening
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CARA	Comprehensive Addictions and Recovery Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CB	Children's Bureau
CBCS	Capacity Building Center for States

CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
CCDFS	Clark County Department of Family Services
CCL	Child Care Licensing
CCSD	Clark County School District
CCSS	Clark County Social Services
CCWIS	Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CDR	Child Death Review
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CFSP	Child and Family Service Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CIC	Court Improvement Council
CIP	Court Improvement Program
CJA	Children’s Justice Act
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CPS	Child Protective Services
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
CRC	Criminal Records Check
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
DA	District Attorney
DAG	District Attorney General
DCFS	Division of Child and Family Services
DHCFP	Department of Health Care Financing and Policy
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DMG	Decision Making Group
DPBH	Department of Public and Behavioral Health
DR	Differential Response
DRC	Desert Regional Center
DVRC	Domestic Violence Resource Center

DWSS	Department of Welfare and Supportive Services
EFC	Extended Foster Care
EPSDTS	Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment
ETV	Educational Training Voucher
FAFFY	Financial Assistance to Former Foster Youth
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder
FFPSA	Families First Prevention Services Act
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
FIMR	Fetal and Infant Mortality Review
FPO	Family Programs Office
FRC	Family Resource Center
FSS	Family Service Specialist
FY	Fiscal Year
GMU	Grants Management Unit
HMA	Hearing Management Associates
HR	Human Resources
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
ICF/ID	Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICTN	Inter-Tribal County of Nevada
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
IL	Independent Living
IM	Instructional Memorandum
IS	Information Services
IT	Information Technology
ITCN	Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

IV-B 2	Title IV-B, Subpart 2
IV-E	Title IV-E
JCAMP	Judicial, Court, and Attorney Measures of Performance
JD	Judicial District
JDMP	Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program
JOIN	Job Opportunities in Nevada
JVTA	Juvenile Victims of Trafficking Act
KinGAP	Kinship Guardian Assistance Program
LACSN	Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer and more
LMS	Learning Management System
LSW	Licensed Social Worker
MI	Motivational Interviewing
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAC	Nevada Administrative Code
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NCID	National Criminal Investigative Database
NCJFCJ	National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
NEICE	National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise
NHD	Nevada Housing Division
NIA	Nevada Initial Assessment
NIC	Nevada Indian Commission
NITC	Nevada Inter-Tribal Council
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
NOTO	Nevada Outreach and Training Organization
NPT	Nevada Partnership for Training
NRIT	Nevada Rapid Indicator Tool
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NV LIFE	Nevada Leaders in Future Excellence – Statewide YAB

NYTD	National Youth in Transition Database
OMS	Online Monitoring System
OPPLA	Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
OT	Occupational Therapy
PEU	Planning and Evaluation Unit - Children's Mental Health
PLR	Person Legally Responsible
PRTF	Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility
PYD	Positive Youth Development
PSSF	Promoting Safe and Stable Families
QA	Quality Assurance
QPI	Quality Parenting Initiative
QRTP	Qualified Residential Treatment Program
RRCW	Rural Region Child Welfare
RRT	Recruitment Response Team
RSP	Risk Standardized Performance
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SAFE	Safety Assessment and Family Evaluation
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration
SAPTA	Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
SB	Senate Bill
SCP	Social Change Partners, LLC
SFC	Specialized Foster Care
SFY	State Fiscal Year
SQIC	Statewide Quality Improvement Committee
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TA	Technical Assistance
TPR	Termination of Parental Rights
UNITY	Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth
UNLV	University of Nevada, Las Vegas

UNR	University of Nevada, Reno
VOCA	Victims of Crime Assistance
WCHSA	Washoe County Human Services Agency
WIT	Workforce Innovation Team
WWK	Wendy's Wonderful Kids
YAB	Youth Advisory Board
YL	Young Leader
YTD	Year to Date
YYA	Youth and Young Adults



## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A	NV DCFS organizational chart - Executive
Attachment B	NV DCFS organizational chart – Quality and Oversight
Attachment C	NV State map with counties
Attachment D	NV DCFS CQI Action Plan
Attachment E	NV EFC Implementation Timeline
Attachment F	NV Foster and Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment Plan
Attachment G	NV Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan
Attachment H	NV Training Plan
Attachment I	UNR FFY25 Projected Training
Attachment J	UNR FFY24 Delivered Training
Attachment K	UNLV FFY25 Projected Training
Attachment L	UNLV FFY24 Delivered Training
Attachment M	NV Disaster Response Plan
Attachment N	NV FY2025 CFS-101, Part I, II, III, and Grants for Title IV-B, Excel Workbook
Attachment O	NV FY2025 CFS-101, Part I, II, III, and Grants for Title IV-B, pdf
Attachment P	NV FY 2025 Reallotment Request
Attachment Q	NV Assurances and Certifications
Attachment R	Needs Assessment for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect in Nevada
Attachment S	Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect in Nevada.