

Children's Bureau

Child and Family Services Reviews

Fact Sheet for Youth Involvement

History and Purpose

The Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) are conducted by the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to help States improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for families and children who receive services through the child welfare system. The CFSRs monitor States' conformity with the requirements of title IV-B of the Social Security Act. The first round of reviews took place between 2000 and 2004 and all States were required to implement Program Improvement Plans. The second round of reviews began in early spring of 2007. The CFSRs are an important tool that will enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with Federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families receiving child welfare services; and (3) assist States in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Significant financial penalties may be assessed for failure to make the improvements needed to achieve substantial conformity.

Youth Involvement

The Children's Bureau is providing former foster care youth the opportunity to apply to participate in the CFSRs as consultant reviewers. This new effort is intended to bring a new awareness to the review process. Youth involvement will greatly diversify the current pool of qualified consultants by contributing both professional experience and a more personal understanding of the child welfare system.

Reviewer Roles and Responsibilities

Participation in the CFSRs requires a significant commitment of time and effort. Consultants typically will not have time during the onsite review to conduct other activities; the review schedule is very full and events may extend into the evening hours, as necessary (for example, time is needed for the team's daily meetings and to conduct focus groups with foster parents who cannot meet during daytime hours). The general responsibilities of consultants participating in the reviews include but are not limited to:

- Reviewing the Preliminary Assessment in preparation for the onsite review.
- Participating in any scheduled orientation or training sessions before or during the onsite review.
- Remaining present at the review site(s) for the entire week of the onsite review and participating in all scheduled review activities, from the entrance conference through the exit conference. Activities include helping to review a representative sample of cases.

- Conducting all assigned activities associated with the review of case records and interviews, including completion of the review instruments.
- Participating in focus groups, open forums, or other group meetings scheduled during the onsite review.
- Attending daily briefings of the local review teams and presenting information on cases reviewed or stakeholders interviewed.
- Assisting in compiling a summary of the team's findings during the onsite review.

Training

To prepare for the onsite reviews, you will be required to participate in a 1½-day Consultant Reviewer Training. The goal of the training is to provide consultant reviewers with an understanding of the review process. If you attend the training, you will be expected to be available to serve as a consultant reviewer, perhaps for more than one review per year. The Children's Bureau selects consultants to participate in the CFSRs from the Child Welfare Review Project-managed consultant pool. If you are selected to participate in a training or a review, the Child Welfare Review Project will contact you to determine your availability and to provide you with further information on the training or review.

Honorarium and Travel

Consultants receive a \$350 honorarium for each day spent on site (4 days) and a \$150 honorarium for the time spent preparing to participate in a review.

The Child Welfare Review Project, managed by JBS International, Inc. (JBS), which supports the Children's Bureau and HHS, will arrange to pay for all hotels and air travel. While participating in a review, all meals and incidentals (M&IE) are paid for up front by reviewers. However, you will be eligible for reimbursement of M&IE at the Federal Government allowed rate for the city of that review. For local travelers (less than 50 miles one way), as with all consultants, JBS will provide reimbursement for mileage at 44.5¢ per mile. Local consultants are not eligible, however, to receive Federal Government reimbursement for daily expenses and lodging costs.

For more information on the CFSRs, please visit the Children's Bureau Web site at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/cwmonitoring/index.htm#cfsr>. To receive an application, contact the Child Welfare Review Project by phone at (301) 565-3260 or by e-mail at cw@jbsinternational.com.