



# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE REVIEWS

## Round Three

### History of the Children and Family Services Reviews (CFSR):

The 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act authorized the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to review state child and family service programs to ensure conformity with the requirements of Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. This includes requirements around child abuse and neglect prevention; family preservation and reunification; and foster care, adoption, guardianship, and independent living.

All 50 states completed their first review by 2004 and their second review by 2010. Preparation for Nebraska's third CFSR, which will be completed in 2017, is already underway.

### Purpose of the CFSR:

The CFSR enables the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to (1) assess Nebraska's overall and all inclusive child welfare systems; (2) ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements; (3) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they engage in child welfare services; and (4) assist states in enhancing capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes in the areas of:

#### Safety

- ▶ Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- ▶ Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

#### Permanency

- ▶ Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- ▶ The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for families.

#### Family and Child Well-Being

- ▶ Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- ▶ Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- ▶ Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

#### Systemic Factors

- ▶ Statewide child welfare information system
- ▶ Case review system

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- ▶ Quality assurance system
- ▶ Staff and provider training
- ▶ Service array and resource development
- ▶ Agency responsiveness to the community
- ▶ Foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention

**Nebraska’s final federal rating will be based upon a combination of:**

- ▶ The submitted statewide assessment
- ▶ Stakeholder interview findings
- ▶ The seven revised performance data indicators
- ▶ Sixty-five case reviews from three counties

**A resource for oversight:**

The Child and Family Service Reviews provide greater transparency about how systems in the state are operating. They increase public knowledge and provide information to encourage the participation of important stakeholders in the state.

Leadership from across all systems must make investments to continually assess our system. The reviews offer states a way to manage child welfare systems by focusing on continuous quality improvement.

**Nebraska’s Round Three CFSR:**

Preparation for Nebraska’s third Child and Family Service Review has already commenced. The timeline is:

**April 1, 2016** Commencement of Nebraska’s six-month period under review

**December 30, 2016** Nebraska submits our Statewide Assessment to the federal Administration for Children and Families

**June 5 - 9, 2017** Onsite Federal review. The Children’s Bureau staff and contractors will be onsite for one week to:

- ▶ Review case files
- ▶ Evaluate outcomes and performance
- ▶ Stakeholder interviews
- ▶ Assess systems, policies and practices

As part of this overall review, our Federal partners are likely to interview many parties who are part of Nebraska’s child welfare system such as:

- ▶ DHHS staff
- ▶ Service providers
- ▶ Judges

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- ▶ Prosecuting attorneys
- ▶ Court Appointed Special Advocates
- ▶ Court Improvement Project
- ▶ Tribal representatives
- ▶ Guardians ad Litem
- ▶ Legislators
- ▶ Foster Care Review Office
- ▶ Child Advocacy Centers
- ▶ Adoptive and foster parents
- ▶ Educators
- ▶ Inspector General
- ▶ Other stakeholders