



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

June 6, 2019

Dear Child Welfare Leaders:

On behalf of the Children's Bureau (CB) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, I am writing to provide an update on the implementation of the Title IV-E Prevention and Family Services and Programs (title IV-E prevention program) created by the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

The FFPSA authorized new optional title IV-E funding beginning October 1, 2019 for certain time-limited, evidence-based prevention services programs for a "child who is a candidate for foster care" (defined in section 475(13) of the Social Security Act (the Act)), pregnant or parenting youth in foster care, and their parents and kin caregivers. The statute requires that title IV-E prevention services must be rated through an independent systematic review of evidence as promising, supported, or well-supported in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) criteria and be approved by HHS, and that HHS establish a public clearinghouse of rated practices. In ACYF-CB-PI-18-09, the Children's Bureau (CB) clarified that the ratings will be provided by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse (the Clearinghouse).

On June 22, 2018, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published a Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting comments on the initial criteria and potential programs and services for review and inclusion in the Clearinghouse. On November 30, 2018, the CB released ACYF-CB-PI-18-09, which included the initial practice criteria and first list of services and programs selected for systematic review as part of the Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse developed standards and procedures for the systematic review and rating in accordance with the title IV-E statutory requirements detailed in the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse Handbook of Standards and Procedures, released April 26, 2019. The specific statutory requirements mean that these standards and procedures are unique, and do not precisely match those of any existing clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse anticipates releasing ratings for the first list of programs of services this spring and selecting additional programs and services for review in the late spring and summer of 2019.

In ACYF-CB-PI-18-07, the CB strongly encouraged all states to elect the title IV-E prevention program and take the opportunity it creates to build child welfare systems that strengthens families by preventing child maltreatment and unnecessary removal of children from their families. However, I understand that some states are concerned that the Clearinghouse timeline for reviewing and rating programs may delay their ability to implement the title IV-E prevention program. In particular, states have identified prevention programs and services within their communities that are not yet slated for review by the Clearinghouse, but that the state believes would meet the evidence criteria of the title IV-E prevention program.

Therefore, the CB plans to issue guidance allowing a state to claim transitional payments for services and associated costs under the title IV-E prevention program until the Clearinghouse can review and rate a program or service, if a state submits sufficient documentation. The guidance will specify what documentation the state must submit to demonstrate that the state conducted the independent systematic review and met the criteria outlined in section 471(e)(4)(C) of the Act and Attachment C to ACYF-CB-PI-18-09. While the guidance will allow for transitional payments, the Clearinghouse will ultimately make the final determination about whether a program or service is assigned a promising, supported, or well-supported rating.

While I cannot provide more details in this letter, I hope to share this guidance with you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Milner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jerry Milner
Associate Commissioner
Children's Bureau

cc: