



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Administration for Children and Families**

**[Office of Management and Budget #: 0970-0428]**

**Proposed Information Collection Activity; Case Plan**

**Requirement, Title IV-E of the Social Security Act**

**AGENCY:** Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**ACTION:** Request for Public Comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is requesting a 3-year extension of the information collection Case Plan Requirement, Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, (Office of Management and Budget (OMB) #0970-0428, expiration September 30, 2026). There are no changes to the requirements, but burden estimates have been updated to reflect a reduction in average time to complete a case plan and the current numbers of children in foster care.

**DATES:** *Comments due [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].*

**ADDRESSES:** In compliance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, ACF is soliciting public comment on the specific aspects of the information collection described above. You can obtain copies of the proposed collection of information and submit comments by

emailing [infocollection@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:infocollection@acf.hhs.gov). Identify all requests by the title of the information collection.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Description:* The case plan information collection is authorized in sections 422(b)(8)(A)(ii) and 471(a)(16), and defined in sections 475 and 475A of the Social Security Act (the Act). Statutory requirements in the Act mandate that states, territories, and tribes with an approved title IV-E plan develop a case review system and case plan for each child in the foster care system for whom the state, territory, or tribe receives title IV-E reimbursement of foster care maintenance payments. The case review system assures that each child has a case plan designed to achieve placement in a safe setting that is the least restrictive, most family-like setting available and near the child's parental home, consistent with the best interest and special needs of the child. States, territories, and tribes meeting these requirements also partly comply with title IV-B, section 422(b), of the Act, which assures certain protections for children in foster care. The case plan is a written document that provides a narrative description of the child-specific program of care. Federal regulations at 45 CFR 1356.21(g) and sections 475 and 475A of the Act delineate the specific information that must be addressed in the case plan. ACF does not specify a format for the case plan nor does ACF require submission of the

document to the federal government. Case plan information is recorded in a format developed and maintained by the state, territorial, or tribal title IV-E agency.

*Respondents:* State, territorial, and tribal title IV-E agencies.

*Annual Burden Estimates*

Burden estimates have been adjusted to reflect one additional title IV-E agency, a decrease in average hours to complete a case plan due to technology, fewer children entering foster care, and an increased number of children exiting foster care. Overall, the estimated annual burden has decreased by about 32 percent.

Instrument	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Responses Per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Total Burden Hours	Annual Burden Hours
Case Plan Requirement	67	19,490	3.8	4,962,154	1,654,051

*Comments:* The Department specifically requests comments on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted within 60 days of this publication.

**Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 622; 42 U.S.C. 671; 42 U.S.C. 675; 42 U.S.C. 675a.

**Mary C. Jones**, *ACF/OPRE Certifying Officer*.

[FR Doc. 2026-03445 Filed: 2/20/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 2/23/2026]