

Agency Current Practices, Challenges, and System Needs by Functional Area

1 CCWIS Functional Areas

The following overview provides information concerning the functional areas of DCFS at a high-level. It is not all encompassing of all DCFS processes, but rather an outline and summary description of key functional areas and what DCFS expects from its Future System. While the Future System **must** be modular, the functional areas listed below are not intended to be a replica of the modularity required for the Future System. The Contractor is not expected to have a separate module for each section below; the duties of DCFS are divided across sections below to facilitate an understanding only.

Please Note: The tasks, responsibilities, expectations and obligations set forth in the RFP and Attachment A represent the duties of the Contractor under the resulting Contract. Some, but not all, of the duties of the Contractor are listed in a Functional Requirements Matrix, RFP Attachment C. This Matrix primarily gathers information about Respondent's proposed systems and approximately tracks to this document. Respondents will populate this Matrix as part of their Technical Proposal Submittal. **A duty or responsibility need not be specifically listed and numbered in the Matrix to be enforceable.** The numbered functions are provided for ease of reference and do not enhance, or detract, from the enforceability of any duty or clause in the RFP and Attachment A regardless of its placement in a matrix.

1.1 General Functions

Certain system functions and functionalities are sufficiently widespread, universal, cross-unit or critical that they warrant separate discussion. These "General Functions" include:

- Search
- Travel
- Narrative and Contacts
- Workload Management
- Supervisor Approval
- Internal Review
- Uploading Files

Additionally, the Future System **must** comply with all applicable federal laws. Specifically, the Future System **shall** be ADA compliant. Also, the Future System **shall** comply with all CCWIS regulations, including identification of all Automated Functions for documenting in forthcoming APDs.

1.1.1 Search

The ability to perform searches in the Future System is paramount. Users will need a robust search functionality to search for Clients, Providers, Cases, Staff Members, virtually all aspects of the Future System. There are certain expectations of all search functionalities in the Future System.

1.1.1.1 Search Parameters

The Future System **shall** allow users to search for information based on one or several data elements. The search function may allow but not be limited to the following searches:

- Searches for exact match to one or more data elements; and
- Searches for a fuzzy match to one or more data elements (which feature can be turned on and off).
- Searches with partial matches
- Searches for a range of values where applicable (*e.g.* dates of birth between 4/1/13 and 3/30/14, return results only for Pulaski and Saline counties)

The Future System **shall** allow users to specify the type of record they are searching for (*i.e.* Client, Staff Member, Case) and the search parameters **shall** be individualized by the type of record being searched.

1.1.1.2 Presentation of Search Results

The Future System may return search results which meet the search parameters in a list from which the user may select a particular record (*i.e.* Client, Provider, Case) for further review. Selecting a record from search returns may present the record for review. The precise information presented will depend on the type of record selected.

Selecting a Client from search returns may present the Client information and should also display all Investigations, Differential Responses, Referrals, and Cases, both current and historical. This history search is a critical feature and the Future System will meet DCFS business needs.

- This includes, necessarily, the ability to tell if a Client is listed in more than one Case or Referral.

After a user has selected and reviewed a record returned in a search, the Future System may have the ability to hit “back” and return to the list of search returns rather than require the user to restart the search at the beginning.

The Future System may allow users to print or email the full results of a search (not just print the data shown on the screen).

1.1.2 Travel

Travel is an essential activity that is required for all types of DCFS work. Workers travel for initiation of investigations, for case worker home visits, training, opening of Resource Parent Homes, transporting Clients to services, and many other activities. Currently, DCFS does not have a way to schedule or optimize travel – there is no high-level or detail view of required travel, either by location, proximity, or priority. For example, DCFS often has multiple clients with appointments at the same location, such as Children’s Hospital or a mental health clinic, but because there is not a way to coordinate travel, multiple workers may end up at the same location. In this example, the travel could have been planned and coordinated, thus saving time and providing efficiency. In addition, reservation of State cars is required of employees who are travelling the furthest distance that day. There is no way to plan, coordinate, and schedule reservations or verify the appropriate use of employee vs. State cars.

In addition to entering travel information into CHRIS to document work-related activities, staff members must enter travel information into a separate system to be reimbursed for their travel. This presently requires duplicate data entry of the information entered into CHRIS. The travel documentation process is time consuming and labor intensive due to the need to access multiple data sources to submit travel. The supervisory approval process is also time consuming and labor intensive. This is a retention issue for staff, due to the cumbersome nature of the process.

The Future System may comprehensively address these complex travel issues, including leveraging mobile technology and any other industry innovations as appropriate.

1.1.3 Narrative and Contacts

Narratives and tracking contact information support critical DCFS business activities, therefore robust functionality in this area is crucial to the overall CCWIS system. The Future System **shall** allow users to document contacts, utilizing pick lists and freeform text where appropriate, and link the contacts to the related function pursuant to the performance the user’s job duties.

There are many places within the Future System where a user will need to enter an unlimited amount of open text narrative using basic word processing functionality. The information captured in an open text narrative **must** be attached to a case or specific piece of work, as it is critical to a complete and accurate record. To promote efficiency, the State is interested in how the Future System may utilize voice transcription as one means of capturing open text narratives.

There are multiple places where Future System users will need to keep a record of contacts with different types of individuals, including but not limited to Clients and Providers, with whom they have made contact in the performance of their duties. Examples of the contacts that the State documents include home visits, referrals for services, telephone calls, purchases, and case staffing. This information may include data about the contact (*e.g.* demographic data, name), the role of that contact (*i.e.* a Client’s teacher) and information provided by that contact.

Some business rules require the collection of contacts in order to proceed (such as a closure staffing must proceed before a case can close). Sometimes, information gathered about a contact may drive business rules. Documenting contacts is a core functionality of DCFS case management.

1.1.4 Workflow Standardization and Workload Management

The Future System will drive business processes and promotes users' adherence to standard practices. Accordingly, the Future System may have a workflow engine which helps drive the State's business processes. The Future System **shall** track key events for upcoming and past due dates. The Future System **shall** provide selected staff notification (at timeframes specified by the State) so that said staff member may address activities in a timely manner.

The Future System may also employ workflow processes and routing to help users identify, prioritize and perform their assigned work/tasks. To support this end, the Future System may clearly display all of the work/tasks that a user is expected to perform in the system (or perform outside of the system and record the performance of in the system), how long that work/task has been pending, whether that work/task has been begun (as applicable), and whether the work/task is overdue. When work/tasks are completed they may no longer be presented in these lists/queues. A user may be able to search their outstanding work/task, as well as filter it by type, due date, and other criteria determined by the State.

1.1.5 Supervisor Approval

Across multiple units within DCFS/Crimes Against Children Division (CACD) of the Arkansas State Police (ASP), certain things require the approval of an individual's supervisors. By way of example, closing a Case requires an FSW's supervisor's approval and certain Title IV-E determinations requires that employee's supervisor's approval. Sometimes certain employees may require supervisor approval, accordingly, the Future System may have workflow processes that provide the ability to require that certain tasks or work require a supervisor's approval before it is finalized in the system. In the Future System, when a supervisor reviews work, they may have the ability to approve it, deny it and send it back with explanatory comment, or other outcomes (*e.g.* referring the issue to a TDM, *see* Section 1.11.5) as determined by the State.

1.1.6 Internal Review

Certain actions and determinations made by DCFS are subject to Internal Review. Presently an Internal Review is a review by the Director, or designee, of DCFS. Actions presently subject to Internal Review are:

- Closure of a Resource Parent Home due to any circumstance;
- Removal of a child from the Resource Parent Home without appropriate cause and/or or without appropriate notice;
- Failure by DCFS to share appropriate information with Resource Parents;

- Failure by DCFS to provide necessary support to Resource Parents;
- Failure by DCFS to keep the terms of the initial written agreement with the Resource Parent Home;
- Denial of a home study, including ICPC, which results in a decision not to open the home of any relative within the third degree of kinship;
- Denial of an adoption application;
- Denial of name removal from Child Maltreatment Central Registry after one year; or,
- An age-appropriate child or his attorney ad litem on his or her behalf, may appeal a change in his out of home placement.

Documentation and information concerning an Internal Review may be documented and maintained electronically in the Future System. Additionally, there may be functionality to override and edit previously entered information in the system if necessary, as determined by the Internal Review decision in the Future System.

1.1.7 Document and File Upload

The Future System **shall** allow State users to upload documents, files, videos, and photographs with the system imposing no maximum size or number of items which would impact users. These uploads may be in Client Information, Provider Information, Case Information, Staff Information; virtually accessible anywhere in the system. The Future System **shall** accept the upload of .JPEGs, PDFs, TIFFs, and any other common file types identified by the State. All uploaded electronic documentation **shall** be connected to the appropriate client, case, collateral, provider, etc. throughout the Future System.

The Future System **shall** scan and support the uploading of files from mobile devices and the linking of them to the related client activities. The Future System **shall** integrate mobile device cameras to allow a user to take a picture or video, upload it to the system tagged with relevant case metadata, and send it to another person via email or SMS.

1.1.8 Numbering

Many records in the Future System may have a unique identification number. This includes, but is not limited to, Clients, Providers, and Cases. The Future System **shall** support the assignment of identification numbers to appropriate records.

1.1.9 Summary View

The Future System may support the development of a Summary View of certain records which displays a “thumbnail” of critical data about that record. Examples of this Summary View would include a Client Summary View displaying standard Client Data, a Provider Summary View, Case Summary View, etc.

1.1.10 Timestamps

As a user enters, alters or deletes information into the Future System, that action **shall** be documented by the system, including the user's name and date and timestamp.

1.1.11 Addresses

Addresses are collected for a number of reasons, including but not limited to the address of Clients and Providers. They may be collected during receipt of a Referral or at other times.

The State is interested in how the Future System may validate these addresses through an interface with an external source such as the US Postal Service. The State is also interested in how the Future System may display addresses on a map (*e.g.* Google Maps) and provide routing suggestions and directions.

1.1.12 Tracking

DCFS desires a system which helps actively alert users of important and imminent things. The Future System may have a method to track key events for cases and provide the users notification when an event is upcoming or out of compliance, including but not limited to timely placements, child birthdays, and permanency hearings.

1.1.13 Paperless Files

DCFS still maintains numerous paper files but is looking to the Future System to help it become paperless where allowable. The Future System **shall** hold all required documentation electronically, thus eliminating the use of hard copy files.

The Future System may allow users to create "packets" of existing types of documents for quick generation.

1.1.14 Records Retention and Security

DCFS policy requires its child welfare system to store records indefinitely. The Future System will maintain all its records indefinitely.¹

All Client information maintained in the Future System **shall be** stored securely in accordance with all relevant federal and State standards and requirements. The Future System **shall** maintain historical records in accordance with DCFS policy.

The Future System **shall** retain all electronic records in accordance with State records retention policies. The current in-force records retention policy may be found in Policy I-D of DCFS Policy and Procedure Manual, Rev. 01/2021, available in the Bidders Library. The State reserves its right to adjust its records retention policy in the future and the Contractor **shall** work

¹ DCFS policies currently state that CHRIS shall retain all information indefinitely. See page 13 of the DCFS manual in the Bidders Library.

with the State to ensure the Future System accommodates any applicable changes.

1.1.15 Logic Rules and Quality Control of Information

The Future System will support the incorporation of automated data quality tools and logic rules that help promote data quality and prevent the input of invalid information. The Future System **shall** allow the State to designate certain information fields as required. The Future System **shall** monitor the quality of data and include tools that test for and monitor data quality.

Automated data quality tools and logic rules that may be required include:

- Improved search & record matching techniques to find & merge duplicate cases & clients
- Automatic spell check for narratives
- Visual aids such as highlighting required fields or flagging missing data
- Consistent field labeling throughout the system
- Real-time feedback on data quality
- Edit checks
- Data quality reports
- Automated functions to evaluate quality of data from data exchanges
- On-line help to assist staff with data collection
- Third party tools for tasks such as address verification, record de-duplication, and data profiling
- Banners to workers when data quality goals are reached

By way of example, the Future System should be capable of preventing impossible dates (*e.g.* February 30, a birthdate in the future). The State may identify other logic controls for incorporation into the Future System.

The State is interested in the potential for address validation (*e.g.* validating physical addresses with the US Postal Service) so long as it does not cause disruption or delays to business processes for Future System users.

1.2 Referrals

A principal responsibility of DCFS/CACD is the investigation of suspected cases of abuse and neglect of children within the State. Individuals, at their own discretion or as required by law, refer instances of suspected abuse or neglect which occur in the State to the Child Abuse Hotline for possible investigation. The State's receipt of this reported information is considered a "Referral." This Functional Area covers:

- How the System receives and creates Referrals
- An overview of the type of information presently captured for each Referral
- How the users of the System research parties in a Referral in real-time or thereafter
- How the users of the System assign Referrals to different parties or dispositions
- That the Referral process is a means by which a Client is created
- Other related Hotline activities

1.2.1 Reporting Parties

Anyone may report suspected instances of child abuse or neglect in the State to the State, but certain individuals are required by law to make such reports. Arkansas Code §12-18-402 governs who is required to report suspected child maltreatment.

Given the wide range of mandatory reporters, and the wide classification of reportable maltreatment, Arkansas received 31,142 reports of maltreatment in State Fiscal Year 2020.²

1.2.2 Methods of Reporting

1.2.2.1 Hotline

The main method by which the State receives Referrals is through the State of Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline (the “Hotline.”) This hotline is operated by the Arkansas State Police (ASP) in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ASP and DCFS. A copy of this MOU may be found in the Bidders’ Library.³

The hotline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. ASP hotline personnel use a phone system owned and operated by the ASP. Information about that phone system can be found in the Bidders’ Library.

The Hotline has varying periods of demand and, accordingly, varying amounts of hold times for callers. Wait time can vary from a few minutes to a maximum of one hour. In State Fiscal Year 2020, the State received 31,142 reports of maltreatment.

The Future System will be used by hotline staff as described below. The State is interested in how Future System efficiencies may contribute to a reduction in call time, and thus, a reduction in hold time.

1.2.2.2 Non-Hotline Reports

Presently, the State also receives Referrals of suspected maltreatment via fax on a designated reporting form.⁴ This information is manually read and entered by hotline staff into CHRIS upon receipt.

The State is interested in a web-based Referral solution for the Future System. Additionally, the State is interested in different strategies to control how this web-based solution is used. This could include the means by which web-reporting is limited to mandatory reporters,

² See also DCFS’s *Annual Report Card* for State Fiscal Year 2020 available here: https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/ARC_SF2020_FINAL.pdf The figures in SFY2020 may be impacted by COVID-19 and Respondents are encouraged to review prior periods report cards (available here: <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/divisions-shared-services/children-family-services/reports-publications/>) to obtain a more complete picture of the States volumes.

³ For more information on the hotline and reporting suspected child maltreatment in the State please see <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/about-dhs/dhcs/programs-services/child-protective-services-how-to-report-child-abuse-or-neglect>

⁴ This form may be viewed at https://ar.mandatedreporter.org/public/pdf/en/suspected_child_abuse_report.pdf

as well as other solutions (*See* Section 1.2.1 above).

1.2.3 Referral Information Capture

Referrals with more complete and accurate information better inform the State regarding potential next steps. However, long wait-times for the hotline may contribute to missed Referrals, so it benefits the State to complete referrals as expeditiously as possible without sacrificing quality of information collected. The Future System should help the Referral intake process be as streamlined as possible while also ensuring all essential information is captured.

1.2.3.1 Dynamic Questionnaire/Script

While there is presently one script for Hotline staff to follow with each reporting caller, the questions and prompts presented to the Hotline employee by the current system depend on the nature of the information collected thus far. Accordingly, the Future System may have dynamic scripts/questionnaires to facilitate this information gathering process to ensure that hotline staff does not spend time asking unnecessary questions. The Future System may also allow for a “check” at the end of the questionnaire/script to ensure certain fields left blank were intentionally left blank, and other logic checks as appropriate.

1.2.4 Information Captured

In the Future System, the information gathered by Hotline staff while creating a Referral may be entered as open text, the selection of a choice from among a drop-down list, or the selection of a radio button. Accordingly, the Future System may accommodate similar types of information capture for Referrals.

The precise information captured during the Referral process by Hotline staff through the Future System will need to be finalized and approved by the State during the Design and Development process. The Future System **shall** maintain information about each Referral including but not limited to:

- a. the time and date a call (or calls) was placed
- b. the allegations alleged in the Referral
- c. the alleged Offender
- d. the Client
- e. other related parties
- f. demographics of the referral
- g. collaterals
- h. the date of allegations
- i. the Referral's disposition
- j. information regarding the reporter or reporters

As data is captured in the Future System, the entrance of the information may be time stamped.

1.2.5 Checking for Existing Clients & Creating New Clients

Referrals are a means by which new Clients⁵ are entered into the Future System. The Future System **shall** be able to use information gathered in a Referral to create a new Client, provided the necessary (as defined by the State) data points are captured in the process.

However, Referrals are sometimes received which relate to individuals who are already Clients. In these instances, creating a new Client would result in duplicate entries for the same Client. Accordingly, the Referral process includes a check to determine if the individual or individuals referenced in a Referral have previously substantiated or unsubstantiated maltreatment allegations (presently conducted as a CHRIS history search).

Presently, Hotline staff's opportunity to perform this history search is during the receipt of the Referral from the reporter in real time during the telephone call. However, given the potential for long wait times, current protocol only requires this Client history search during a Referral report if the wait time for the Hotline is 15 minutes or fewer.

The Future System may allow users to perform a history search to see if an individual related to a Referral is already in the Future System as a Client. Such check may be allowable in the Future System while the Referral is being completed in-real time and after the Referral is complete. If the search yields a confirmed or suspected Client match, such match may be noted by the Hotline staff member in the Referral for linkage to a Client and/or porting in Client information into the Referral in real time or at a later point. Even if a Referral is screened out, a new Client is created if the individual is not already in the system.

1.2.6 Adding to an Existing Referral

In some instances, State users (including Hotline users) may need to add additional information to an existing Referral. This information may include new allegations or new alleged offenders. The Future System **shall** allow this.

1.2.7 Referrals Related to Providers

The Hotline receives Referrals which relate to Providers. This could include, but is not necessarily limited to, allegations related to abuse or maltreatment by individuals in a Resource Parent Home or other placement setting that relate to existing Clients, household members, or facility staff. It is important to the State that, in the event of a Referral related to a Provider, the State have this information appropriately linked in the System so that users with Cases related to this Provider, or users searching for a Provider, are apprised of the situation so long as the allegations against the Provider are open. The Future System may ensure that, when a Referral relates to a Provider, information about that Referral is shared with users who have a Case or Client which utilize that Provider. The Future System may also ensure that, when there are open allegations against a Provider, if that Provider is selected from the Provider Directory (either directly or through search results) the user is apprised of the open allegations.

1.2.8 Referral Disposition and Merger

⁵As discussed herein, an alleged offender and the alleged victim are both considered a Client. See Section 1.6.2 for a definition of Client.

Hotline staff review Referrals with the Intake Assessment Tool developed by Evident Change, using the output of this tool to a particular disposition or routing. *See also* Section 1.11.5. The Future System **shall** integrate this Intake Assessment tool for purposes of automating the disposition output of that tool.

Referrals are assigned a Priority Level I or II as well as routed to either the Crimes Against Children Division (CACD) of the ASP or the Investigations teams of DCFS. State and CACD Referrals are also routed according to the location of the alleged offense. Additionally, some Referrals are routed to DCFS specifically for consideration as a Differential Response. It is possible that, in the future, there may be other classifications of Referrals which require routing logic. When the disposition of a Referral creates an obligation for another user (*e.g.* opens an Investigation for a DCFS Investigator), that user who received the new obligation may be notified by the Future System.

This Referral review and routing process is also an opportunity for Referral staff to “screen out” Referrals. “Screening out” a Referral ends the Referral without further routing. Presently, a Referral may be “screened out” if the allegations do not constitute maltreatment under State law, if there is insufficient information to conduct any Investigation into the Referral’s contents, if the Referral is duplicative with another Referral (*i.e.* relates to the same incident or allegations and same Clients), or if the Referral relates to alleged activity within another jurisdiction. The Hotline will document reports that are classified as “out of state reports” and forward them to the state of jurisdiction.

Sometimes, the Hotline will get multiple reports for one incident. In the event Referrals are duplicative they may be able to be merged in the Future System by authorized users. The Future System should have a means of automatically merging completely identical Referrals as well as a means of manually merging Referrals. The State is interested in maintaining certain information from a merged Referral (*See* Function R-7 in the Functions Matrix).

1.2.9 Referral Audit Trail

The State desires an audit trail, within the Future System, to document when Referrals are created, merged, have a disposition assigned, or are altered or updated in any way. The audit trail may be retained indefinitely.

1.2.10 Referral Overrides

There may be instances in which authorized users at the State may be required to change information in a Referral. This may include removing a person listed as an alleged offender, changing allegations, or the adjustment of other information in a Referral. These actions will require the inclusion of an explanatory comment. The Future System **shall** have the capacity to allow certain users to perform this type of adjustment and provide the required explanatory comment.

1.2.11 Other Hotline Responsibilities

The Hotline also processes death assessments, CARA,⁶ and fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). In addition, the Hotline supervisors perform quality assurance activities on Referrals. The Future

⁶ The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) Public Law 114-198.

System may have the functionality to process and store the information related to the transactions from these functions. *See also* Section 1.3.6 on Referral Assessments.

1.3 Investigations and Differential Response

Two possible dispositions for a Referral are to Investigations or for Differential Response (DR). Upon determination that a Referral warrants an investigation, the Investigation is assigned to the DCFS Investigations Unit or the Crimes Against Children Division (CACD) of the Arkansas State Police. The State of Arkansas uses an established protocol when a DCFS family service worker or the Arkansas State Police CACD investigator conducts a child maltreatment assessment; investigations are conducted pursuant to laws, rules and regulations. Differential Responses are assigned to the DR teams (DCFS employees). This functional area will cover:

- Investigations and Differential Response processes and workflow
- Findings and determinations of investigations
- Child Maltreatment Central Registry
- Referral assessments
- Child fatalities, near fatalities, and Death Assessments
- Differential Responses

1.3.1 Investigations & Differential Response Processes and Workflow

Priority I investigations are generally initiated within 24 hours of receipt of the initial hotline report. Priority II investigations are generally initiated within 72 hours of receipt of the initial hotline report.

Under new legislation, DCFS has the ability to conduct secondary reviews of hotline referrals. Not all referrals are subject to secondary review. Criteria for a referral to qualify for secondary review is at the discretion of the State.

When an investigation begins, any person per State policy that is supposed to receive a notification letter (*e.g.*, parent(s)) will be issued a notification letter regarding the allegation. The Future System may facilitate the generating and sending of notification letters to all relevant parties. The Future System may automatically pre-fill notification letters with information in the system pertaining to the investigation. In certain instances, the Client name may not be known. Users need to be able to create Clients (and Client IDs) without full information on the Client. *See* Section 1.6.3.2 for more information on Unknown Individuals. Once an investigation begins, investigators first determine whether there is a safety concern for either the victim or any other children in the home by making a Safety Factor assessment. The Future System may support the entry and maintenance of Safety Factor documentation, including mobile capabilities to enter and view relevant information.

After the Safety Factor assessment is made, the investigation shifts to a fact-finding phase. During this fact-finding phase, the investigator determines:

- a. the existence, cause, and nature of child maltreatment
- b. the identity and past offenses of the perpetrator(s)
- c. the existence and extent of previous injuries to the victim

- d. the relationship of the children with the parents or caretakers and their circumstances
- e. the child's environment in terms of risk and protective factors
- f. the names and conditions of other children in the home (if applicable).
- g. any other pertinent information

During the investigation, investigators will ensure that reasonable efforts are made to preserve the family and to prevent the child from being removed from the home.

Throughout an investigation, users can access and print an Investigation Summary Report from the system.

The Future System **shall** support the entry and maintenance of information gathered during the interviews of clients and collaterals in the fact-finding phase. If upon initial review of the hotline investigation referral it is determined that the Referral is eligible for Differential Response (*see* Section 1.3.7), the local Supervisor may send an email request to the Child Abuse Hotline to assess for reassignment to the Differential Response pathway. There is also a method to reassign a Differential Response case to the Investigations pathway (*see* Section 1.3.7.2). The Future System **shall** allow for an override to move an Investigation to the Differential Response (DR) pathway (with approval from Hotline staff) and vice versa. When these overrides occur, information should be automatically populated over to the respective pathway.

During an investigation, investigators can determine that services need to be rendered to a child or family. A case does not need to be opened for services to be rendered. However, if a case is eventually opened, DCFS needs the services rendered during an investigation to be documented in the respective case. In addition, regardless of whether the investigation becomes a case, the Future System **shall** allow the information related to all Investigations, including but not limited to interviews, contacts, services, evidence, documentation, and reason for determination, to be stored in the system.

1.3.2 Investigations Components

One main component of an investigation is a Health and Safety Assessment, which includes:

- a. A health and safety checklist which assesses the presence or absence of 14 safety factors (for a list of all 14 safety factors, *see* Bidders Library)
- b. A safety planning process which necessitates specific actions to be taken to ensure the safety of a child
- c. An investigation risk assessment which identifies the current risk environment of a child's situation and indicates the level of involvement needed to ensure the child remains healthy and safe.

The Health and Safety Assessment will be approved by the Supervisor within 45 calendar days of the receipt of the initial hotline report. Upon completion, the Future System may have the capability to send Health and Safety Assessments to Supervisors. Once approved, the Health and Safety Assessment will copy over into the case (if a case is opened).

The other main component of an investigation is a multitude of interviews, specifically with:

- d. The alleged victim;
- e. Parents, both custodial and non-custodial;
- f. If neither parent is the alleged offender, the alleged offender;
- g. Current or past healthcare providers when the allegation of child maltreatment was reported by a healthcare provider;
- h. Any other relevant collaterals (*See* Section 1.3.2.1 for a definition and further discussion of collaterals)

The Future System may support the entry and maintenance of this information, including mobile capabilities to both enter and view information gathered during the Health and Safety Assessment and interviews. In addition, the Future System may allow applicable documents, videos or pictures to be electronically uploaded to the system and linked to the investigation.

All interviews and the entirety of the Health and Safety Assessment will be completed by the investigator within 30 calendar days of the receipt of the initial hotline report. The Future System may track these deadlines for each investigation. It may also send ticklers (at a timeframe specified by the State) to staff, reminding them of the duties that need to be completed.

The Future System may route some of the information gathered from these investigation components to the respective case, if a case is opened.

1.3.2.1 Collaterals

Collaterals are any individuals who may have information pertaining to an investigation or a case. Collaterals may have witnessed the alleged maltreatment or were told of the maltreatment by the victim. Collaterals include but are not limited to: adult siblings of the victim, teachers of the victim, and neighbors of the victim. It is important for investigators to contact these collaterals in order to retrieve additional information surrounding an investigation. The Future System may record demographic information about the collateral contact, including but not limited to the name, address, phone number, and work location and type of collateral contact and allow for user notes. Currently, this information is entered on multiple screens, which can lead to information being left out. Thus, the Future System may allow this information to be entered in on one screen.

Some collaterals are also reporters. These people are initially entered as reporters, but when a report is printed, they are listed as collaterals in order to maintain their confidentiality. The Future System may support this mechanism.

1.3.2.2 Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

The FFPSA, which was fully implemented on October 1, 2019, placed a new emphasis on the State providing preventative services so that children can safely remain in their home. The FFPSA:

- Includes new regulations regarding candidacy for foster care
- Requires that the State's determination of a Client's candidacy for foster care and types of services to be provided are tracked.
 - Arkansas' Candidates include:

- Those covered under Garrett's Law
- TDM held with no removal
- Protection Plan in place
- Less than Custody filed
- 30-day petition filed
- Supportive Services case opened to prevent removal
- CACD investigation with a true finding and an in-home or unknown offender
- Living with a relative but not in foster care
- Reunification has occurred and the case remains open
- High or intensive risk assessment
- Risk of guardianship or adoption disruption
- A sibling is in foster care
- Parent or caregiver was in foster care as a child
- Failure to Thrive
- Medical Neglect of a child 5 years of age and under
- Inadequate Supervision with a child in the home who is 5 years of age and under
- Domestic Violence is a risk factor
- Candidacy and services provided under FFPSA should be easily adaptable as they are going to change
 - Requires prevention plans that authorize prevention services
 - Has timeline stipulations
 - Supports evidence-based services
 - Requires residential treatment programs to use a trauma informed framework
 - Includes maintenance effort requirements
 - Stipulates coordination with other relevant agencies
 - Establishes and defines Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)

The funds spent on services for FFPSA are required to be tracked within the system by Client and reported to the federal government.

1.3.2.3 Other Investigation Work

There are times when DCFS is contacted by outside entities such as juvenile courts or other states and request that DCFS staff complete investigative work to determine if a home or family member is appropriate (*i.e.* complete a courtesy interview on an out of state investigation, complete a safety assessment in a domestic relations case). The Future System may allow for a way to document this type of work. In these situations, there has not been a formal maltreatment Referral made or an Investigation open. Therefore, there needs to be a way in the Future System for documents and activities completed to be captured. Currently, these activities are documented outside the system and there is not a formal way to know the amount of work being requested from the courts or the number of courtesy interviews being requested.

1.3.3 Findings and Determinations of Investigations

The fact-finding phase of the investigation (mentioned in Section 1.3.1) helps the Division determine whether:

- a. services are necessary to assist the family and allow the child to remain in the home
- b. separation of the child from the family is necessary for the child's health and safety
- c. there is a preponderance of evidence to support the investigation's findings

At any point during the investigation, DCFS investigators have the ability to open a case. The investigation does not need to be done or have a true finding to open the case. When a case is opened, an investigation may still continue. In addition, a case may be closed when the investigation is still open.

DCFS and CACD Directors will also have the ability to render an investigation as an Administrative Close. This process allows DCFS and CACD Directors to administratively close a child maltreatment investigation without an investigative determination after staff complete a preliminary investigation and find that the abuse or neglect did not occur and that other evidence gathered indicates that completion of a full investigation would not be warranted.

The worker or investigator will demonstrate that a preponderance of the evidence supports the allegation of child maltreatment. Once a determination is made by an investigator, it is routed to a Supervisor for approval. Upon completion of the investigation, the Future System may have the capability to send determinations to Supervisors.

Investigations can lead to the opening of a case (*e.g.* foster care, supportive services, protective services). At any point during the Investigation, the Future System **shall** allow staff to open a case or multiple cases linked to the investigation. Certain investigations may not require the opening of a case, even if they are true. However, third-tier approval is required in these instances.

Supervisor approved investigative determinations are made within 45 calendar days of receipt of the initial hotline report. The Future System may also send reminders (at a timeframe specified by the State) to staff, reminding them of this deadline.

At the end of the investigation, the prosecuting attorney can receive a summary report of the investigation, which may be generated and sent by the Future System.

Investigation determinations can be appealed and judicially overridden. Thus, the Future System may be able to support the override of investigation determinations after appeals. If an investigation determination needs to be amended, it will only be done by specific authorized users. The Future System may support this restriction.

1.3.3.1 Specific Determinations

A child maltreatment investigation (that was not administratively closed) is determined to be either:

- a. True

- b. Unsubstantiated
- c. Inactive
- d. Exempted (No Risk)
- e. True but exempt for
 - i. Garrett's Law
 - ii. Religious beliefs
 - iii. Underage juvenile offenders
 - iv. The investigator's discretion on whether the alleged offender presents risk to vulnerable people

A child maltreatment investigation results in a true determination if:

- a. An admission of the fact of maltreatment by person(s) responsible
- b. An adjudication of dependency-neglect
- c. A determination of the existence of maltreatment by Division staff, based on a preponderance of the evidence
- d. A medical diagnosis of failure to thrive
- e. Any other medical or legal form of confirmation deemed valid by the Division.

Many investigations that are true become cases. There could be true but do not open investigations that do not have cases. Conversely, unsubstantiated allegations may have open cases. *See also* Section 1.5.

Usually, an unsubstantiated or inactive determination means that the investigation will not become a case. Certain components of an investigation (e.g., Investigation Risk Assessment) may not be completed in instances where an unsubstantiated or inactive determination has been made. For a child maltreatment investigation to result in an unsubstantiated determination:

- a. The allegation of child maltreatment is not supported by a preponderance of the evidence following an investigation by Division staff.
- b. The investigation concludes the injuries were the result of reasonable and moderate physical discipline inflicted by a parent or guardian for the purpose of restraining or correcting the child.

For a child maltreatment investigation to have an Exempted (No Risk) determination, the offender must not pose a health or safety risk to any vulnerable population. For a child maltreatment investigation to result in an inactive determination, the alleged offender cannot be found. However, DCFS/CACD will have the capability to open these investigations if an alleged offender is found.

The Future System **shall** allow for unsubstantiated and inactive investigations to be stored in the system, along with a documented reason for the determination.

It is possible for an investigation to result in a true determination, but not necessitate placement on the Child Maltreatment Central Registry. These instances are currently tied to three exemption rationales. The Division may open a protective services case for any of these investigative determinations.

- The Garrett's Law exemption applies when there is a presence of an illegal substance in

either the bodily fluids or bodily substances in the mother or child at the time of birth, resulting from the mother knowingly using an illegal substance.

- The religious belief exemption applies when the parent’s decision to withhold medical treatment was based solely upon a religious belief.
- The underage juvenile offender exemption applies when there is an overall true finding of sexual abuse by a child under the age of 14 to another child.
- In addition, under legislation, DCFS/CACD Staff may determine certain investigations to be true, but not warrant placement on the Child Maltreatment Central Registry if alleged offender poses no risk to vulnerable people.

No matter the determination, all persons who are supposed to receive a determination letter per State policy are issued a determination letter regarding the outcome of the investigation. The Future System may facilitate the generating and sending of determination letters to all relevant parties. The Future System may automatically pre-fill determination letters with all information in the system pertaining to the investigation and its results.

1.3.4 Extensions to Timeframes

If needed, Area Directors can request a 15-day extension to the 45-calendar day timeframe (for a total timeframe of 60 calendar days). Requests are normally approved by the Assistant Director of Prevention and Reunification. The Future System may allow for investigations to remain open beyond the 45-calendar day timeframe if an extension is permitted. The criteria for an extension are as follows:

- a. The Prosecuting Attorney or law enforcement officials have requested that DCFS postpone the determination due to a pending criminal investigation
- b. Medical, crime lab, or autopsy reports needed to make a determination have not been received
- c. The report involves some out-of-state subjects and interview write-ups have not been received
- d. Conflicting medical opinions have been received, requiring further analysis
- e. Multiple alleged offenders or victims are involved, requiring additional time to conduct interviews and gather evidence.

The requestor will submit appropriate documentation in support of the extension. This documentation, along with the request and disposition of the extension, may be stored in the Future System and linked to the investigation.

1.3.5 Child Maltreatment Central Registry

The Child Maltreatment Central Registry is established within the Department of Human Services for the collection of records of referrals involving allegations of child maltreatment which are determined to be true pursuant to A.C.A. § 12-18-901 based on investigative findings and statutorily defined categories. The Division of Children and Family Services maintains the statewide Child Maltreatment Central Registry. Currently, most of the entry, reporting, and management of the Central Registry requires manual activities. DCFS is seeking a Future System

that will reduce manual processes related to the Central Registry and should include functionality including, but not limited to, form generation, data pre-population, and time logic. In addition, DCFS would prefer that the Future System provide a list of all individuals on the Central Registry. The information on the Central Registry is vital and has to be accurate, timely, and complete. Workload tracking for all activities with associated timelines would be beneficial to ensure the accuracy of the Registry. Documents associated with the Central Registry may be linked or uploaded. Additionally, reporting requirements are associated with the Central Registry.

Names of offenders and alleged offenders are placed on the Child Maltreatment Central Registry (the “Central Registry”) as specified by law in Arkansas Code §12-18-901 *et. seq.* There may be multiple charges made against alleged offenders and system functionality may allow separate entry for each charge as well as a disposition/determination of each allegation.

Information on the Central Registry is subject to appeal before to Office of Appeals and Hearings (OAH). OAH appeals are first heard by an Administrative Law Judge and then (if appealed again) by a circuit court. When appealed, information cannot be taken off the Central Registry until after it is adjudicated. Alleged offenders will not appear on the Central Registry if they are in the process of appealing the determination. *See also* Section 1.10.7.

DCFS is responsible for providing notices regarding child maltreatment allegations, investigative findings and appeal decisions. Notices may be provided to the following:

- law enforcement
- prosecuting attorney
- facility director/licensing or registering authority
- legal parent or guardian of alleged offender in foster care
- current Resource Parent of alleged offender
- legal parent or legal guardian of alleged victim in foster care
- current Resource Parent of alleged victim
- attorney ad litem of alleged victim
- court appointed special advocate of alleged victim
- counsel in dependency neglect or FINS case if alleged victim has an open court case
- attorney ad litem of child in Resource Parent Home where maltreatment is reported or where alleged juvenile offender is placed
- court appointed special advocate of child in Resource Parent Home where maltreatment is reported
- Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)⁷ for alleged victim or offender
- schools
- alleged offender

The notice has to be delivered to the offender or alleged offender in order for them to be

⁷ A Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) is a group of professionals (local law enforcement, CACD staff, teachers, DCFS, etc..) that review recent child deaths or severe child maltreatment (Priority 1) reports. The MDT's function is to review the reports to determine if any agency policy or local laws or community ordinances need to be changed, determine if there are any public health/safety issues need to be addressed, and gather information for any possible future legislative changes. The MDT makes recommendations and discusses possible services that might be available or needed in the community.

placed on the Central Registry.

The Future System **shall** maintain the Child Maltreatment Central Registry, as determined by law. The Future System may facilitate the creation of all required notices and forms resulting from Central Registry which will be driven primarily by the generation of forms which utilize data from the Future System. Additionally, the Future System may allow for comprehensive search functionality to properly identify and link those on the Central Registry with detailed information concerning the parties, circumstances and findings associated with registry placement. Further, the Future System may enable the user to track legally mandated filing and notice deadlines, the Appeals and Hearing process and associated time requirements which are dependent on date of disposition and entry on the Central Registry. A listing of the forms utilized today may be found in the Bidders' Library. The Future System may allow the modification or addition of these Central Registry notification forms.

1.3.6 Referral Assessments

Instances in which an infant is born and affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA)-related issues (substance-exposed infants that have withdrawal symptoms) are referred to DCFS for assessment. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects or disorders that can occur in an individual whose mother consumed alcohol during pregnancy.

Pursuant to Policy II-F (available in the Bidders' Library), infants should be referred to the State by healthcare providers for a non-investigative substance exposed infant referral and assessment if that infant is born with and affected by either 1) FASD or 2) withdrawal symptoms or other observable and harmful effects in physical appearance or health condition due to either the mother's lawful use of a controlled dangerous substance during pregnancy or the mother's knowing use of an illegal substance prior to the child's birth but not present in either the child's or mother's body at the time of birth.

Such referral by the healthcare provider shall be made via the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline pursuant to Policy II-F's standards. The Future System **shall** allow non-investigative substance exposed infant referrals and assessments to be directed to the Differential Response pathway. *See also* Section 1.3.7, which team shall conduct the non-investigative substance exposed infant referral and assessment pursuant to Policy II-F's requirements.

The Future System **shall** support the entry and maintenance of all information related to non-investigative substance exposed infant referral assessments. The Future System may also maintain a plan of safe care template as a form that can be filled out in the system. The Future System **shall** support this type of referral's receipt by the Hotline.

If during an open investigation, an investigator suspects that a child may have symptoms of FASD, the investigator gathers information on the child's birth history to determine if the mother consumed alcohol or misused a legal substance. From there, the investigator completes a screening referral and coordinates with the FASD unit to ensure the child receives any necessary services. Currently, the screening referral is faxed to the FASD Director to initiate communication between the two. The Future System may continue to support this faxing

functionality. The State is open to other functionalities to communicate this information.

1.3.6.1 Child Fatalities, Near Fatalities, and Death Assessments

Unfortunately, on occasion, a child in the State of Arkansas may suffer a fatality or near fatality (serious injury). A fatality is classified as a death not caused by a known disease or illness for which the child was under a physician's care at the time of death. CACD is responsible for assessing all child fatalities and near-fatalities which are reported to the Child Abuse Hotline. Death Assessments are used to build records associated with a child death.

Currently, child fatalities and near fatalities are classified as assessments in the system. In the Future System, child fatalities and near-fatalities **shall** be redirected from the Referral Assessment to the Investigation pathway.

Currently, if a child fatality report is received via the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline, an automatic email is generated to specified DCFS and CACD personnel. The Future System may generate and send these notifications to specified DCFS and CACD personnel, although the notification does not need to be an email.

Upon learning of a child fatality, the Division of Children and Family Services County Office will immediately (within one hour) notify the appropriate Area Director or designee, who will be responsible for notifying the Division Director. The Division Director is responsible for notifying the DHS Deputy Director and DHS Director of Communications immediately. Additionally, DCFS takes immediate action to ensure the safety of other children in the home when DCFS becomes aware of a child near fatality or fatality that may be the result of maltreatment. This contact chain presently occurs outside of the CHRIS system. DCFS and CACD would prefer an automated notice function that could provide an alternative to, or a method in addition to email notification in the Future System.

Following a child fatality related to child maltreatment, an internal team of DCFS staff will meet to review the investigation and/or case and identify systemic issues, public health concerns, and where practice could have been improved in that particular case in an effort to prevent future child fatalities and near fatalities. Following a DCFS internal near fatality or fatality review, the Division will also be responsible for holding an external review meeting of any near fatality or fatality with which the Division has had involvement with the family during the previous twelve months.

Finally, the Child Death and Near Fatality Multidisciplinary Review Committee will also conduct a comprehensive review of the circumstances leading to the near fatalities and fatalities of children who have been reported through the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline.

DCFS undertakes to track and, in certain instances, publish information regarding child fatalities. This process is presently done mainly outside of CHRIS and in multiple manual reports. The Future System **shall** be able to support CACD in the entry and maintenance of information related to Child Deaths. The Future System may maintain an accurate tracking method for near-fatalities, including a way for near-fatalities' status to be changed to fatalities and an area to indicate whether the near-fatality has been certified by a doctor. When the death of

a child previously classified as a near-fatality occurs, the Future System may notify specified DCFS and CACD personnel.

1.3.7 Differential Response

Some child neglect and child abuse Referrals may be assigned to Differential Response (DR) teams. DR is a family engagement approach which recognizes that in some low to moderate risk allegations, an alternative approach to investigation is warranted. DR stems from the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 2010 and is designed to focus on the safety and well-being of the child and promote permanency.

In DR, there is no alleged offender, no disposition and no entry on the Central Registry. DR involves a comprehensive and collaborative assessment for health and safety and for strengths and needs of the family. If a need is identified, a Family Plan is created in collaboration with the family. Each Family Plan will detail goals and activities to increase parent/caregiver protective capabilities to address identified concerns and/or needs. The Family Plan is a blueprint of what services will be provided and the roles and responsibilities of all necessary parties. The Future System **shall** support the entry and maintenance of Family Assessments and Family Plans, including mobile capabilities to enter and view relevant information. For more information on Differential Responses please see the “Differential Response Day 1” PowerPoint presentation in the Bidders’ Library.

DR teams are comprised of three primary roles:

- a. A DRT Supervisor who manages DR services, including review and approval of assessments, Family Plans, and appropriateness of service referrals, case file documentation, service extensions, and requests to close family assessment cases.
- b. DRT Specialist(s) who initiate contact with family and assume the role of the family’s contact and case manager.
- c. DRT Program Assistant(s) who provide support and assistance as needed to the DRT Specialist(s) and families involved in DR cases.

1.3.7.1 Differential Response Eligibility

For a Referral to be assigned to a DR team, it will meet the following specific eligibility criteria:

- a. Identifying information for the family members and their current address or a means to locate them is known at the time of the report
- b. The person responsible for the care of the child must be one of the following: child’s parents, birth or adoptive, legal guardians, custodians, or any person standing in loco parentis
- c. The family has no pending investigation or open protective services or supportive services case
- d. The alleged victims, siblings or other household members, are not currently in the care and custody of Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services or wards of the court
- e. Protective custody of the children has not been taken or required in the current

- investigation
- f. The reported allegations will only include: inadequate supervision, inadequate food, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, educational neglect, environmental neglect, lock out, medical neglect, human bites, sprains/dislocations, striking a child age seven or older on the face, striking a child with a closed fist, throwing a child. These reported allegations are subject to change over time.

As Hotline staff key in a Referral, the current system has logic to flag it as being eligible for DR via a pop-up message based on certain characteristics (*e.g.*, age). The Future System **shall** allow for the entry and tracking of Differential Response (DR) reports and maintains logic to flag referrals as eligible for Differential Response (DR).

In addition to the criteria that permit a Referral to be assigned to a DR team, there is also criteria that prohibit a Referral from being assigned to a DR team:

- a. Inadequate Supervision reports involving a child or children under the age of five or a child five years of age and older with a physical or mental disability which limits his or her skills in the areas of communication, self-care, self-direction, and safety will be assigned the investigative pathway.
- b. Educational Neglect reports involving a child that was never enrolled in an educational program
- c. Environmental Neglect reports involving a child or children under the age of three; and those situations in which the hotline assesses an immediate danger to the child's health or physical well-being based upon the severity
- d. Lock out reports involving a child or children under the age of ten; and those situations in which the hotline assesses an immediate danger to the child's health or physical well-being based upon the severity
- e. Medical Neglect reports involving a child or children under the age of 13 or a child with a severe medical condition that could become serious enough to cause long-term harm to the child if untreated will be assigned the investigative pathway
- f. Reports of human bites, sprains/dislocations, striking a child age seven or older on the face, striking a child with a closed fist, and throwing a child when these allegations occurred either less than one year ago; and/or if the caller to the hotline can verify an injury either through physical signs (*e.g.*, scarring), medical information, dated photographs, *etc.*

The Future System may be able to store these prohibitory criteria so Hotline staff can make appropriate judgements on which Referrals will not be assigned to a DR team.

1.3.7.2 Differential Response Timeframes and Processes

When a Referral is determined to meet the requirements for DR, it is assigned to a State DR inbox. The Future System may allow DR reports⁸ to be routed to specific DR inboxes or queues for each county. Within 24 hours of receipt of the initial hotline report, DR staff conducts

⁸ As used in this section, the word "report" refers to the work conducted pursuant to a Differential Response, and not the assembly and presentation of information (otherwise discussed in Section 1.12).

an initial call with the family.

Within 72 hours of receipt of the initial hotline report, DR staff engage with the victim child(ren) and at least one parent and/or caregiver. DR staff engage with all other household members within five days of receipt of the initial hotline report. If DR services are to be rendered, the DR team will complete the Family Plan and Family Assessment within 14 days of receipt of the initial hotline report.

Differential Responses reports are closed within 30 days of receipt of the initial hotline report; however, there is the possibility for two 15-day extensions to this deadline, if deemed necessary.

The Future System **shall** be able to track these timeframes for each DR. In addition, the Future System should send ticklers (at a timeframe specified by the State) to remind Staff to contact the victim child(ren) and household members within the required timeframes, to remind Staff to complete Family Plans and Family Assessments within the required timeframe, and to remind Staff of a DR report that is approaching the closing deadline.

Upon initial review and contact, the DR team can determine whether:

- a. The DR should be closed without rendering services
- b. Services should be provided to the family through DR
- c. The DR should be referred back to investigations.

If a safety factor is identified at any point in the DR, the DR can be elevated to an investigation. There is an override in the current system that sends elevated DRs to the county's inbox for investigation assignment. There may be circumstances where an accepted report of maltreatment to Investigation has a secondary review and is reassigned to DR. The Future System **shall** allow for an override to move an Investigation to the Differential Response (DR) pathway (with approval from Hotline staff) and vice versa. Authorized staff members need to be able to override the initial assignment from the Hotline, based on the secondary review.

1.4 Assessments

DCFS uses a number of assessments and assessment tools to help understand the populations they serve and how to best provide services. Assessment and assessment tools are frameworks purchased and administered by DCFS in select instances to aid case planning, health and safety reviews, risk evaluations, and other aspects of service provision. This Functional Area covers:

- Current Assessments
- Future Assessments
- Data Capture, Storage, and Display

1.4.1 Assessments Used Today and in the Future

Presently, DCFS is transitioning from assessment tools embedded in CHRIS to the suite of tools built and hosted by Evident Change, as discussed below in Section 1.11.5. The Future System **must** provide a platform for users to complete assessments as well as a repository of the

assessments recorded results.

The Future System **must** accommodate changes in the assessments used by the State possibly prior to the system's go live and likely during the life of the system. This includes changes to the assessments themselves (as made in accordance with the State's contract with Evident Change) or changes in how these Assessments are integrated with the Future System

The Future System **must** allow the State to select new types of assessment tools to supplement or replace current assessments listed in Section 1.11.5, and adapt to meet DCFS needs as they change through the life of the Contract, including but not limited to providing mobile access to assessments per Section 1.4.2.4 Mobility and Assessments.

1.4.2 Data Capture, Storage, and Display

The Future System **shall** allow users to capture, access, maintain, store, and display information from assessments.

1.4.2.1 Data Capture

Information captured by users in the performance of assessments will be uploaded to the Future System and linked to the relevant Case(s). As discussed in Section 1.11.5, Evident Change has or will configure the questions and prompts of the Assessments used by the State on the Evident Change platform, which **shall** be integrated by the Contractor into the Future System.

To the extent that an assessment tool (including those developed by Evident Change) requires information already in the Future System (*e.g.* the name of the Client) the State is interested in having the Future System pre-populate this information into the assessment tool to expedite the user's completion of the assessment.

1.4.2.2 Data Storage

The information captured by assessments (as well as legacy data captured from assessments conducted before the Future System) **shall** be stored within the Future System and linked to relevant Cases(s) and Client(s) and any other relevant files, windows, and interfaces. Collected assessment information **must** be stored securely and meet all relevant federal and State confidentiality standards and requirements.

The Future System may include access controls (i.e. controls that allow secure access to assessments and captured assessment data), including the ability to restrict which users may conduct assessments or view assessment data by user type. Information collected through separate assessments that relate to the same Case may be organized logically and allow users the ability to sort and search through old and new assessment results.

1.4.2.3 Data Display

The Future System **shall** display and print all captured and stored data from assessments (including legacy assessment data and results) in an easy to read format, and should include the ability to create a pdf which can be emailed.

The Future System may store and provide viewing and printing capability for collected

assessment information (including legacy data and results captured from assessments conducted before the Future System and including assessment information from deactivated assessment tools). Results of assessments may be transferred or displayed for use in relevant reports. Additionally, the Future System may display legacy assessment data and results.

DCFS has interest in having the Future System prompt users when a deadline for an assessment or re-assessment is approaching. Additionally, DCFS is interested in the ability to leverage the Future System to help display and report high-level data trends that may be indicated by the results of assessments across relevant populations over time.

1.4.2.4 Mobility and Assessments

DCFS desires to increase the mobility of assessments and assessment tools. This enhanced mobility would include:

- The ability to conduct assessments in the field on mobile devices such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops. This would include both using cellular and wireless data to upload assessment results into the system as the assessments are completed and the ability to complete assessments “offline” on these devices to be uploaded later. This “offline” capability is of particular importance in rural areas of the State with sub-optimal cellular signal.
- Mobile collection by users of assessment tool information, including the ability to upload photographs (taken on the mobile device) into the assessment.
- Access to completed assessments and their information from mobile devices in the field.
- Electronic signature.

1.5 Case Management

Efficient management of child welfare cases and their associated functions is a critical component in service to families impacted by the child welfare system. While many efficiencies have been gained through the existing system CHRIS, many aspects of case work, case management and documentation remain manual and time consuming. The State is interested in a modern case management system that takes advantage of current and future technologies, reduces the time necessary for system input and allows DCFS staff and authorized contractors to perform the duties necessary to protect and promote the well-being of children and families.

The State’s priorities for a Case Management system are for it to:

- be the official system of record;
- provide system users with immediate access to child, family and case-specific information in order to make important and timely case decisions;
- provide users with accurate and current information to manage caseloads and take appropriate case action;
- provide supervisors with information needed to monitor and evaluate case decisions, program goals and resource allocation; and
- provide adequate privacy and security to protect highly confidential information and

restrict access based on internal roles and permissions.

In the Future System, the Case Management functional area will provide the electronic management of various case types including, but not limited to Protective Services, Foster Care, and Adoptions case types. The State is interested in a Future System that will readily identify various case types and services being provided. Additionally, the Future System will accommodate multiple different types of cases with unique considerations.

The Future System will enable users of the system including DCFS staff, supervisors and authorized contractors to carry out the following duties (not an exhaustive list):

- Case Documentation
- Case Load Management
- Preparation of Case Plans/Ongoing Services
- Protective Services
- Family Reunification Services
- Child Placement/Court Processing
- Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC)
- Indian Child Welfare Act Cases (ICWA)
- Transitional Youth Services
- Service Provision to Families
- Adoptions

1.5.1 Case Documentation

The State must maintain accurate and timely case documentation throughout the life of a case from initiation to closure. The Future System **must** allow the user to enter and maintain case documentation including but not limited to case notes and summaries, general history of the case, family visitations, and conference summaries. Additionally, supervisor review and approval functionality must be customizable and modifiable for current and future case documentation needs. Documentation is critical in the event of an Internal Review or Administrative Appeal, which require a complete review of all case actions, decisions and supporting documentation. Use of pick-list, drop down tables, reliable audio-to-text technology, radio buttons, mobile availability, pre-population of forms/screens and document scan and upload capabilities are examples of enhancements that will improve the current process of case documentation. (See 1.1.8 General Functions).

The Future System **shall** allow authorized users to open and close cases. The Future System **shall** allow authorized users, in accordance with specific roles and permissions, to enter, maintain, approve, disapprove and edit case documentation and data in various formats, including but not limited to open text, numerical, pick-lists, drop-downs, and radio buttons. Such items that might be documented in a case might include, but is not limited to: face to face visits to the Client's homes; face to face visits to the foster care settings (Resource Parent Home, residential treatment center); transporting Clients to services or doctor appointments; attending court hearings; holding case staffings; making referrals for services; telephone calls to Clients,

provides; conducting drug screens; making purchases for a Client; *etc.*

The Future System **shall** capture case information deemed necessary by the State. The necessary information to be captured in the case may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Client(s) name(s)
- Client placement information
- general history of the case
- relationships that impact the case
- signify what parties/persons are related to the case
- allow for use of, and data capture for assessments
- track key events (including but not limited to) such as case initiation date, change of placement, child fatalities, case closure
- ability to create check-list options for packets of information containing several different forms/screens within the system (examples might include: the adoption disclosure packet, court exhibits packet, internal review packets)
- case and contact notes
- completion of forms
- case/conference summary
- uniform contact information for all persons related to the case/collateral contacts
- criminal information
- legal processes and results
- education status and progress
- medical information
- Project for Adolescent and Child Evaluations (PACE)
- health/safety information
- photographs (such as JPEGs or other common formats uploaded to the case file in the Future System)
- audio or video recordings (uploaded to the case file in the Future System)
- travel information
- investigation information and supporting documentation
- also see Bidders Library for information required for out-of-home placements

1.5.1.1 Other Case Management Work

There are times when the Division is contacted by outside entities such as juvenile courts or other states and request for staff to complete case work activities (*e.g.* complete a home study on a family member of a pregnant teen in DYS custody, coordinate services in a juvenile delinquency case) when a case has not been opened. Currently, these activities are documented outside of CHRIS and there is not a formal way to know the amount of work being requested from the courts or the number of courtesy interviews being requested. There will need to be a way in the Future System to document the completion of these activities.

1.5.2 Case Load Management

The case load for DCFS staff is highly variable and dependent on the role of the employee. A case load may average 15-20 cases for some employees, while others may have 50 or more cases assigned. These averages vary by role, region, staff tenure, and human resource capacity.

The Future System will need to assist users and their supervisors prioritize worker time. To this end, DCFS would like to know how a Respondent will provide functionality for users to determine which cases need immediate action, who is assigned to a case, what role do they have (Primary or Secondary), volume of not only the number of cases, but also the number of children involved in a particular case.

The Future System will have the functionality to determine if a case is completed and/or able to be closed within the system, as defined by business process rules, policy and pursuant to multi-layered review and approval.

Use of automated reports, dashboards, at-a-glance indicators etc. would improve the current functionality of the child welfare system as would the ability to access case load information through multiple devices including Mobile Technology. (See Section 1.14 Mobility)

The Future System will promote efficiency and optimize case management and monitoring and may include the following features:

- easy to use work and task lists
- the ability to view and sort tasks to prioritize them
- specific alerts/reminders/ticklers that can be tied to required action and meet business needs
- calendar and planning functionality
- ability to assign, reassign, and transfer case load, individual cases and tasks
- ability to refer actions/tasks cases to other units (*e.g.* Investigations)
- determine case volume/number of children being served
- ability to access case load information over mobile devices
- status indicators to distinguish case types and progress
- ability to transition from one case type to another
- easily modifiable as needs/requirements and processes change
- ability to create automated reports and as well ad-hoc reports
- assignment tracking/dashboards
- performance management and reporting tools
- search capabilities for key data, that can be customized and filtered as necessary
- suggested next actions based on input
- ability to connect investigation with multiple cases
- ability to restrict/limit access to certain cases

1.5.3 Preparation of Case Plans/Ongoing Services

DCFS is responsible for creating a family services case plan as determined by assessment,

policy and/or court order. The case plan is a document that is a discrete part of the case record between the family and DCFS. The ultimate goal of a case plan is to assist the family in rectifying the issues that resulted in DCFS intervention if appropriate.

Case plans are developed after a thorough assessment of the family the State's assessment tools. *See also* Section 1.4 on Assessments.

The Future System **shall** allow the user to create an easy to understand case plan that details all services being provided and the roles and responsibility of all parties to the case, for all case types. Additionally, the Case Plan will need to be accessible to other users during the course of investigations, Differential Response cases and other case types. Presently, some of the information captured in Case Plans includes (but is not limited to):

- description of placement
- determination of health and safety of the child
- plan for assuring that child receives safe and proper care
- appropriateness of the services provided
- plan for assuring services and listing of service history are provided to the clients and caregiver
- visitation rights, schedule and obligations of parents, other siblings, guardian or custodian
- location of siblings/determination of joint or separate placement and rationale
- transition plan for youth
- best interest determinations
- DCFS's plan to carry out judicial order(s)
- educational status/providers/school records
- ultimate goal/plan for permanency

The Future System **shall** meet the requirements of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), and **shall** have functionality to show that the requirements have been met. The Case Plan will contain the information necessary to create a child-specific, separately-identified Prevention Plan as required by the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). The FFPSA requires that the State's determination of a Client's candidacy for foster care and types of services to be provided, as well as the funding for such, are tracked. There will be specific guidelines around what determines a Client's candidacy and that will determine if a prevention plan needs to be done. The Future System **shall** identify and maintain a written prevention plan for a child to remain safely at home, live temporarily with a kin caregiver, or live permanently with a kin caregiver and list and track the services or programs to be provided on behalf of the child. Additionally, the Future System **shall** capture information for pregnant or parenting foster youth and list the services or programs to be provided on their behalf as well as describe the prevention strategy for any child born to the youth. The Prevention Plan may be accessible to other users of the Future System for purposes of investigations, Differential Response, or other cases. The Future System **shall** be able to provide a report on outcomes for those receiving FFPSA services and the costs associated. The State fully implemented FFPSA on October 1, 2019.

1.5.4 Protective Services/In-Home Services

Protective Services/In-Home Services, which generally result from Investigations or court orders, refers to services to help children safely remain with their families. Additionally, protective services can provide services to prevent foster care placement as well as family services with respect to but not limited to parenting skills, family budgeting, health and nutrition information and strategies on handling stress. An assessment is completed with the family to determine which services are needed.

DCFS has a business need to know where children who are in an in-home case are residing at any point in time. For example, if they go to a mental health facility, grandma's house for the summer, or run away. It would also be helpful to know if a parent is in treatment, jail, hospitalized, or is otherwise out of home.

Protective Services/In-Home Services cases will require rules, and logic in light of their special considerations. *See* Section 1.1.5. The Future System **must** have the ability to create multiple case types with specified logic associated with each type and indicators to distinguish each case type.

DCFS also has supportive services within the In-Home Services category that are provided to families on a voluntary basis. Because there is not an investigation attached to these cases, workers will need to be able to open them independent of a maltreatment finding.

1.5.5 Family Reunification Services

Reunification Services are services and activities that are provided to a child that is removed from the child's home and placed in foster care or in a relative's temporary custody and to the parents or primary caregiver of such a child. Reunification Services are provided in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion, but only during the time as determined by the court or pursuant to state and federal regulations that begins on the date the child enters foster care. Services include but are not limited to: counseling, substance abuse treatment services, mental health services, assistance to address domestic abuse, temporary child care, and transportation to services/activities.

Family Reunification Services cases will require additional business process mapping, rules, and logic in light of their special considerations. The Future System **must** have the ability to create multiple case types with specified logic associated with each type to accommodate this.

1.5.6 Child Placement/Foster Care

During the course of a child maltreatment investigation, it may be deemed that it is unsafe for a child to remain in their home. In that instance, DCFS can make the determination that a child must be placed in foster care, which triggers a 72-hour hold. Alternatively, a judge can order DCFS to take custody of a child and place them in foster care or place the child on a 72-hour hold. Once either of these instances occur, DCFS begins tracking of removal information. Removal information includes date and time removed, from whom custody of the child was removed, conditions at time of removal, reason for removal, and other critical information. A

removal episode begins initiation of key events in the case, such as placement, Medicaid application, and court activities.

The Future System's case management solution **shall** provide the functionality to enter, maintain, and track detailed and timely child placement information according to DCFS specifications. Detailed information includes tracking proximity to child's school and parents, runaway information, and placement with siblings.

Arkansas is not a voluntary placement state; this means that any child who is removed from their home and placed out-of-home must be subject to judicial order placing custody of the child with the State. After the Department removes a child or the court grants custody of the child to the Department, the child must be placed in a licensed or approved Resource Parent Home, shelter, or facility, or an exempt child welfare agency as defined at A.C.A. § 9-28-402.

When a child is in the custody of the Department of Human Services, DCFS must ensure that the out-of-home placement is in the best interest of the child, is the least restrictive option, is matched to the child's physical and therapeutic needs (*e.g.*, caretakers have the skills and training sufficient to meet the child's individual needs), and is close in proximity to the child's parents and the child's school. All efforts to place a child within Arkansas will be thoroughly explored and documented before consideration is given to out-of-state placement. When it is in the best interest of each of the children, the Department will attempt to place siblings together while in out-of-home placements. When it is in the best interest of each of the children, the Department will attempt to place together infants with minor mothers who are in foster care.

Prior to placement, DCFS must ensure that the placement is safe. That includes checking child abuse and neglect registries, criminal checks and home studies/consultation. In all custodial placements by DCFS, preferential consideration is given to an adult relative if the relative caregiver meets all relevant child protection standards. The placement decision must be based on an individual assessment of the child's needs and in the best interest of the child.

If the health or welfare of a child is in immediate danger while in a court-ordered placement the Division may immediately remove the child from the court-ordered placement. If the Division must move a child from a court-ordered placement due to the health or welfare of a child being in immediate danger, the Division will notify all required parties within 24 hours of the change in placement. DCFS would like to automate this process within the Future System.

DCFS' interaction with the Court system and legal counsel prior to and during removal/out-of-home placements is imperative. Currently, information is communicated between all necessary parties primarily by email communication. Additionally, copies of court orders and court proceedings are obtained in hard copy which are not currently uploaded in CHRIS. The State is interested in a system that will allow real time input of information, document upload/attachment and mobile access. Additionally, an interface with the judicial system is needed. (*See* Section 1.10 on Courts and 1.11 on Interfaces and Data Exchanges).

The Future System **shall** support users' ability to capture all the necessary information related to any type of out-of-home placement. This information may take a number of forms. By way of example (as this is not an exhaustive list), the Future System **shall** allow users to:

- Obtain an initial health screening for the child(ren) placed in the State’s custody
- Obtain medical and psychological records and information
- Obtain a written health assessment and health plan for the child(ren)
- Sign any necessary consent for medical or dental treatment
- Create case plan
- Document Team Decision Making
- Create a visitation plan and monitor compliance with the plan
- Create court report
- Capture results of court hearings, i.e. court orders
- Follow all directives ordered by the court
- Request and/or recommend termination of reunification efforts/termination of parental rights
- Send notice to parties of actions taken
- Prepare case for permanency
- Pay providers
- Track services provided

1.5.6.1 Change in Out-of-Home Placement

In some cases, a change in placement may be necessary and in the best interest of the child in foster care. Change in placement requests may be made by a Resource Parent or the Department. Additionally, a placement change may occur as a result of a planned transfer to another Resource Parent Home or residential setting that better meets the child’s needs, a trial home placement, and a return to the parent/legal custodian when a child exits care. In some situations, there may be a need for an emergency placement change.

As of October 1, 2019, in accordance with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), children who are placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) are subject to an independent assessment and specific court rulings. The Future System **shall** comply with all business rules surrounding this specific placement setting.

The Future System **shall** provide the ability to document child removals and placements according to DCFS specifications.

1.5.7 Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC)

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) is used to move children in need of a foster or pre-adoptive placement, adoption, guardianship or custody across state lines, or reunification with parents in an orderly and timely manner. When a child requires placement for foster care or a possible adoption outside the resident state, DCFS will use the ICPC process. Unless authorized by the ICPC, all communications with other states regarding approval of placement, progress reports, disruption of placement, or termination of the ICPC case should process through the Arkansas ICPC Central Office, to the ICPC liaisons. Additionally, children who are being placed in Arkansas from another state must request placements following ICPC process and procedures.

The Future System **shall** allow the user to process out of state cases pursuant to the

requirements of ICPC and have the ability to and enter and maintain all associated case information. The Future System **shall** allow the State to connect its child welfare information system DIRECTLY to the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) utilizing the NEICE clearinghouse.

The NEICE Clearinghouse option allows the state to connect the child welfare information system directly to NEICE, which operates as an information exchange between states. NEICE users create and process ICPC cases through the state's child welfare information system. When the caseworker submits the ICPC placement request, the case and placement request are transported through NEICE as a secure clearinghouse directly to the receiving state. The Future System **shall** capture all information necessary for NEICE requirements and provide that information through the NEICE Clearinghouse.

1.5.8 Indian Child Welfare Act

DCFS complies with all mandates of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). ICWA is a federal law regulating placement proceedings involving children of Native American descent. ICWA mandates preventive services before removal to protect the best interest of Native American children and to promote the stability and security of Native American families and tribes. This includes preventing the unnecessary and arbitrary removal of Native American children from their families and tribes and placing a Native American child who must be removed in an available and safe home that reflects the unique values of the Native American culture. ICWA cases are specialized and DCFS will work in close consultation with the applicable Native American Tribe. The Future System **shall** allow processing of Native American Child Welfare cases according to the ICWA. The Future System **must** have the ability to create multiple case types with specified logic associated with each type and indicators to distinguish each case type.

1.5.9 Transitional Youth Services (TYS)

The purpose of Transitional Youth Services (TYS) is to better prepare youth in DCFS custody, who are in an out-of-home placement or whose adoption or guardianship is finalized at age 16 or after, for successful transition to adulthood and to ensure that youth have access to an array of resources. Each youth will be given the opportunity to create a Transitional Plan which encompasses all the life skills, resources, and future-planning for the youth's successful transition into adult life. The Transitional Plan will be created with the support of the youth's Transitional Team which will consist of adults whom the youth identifies as significant. The youth's primary Family Service Worker will be responsible for the coordination of the youth's Transitional Team and is responsible for the Transitional Plan and case plan.

The Future System **shall** include functionality to create and document:

- Transitional plans
- Life skills classes and life skills assessments
- Transitional services
- National Youth Transition Database (NYTD) survey (*See* Section 1.12.1.3)

- Educational training vouchers (ETV)
- Driver's license and car insurance information
- Youth budget (determines their board payment)
- Record of youth start-up and after care expenses
- Youth's credit report history

1.5.10 Adoption

DCFS supports adoption by a Resource Parent or provisional Resource Parent, who has a well-established relationship with the child in his or her care and who expresses an interest in adoption. DCFS also supports adoption by a relative, who is not presently caring for the child and who expresses an interest in adoption if such a placement is in the best interest of the child. Each family and child will be carefully assessed and prepared for adoption. The Division provides pre-placement services to move children into adoptive families in a timely manner. Currently, the Adoptions Unit consists of Central Office Staff (4) and adoption specialist throughout the State (approximately 50 staff members).

The Adoption Specialist is assigned as a secondary user in the CHRIS system on the foster care case once the agency recommends termination of parental rights and reunification is no longer the goal. Currently there is no uniform or automated notification or indicator sent to an adoption specialist when the adoption process begins. DCFS is interested in how the Future System could alert appropriate users of a need for an adoption case.

DCFS staff are responsible for the completion of an adoption packet outside of CHRIS on all children whose goal is adoption. The packet includes hard copy documents such as medical and birth records. Currently, this is a manual, time-consuming process that includes requesting and collecting documents and manual redaction. *See Bidders' Library for the Subsidy Checklists.* The Future System will store these documents and facilitate the generation of the adoption packet and may include electronic redaction functionality.

If a child is not being adopted by the Resource Parent or a relative, the adoption specialist is responsible to pair a child with a possible adoptive parent. Currently, adoption specialists use a .NET data match application to query possible adoptive parents. Currently, this process does not efficiently identify families that meet the appropriate criteria for the child and the specialist receives data that may not be useful in matching children to potential families. The Future System may implement a State-approved, integrated functionality for matching foster children to potential foster or adoptive families.

Arkansas DCFS maintains a public website that will allow an interested party to apply to be a Resource Parent or an adoptive parent. *See also* Section 1.7.4.1 below. On-line applications are reviewed by DCFS once received and then information is uploaded into CHRIS. An outside community partner maintains the Arkansas Heart Gallery which is a public facing on-line portal that includes biographies and pictures of children who are eligible for adoption. The sharing of information with this community partner is always evolving and further exploration of how the Future System can collaborate with the public facing online portal should be considered. Other recruitment efforts are noted in the current systems, however, there is no specific functionality

that triggers or track recruitment in CHRIS.

During the course of an adoption, there may be changes in the event that a child returns to foster care or a subsidy is modified or terminated. In the event that a child is returned to foster care, a new foster care case is initiated. Additionally, if a child is adopted by another family, a subsequent adoption case is opened as well. If post placement services are needed after an adoption is finalized, the adoption specialist contacts the local office and requests that a supportive services case be opened. Currently, a child can be the subject of several different cases, however the system does not link the cases.

Adoption cases will require their own business process mapping, rules, and logic in light of their special considerations. The Future System **must** have the ability to create multiple case types with specified logic associated with each type and indicators to distinguish each case type including, but not limited to adoption cases.

1.5.10.1 Adoptive/Resource Homes

DCFS assists in the placement of children in adoptive homes. Criteria for consideration in determining the appropriateness of adoptive homes include, but are not limited to the following:

- Jurisdiction: Arkansas Court must have jurisdiction of the child and/or the family planning to adopt
- Applicant must be at least 21 years old
- Housing must be sufficient (as defined by policy)
- Background Checks/Central Registry Checks
- General Physical and Mental Health
- Resources
- The prospective adoptive family must be willing to meet the child's needs to have continuity with the birth family, if applicable, and if in the child's best interest. The family must also be able to appropriately deal with interference from the child's birth family. Geographic location of the prospective adoptive family should not present any risks for the child to be harmed by the birth family. Additionally, if the prospective adoptive family plans to continue as a Resource Parent Home, they must demonstrate that they will also be able to continue to meet their adoptive child's needs.
- Completion of pre-service adoption training and any other child specific training as required by DCFS. Training is provided through a contracted community partner.

Before placement for adoption, the Adoption Specialist must compile and provide a disclosure packet to the prospective adoptive parents, which is a detailed written health history and genetic and social history of the child which excludes information which would identify custodial/non-custodial parent(s) or members of a custodial/non-custodial parent(s)' family. *See Bidders' Library* for a form disclosure packet. The Future System **shall** allow the user to provide and compile all required information necessary for the Adoption Summary and the Disclosure Packet, utilizing and pre-populating information that exists in the system.

1.5.10.2 Adoption Subsidies

After the adoption disclosure packet is completed for the adoptive family, a subsidy packet is created and sent to the subsidy coordinator in the Central Office. The Adoption Subsidy Coordinator reviews the packet to ensure appropriate criteria are met and once approved, approval is sent back to the field office by mail. Once an adoption is finalized, the foster care case is closed and a new, distinct adoption case is opened and assigned to the Central Office Adoption Unit. Note: Guardianship subsidies are processed in a similar manner, however, they have different acceptance criteria. The subsidy review, approval and determination are manual processes conducted outside of CHRIS. Once approved, the adoption (or guardianship) subsidy is paid through CHRIS. Additionally, a child who is receiving Medicaid as a result of an adoption subsidy may continue to receive the subsidy if the child moves to or from another state pursuant to the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA). The Future System **shall** facilitate the preparation and generation of the Adoption Subsidy packet and store its contents (i.e., the documents that comprise the packet).

DCFS is interested in streamlining and automating the adoption/guardianship subsidy packet preparation, review and approval process within the Future System.

1.5.11 Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System

Case-level information from DCFS must be reported to ACF by submission to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) twice a year. The AFCARS report includes data on all children in foster care and all children who have adopted through the IV-E agency. CHRIS produces an AFCARS report through a .net application. The report identifies errors or missing information that is manually corrected. The current system does not automatically alert users to missing or incomplete data.

1.6 Client Information

A successful CCWIS facilitates the collection and maintenance of accurate and comprehensive Client information. It also makes this information searchable. This Functional Area covers:

- The Future System and the Master Client Index
- The Definition of Client
- Client Record Administration
- The Elements of Client Information
- The Validation or Acquisition of Client Information from External Sources
- Client Search

1.6.1 Master Client Index

At the time of the release of this solicitation, DHS has undertaken an effort to develop a Master Client Index (“MCI”). The MCI will serve as the master repository of client information across all DHS programs, including but not limited to the operations of DCFS.

1.6.1.1 Interface with MCI and the Maintenance of Information in CCWIS

The Future System may draw from and share information with the MCI in a manner that is compliant with all federal CCWIS requirements.

45 CFR §1355.52 (b) requires that an agency's CCWIS "maintain" a range of data necessary to the operations of a Title IV-E agency. The commentary accompanying the Final Rule explained that this "maintenance" requirement entailed storing data within the CCWIS itself. *See* Final Rule page 35454. Specifically, a CCWIS may obtain data from an external information system like the MCI so long as "a copy of that data is then stored and managed in the CCWIS." *See* Final Rule page 35451.

Accordingly, the Future System **must** include a bi-directional interface with the MCI. This interface may include the ability to upload information about Clients, as well as obtain information from the MCI about Clients. Notably, the Final Rule commentary clarifies that, while a CCWIS must maintain this information, a "CCWIS is not required to directly capture CCWIS data." *See* Final Rule page 35454.

Insofar as information is obtained from the MCI, the Future System may maintain a copy, in the CCWIS, of any data obtained from the MCI which is contemplated to be "CCWIS data" as defined by 45 CFR §1355.52 (b). Thus, the Future System may maintain a copy, in the CCWIS, of all "CCWIS data" regardless of whether elements of the "CCWIS data" are also maintained in the MCI.

All Client information, whether it is copied from the MCI, collected directly into the Future System by users, or pulled automatically from other sources as described herein, will be stored securely and meet all relevant federal and State confidentiality standards and requirements. *See also* Section 2.10 of the RFP.

1.6.1.2 Hierarchical Order of Client Information

In the event that information captured about a Client through the CCWIS conflicts with information about that same Client in the MCI, this conflict will be resolved in accordance with protocol established by DHS in consultation with the Future System's Contractor and the MCI team. This resolution may include the presumption of accuracy in one system over another (*e.g.* the MCI is presumed accurate) and/or a protocol to resolve a discrepancy.

In the event that information about a Client is changed in the MCI not via the CCWIS interface (*i.e.* a different DHS program has updated the master record of a Client), the State reserves the right for this change to flow into the Future System to be reflected in the copy of that information stored locally in the CCWIS.

1.6.2 Client Defined

A Client is a child who is the subject of a Referral, Investigation, Differential Response or Case. Clients are also the individual(s) who are subjects of the Referral, Investigation, Differential Response, and/or case, including but not limited to family members or other children. Clients include children who are classified as "foster care candidates" – those children who are being closely monitored in-home to ensure their safety as part of the Family First

prevention plan.

1.6.3 Client Record Administration

The Future System will support the administration of Client information, including the functionalities described below.

1.6.3.1 Adding a Client

The Future System may allow users to add a Client for whom there is no existing record. Adding a Client may automatically also add that Client in the MCI, subject to the Hierarchical Order requirements contemplated in Section 1.6.1.2. The Future System **shall** allow users to add Clients to any functional area with an "open" status.

1.6.3.2 Unknown Individuals

Given that information furnished to the State through a Referral is sometimes incomplete, the Future System may need to be able to create Clients whose identities and information is unknown. Unknown Clients may have a Client ID number associated with them. (*See* Section 1.6.4.1). The State may determine how unknown Clients would be reconciled with the MCI at a later date.

During the course of an Investigation the identities of unknown Clients may be determined. Presently, if the caseworker changes the "unknown" Client by giving him/her a name or other information, this information populates into the relevant Investigation(s) and/or Case(s) as a consequence of the associated Client ID number. Sometimes this practice causes unintended complications. For example, if an investigation is closed with an unknown offender and a case gets opened the caseworker might find out that there is another adult living in the home and go into the case and change the unknown person to that adult. Thus, unintentionally, the caseworker has just now made that adult the offender in the investigation. This happens because the unknown client has a system identification number and when you change the name on that client ID number, it changes it everywhere in the system.

1.6.3.3 Removing a Client

The Future System may support certain users' ability to remove Client records from the Future System. The impact of a Client removal on a reciprocal MCI record will be determined at a later time by the State.

1.6.3.4 Merging and Unmerging Clients

The Future System may allow users to merge two Clients into a single Client (to accommodate instances when users create duplicate clients). The Future System may allow users to "un-merge" Clients which have been merged.

1.6.3.5 Active and End-Dated Client Status

Clients in the Future System may be coded "Active" or "End-Dated". Clients may be automatically coded "Active" if there is a screened-in Referral, open Case, open Investigation, or open Differential Response.

A user may End-Date a Client in accordance with State business rules. The Future System may capture the date and reason a Client is End-Dated. Such reasons may be selected from a list of options, which list may contain options dependent on a Client's Case, Referral or Investigation status.

An End-Dated Client may automatically be set to Active status if they are associated with any new or re-opened Case, Investigation, Referral or Differential Response. The date of this change may also be captured in the System.

1.6.3.6 Client Information Retention

The Future System **must** support the State's obligation to keep electronic Client information indefinitely to assist the Department in assessing future risk and safety. *See also* Section 1.1.14 above regarding Records Retention.

1.6.4 Elements of Client Information

The Future System **shall** capture and store all data elements required by DCFS about Clients in the proper formats (i.e. dates stored as dates, text as text). Accordingly, a Client record may include information not otherwise captured or stored in the MCI and, thus, may only be maintained in the Future System.

Client data elements required by DCFS business practice include, but are not limited to medical (eligibility, insurance, physical health), educational, finances (trust accounts, SSA), day care, health and safety assessment, sex trafficking, demographics, educational training vouchers (ETV), relationships, and absent parent information.

Some Client Information is static over time (*e.g.* a Client's race, social security number, or birthdate) and some of the information is prone to change (*e.g.* a Client's address or financial information). None of the fields should pre-populate or default to a given answer unless expressly specified by the State (*e.g.* citizenship should not default to US citizen).

1.6.4.1 Client Identification Number

The assignment of Client Identification Numbers is an important part of managing DCFS operations. The Future System **shall** automatically assign Client identification numbers to all new Clients for which there was not previously a record in CHRIS or the Future System. The State is interested in learning how the Future System can accommodate numbering methodologies which convey information about the Client (*e.g.* all client numbers for Clients who were children at the time of their records creation start with 0).

1.6.4.2 Relationship Mapping

The Future System may include the ability to map familial relationships (including but not limited to blood relatives and fictive kin) between Clients. The mapping of a relationship between two Clients may result in the logical display of that relationship for both Clients (*i.e.* mapping A as the mother for female B may simultaneously note that B is the daughter to A).

1.6.4.3 File Upload

The Future System may allow State users to upload documents, files, and photographs as

part of a Client's information. The Future System may accept the upload of JPEGs, PDFs, and any other common file types identified by the State. These files may also be viewable within the Future System as part of a Client's file. *See also* Section 1.1.7 Document and File Upload.

The State would like the Future System to support the uploading of files from mobile devices, for example, photographs taken by mobile devices like cellular telephones and uploaded to the Future System directly from the phone.

Examples of the types of files to be uploaded into a Client's information may include photographs of Clients, birth certificates, or other forms of identification.

1.6.4.4 Audit Trail or "Freezing" Client Data

The Future System **shall** keep an audit log of all added, removed and edited Clients, including the time and user who made the addition/removal. This may include an audit trail of all information added, changed or removed from a Client record through the CCWIS and accessing the audit trail of information added, changed or removed in the MCI.

This audit trail may include the ability to present Client information which is "frozen" or displayed at a certain point in time for audit purposes.

1.6.5 Validation or Acquisition of Client Information Through Interfaces with External Sources

1.6.5.1 Validation of Social Security Number

The Future System **shall** support the validation of social security number ("SSN") accuracy with the Social Security Administration ("SSA"). Presently the validation of DCFS Client SSNs is done monthly in conjunction with other DHS programs, mainly for client SSN verification currently but there is a desire to check provider SSNs also, and the process is relatively manual. The State is interested in a more streamlined approach.

1.6.5.2 Vital Records

The State is interested in learning how the Future System may obtain Vital Records (automatically or through user-initiated action within the system) from the Vital Records Online Service operated by the Arkansas Department of Health.

1.6.5.3 Immunization Records

The State is interested in learning how the Future System may obtain Immunization records for inclusion in the information about a Client.

1.6.5.4 Drivers' Licenses

The State is interested in learning how the Future System may obtain Drivers' License information for drivers' licenses issued by the State of Arkansas as well as other States. Also, if such information can be obtained, whether that information could automatically populate into the Client's record. *See also* Section 1.11.1.

1.6.5.5 Education Records

For Clients that are children, educational information is necessary to determine what services need to be provided to the child regarding educational development. The child's education needs will be used to assist DCFS and families in getting services to assist the child in excelling in the educational system. The Future System **must** allow the user to enter and maintain educational status, requirements and school progress of children in State custody. This information may also be obtained through an interface with the Department of Education. *See also* Section 1.11.1.

1.6.6 Client Search

The Future System may allow users to search for and find salient information about Clients in accordance with the below parameters. *See also* Section 1.1.1 Search. Searches are critical to DCFS and this is an area where the State is looking for material improvements beyond what is in the current system.

1.6.6.1 Search Parameters

The Future System may allow users to search for Clients based on data elements in the Client's record. The search function may allow but not be limited to the following searches:

- Searches for Clients with exact match to one or more data elements; and
- Searches for Clients with a fuzzy match to one or more data elements (which feature can be turned on and off).
- Searches with partial matches
- Searches for a range of values where applicable (*e.g.* dates of birth between 4/1/13 and 3/30/14, return results only for Pulaski and Saline counties)

1.6.6.2 Presentation of Search Results

The Future System may return search results which meet the Client search parameters in a list from which the user may select a particular Client for further review. Selecting a Client from search returns may present the Client information and should also display all Investigations, Differential Responses, Referrals, and Cases, both current and historical. This includes, necessarily, the ability to tell if a Client is listed in more than one Case or Referral.

After a user has selected and reviewed an item returned in a search, the Future System may have the ability to hit "back" and return to the list of search returns rather than require the user to restart the search at the beginning.

The Future System may allow users to print the full results of a Client search (not just print the data shown on the screen).

1.7 Provider Management

DCFS is responsible for managing the information of approved foster and adoptive parents, contracted persons, businesses, and organizations, and volunteers who are in direct or indirect contact with Clients, collectively known as "Providers". This Functional Area covers:

- The types of Providers
- Provider data storage and utilization
- New Providers review and approval
- Required checks for Providers
- Provider training information
- Volunteer information

1.7.1 Provider Types

Providers are defined as organizations, businesses, or individuals that offer goods or services to DCFS clients. There are over 50 types of Providers; examples include Resource Parent Homes and foster care providers, residential treatment providers, health care professionals, child care providers, early intervention services, and placement providers. A full list of Provider Types can be found in the Bidders' Library.

Providers are split into placement and non-placement Providers. Example placement Providers include Resource Parent Homes and residential treatment facilities. Example non-placement Providers include medical professionals, such as those at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), therapists, and counselors (*i.e.*, those who administer services to Clients). Individual providers may be both types. It is important to have the ability to distinguish ICWA (*e.g.* Cherokee Nation) and ICPC (out of state) providers from other providers. Some Providers, such as large institutions like hospitals and treatment facilities, maintain contracts with DCFS.

The biggest cohort of placement Providers is Resource Parent Homes. There are approximately 1,500 Resource Parent Homes. DCFS needs to track pertinent information about these Resource Parent Homes, including where they were recruited from (*e.g.*, The Call, Christians 4 Kids).

Different Providers can be linked through a master provider and sub-provider relationship.

Providers can be responsible for multiple functions and/or service types. The Future System will allow distinct Provider records or other acceptable methods to track Providers who are responsible for multiple functions and/or service types.

Resource Parents may maintain a Resource Family Support System (RFSS). The RFSS may be comprised of up to three additional households that provide care for the foster children when the Resource Parent Home is unable to do so. DCFS does not reimburse the RFSS; Resource Parent Homes may do so at their discretion. The Future System will track each Provider's RFSS, including the time the RFSS spends with the Client, applicable demographic information, and credentials, and link them to the respective Provider record.

1.7.2 Provider Resource Directory

The Future System **shall** allow users to create new Provider records in the Provider Resource Directory, and store, sort, and maintain information on all (placement and non-placement) Providers, including for Providers who render multiple services. The Provider

Resource Directory contains sensitive identification information and each Provider has a distinct record that includes, but is not limited to (for example) background checks, where they are recruited from (e.g. The Call, Christians 4-Kids), home study information, payment information, direct deposit information, training hours; all demographic information (including Social Security Number), background check information, any policy waiver or alternative compliance information, home studies, past payment information, fingerprints, and direct deposit information, as applicable given the Provider type. In addition, the Directory stores licensing information, certification information, evaluation information, and re-evaluation information, including compliance and expiration dates for each, as applicable given the Provider type. Finally, the Provider Resource Directory may support the collection and maintenance of descriptive details on Providers, including but not limited to: whether the Provider's household has smokers, whether the Provider accepts developmentally disabled children and/or children with special needs, bedrooms (including the square footage of each) in the Provider's household and whether the Provider stays at home during the daytime.

Information about Providers remains in the Provider Resource Directory indefinitely. It is important to note the State plans to develop a Master Provider Index (*See* Section 1.7.7 and RFP Section 2.2.5) as an extension of the "Master Person Index", currently referred to as the Master Client Index.

Although this index may not be available when the Future System is implemented, the State reserves the right to include it in the scope if it becomes available.

In the case of Resource Parent Homes, the Provider Resource Directory contains demographic information on any other household members who reside with the Provider as well as information about the placement types that Provider is willing to accept (*e.g.*, children of certain ages, races.) *See* Section 1.7.4.1 and Section 1.7.4.2 below for a discussion of the Future System and its tracking of licensing, certification, and training for Providers.

For placement Providers, the Future System may track the placement capacity (total available, capacity utilized over time, and current availability) real-time and placement preferences for Providers who offer placements.

The Future System **shall** have an easily accessible (*i.e.*, on the Provider's record) button to facilitate the closing of a Provider record. Upon clicking the button, authorized users could be prompted to give a documented reason for why the Provider record is being closed.

1.7.3 Provider Search Capabilities

The Future System **shall** allow users to select whether they want to search for placement or non-placement (*i.e.*, those who administer services to Clients) Providers. If applicable, users may be able to search for or filter by a distinct group of Providers (*e.g.*, ICWA, Cherokee Nation, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)). The Future System may allow the user to select a Provider from the directory and view the detailed record of that Provider. Users may be able to search by Provider/Head of Household Name, Household Member(s), Client ID, Provider ID number, or Provider Phone Number, or other data elements determined by the State.

Users may be able to search on, but not limited to, any of the criteria (or combination of

the criteria) listed above. In addition, DCFS workers often utilize “wild card” searches, where the system identifies matches that are close to what the user searched, as well as sound-based tools (e.g., SoundX) to aid in searches. The Future System may support these capabilities.

The Future System may allow for these search results to be printed in a printer-friendly format that includes all of the information on the results screen. However, confidential and private information will not be included in this printout. When applicable, Provider searches may display all household members. After conducting a search, the user may be able to utilize a back button to return to the previous page, rather than restarting the search.

Users may be able to search based on parameters (e.g., Providers of a certain type in a county or geographic area, acceptance of sibling groups, or if DHS staff are on the Provider record) and be given a list of all Providers which meet those parameters.

1.7.3.1 Placement Provider Search and Communication

Presently, DCFS uses a .NET application which interfaces with the CHRIS system to search for placement Providers.⁹ This .NET application draws information from CHRIS regarding the placement Provider’s capacity, preferences, and location. The Future System **shall** either interface with the Foster and Adoption Family Portal .NET applications or implement its own State-approved solution.

When a placement is needed, DCFS staff contact Providers via telephone and/or text messaging. For text messaging, DCFS presently utilizes “RAVE”, a third-party system with text messaging notification that alerts Resource Parent Homes of critical and immediate needs to place children. The State is interested in how these communications could be managed through the Future System to increase efficiency and decrease the number of provider contacts needed when looking for a suitable placement. It is preferred that the solution is a tool that staff could access within the Future System. In addition to a text-messaging, DCFS desires to have the capability to email all Providers or Providers who fit certain criteria.

1.7.4 New Providers

The Future System will allow users to create new Providers in the Provider Resource Directory. Providers need to be opened and approved before they can be engaged for services, receive placements, or access certain necessary functionalities in the Foster and Adoption Family Portal.

1.7.4.1 Foster and Adoption Family Recruitment

A main task of DCFS is the recruitment, credentialing, training, and installation of foster/adoptive care providers. To this end, DCFS maintains the public facing website fosterarkansas.org which includes the DCFS Resource Parent/Adoptive Family Home Inquiry website. This website provides a template for prospective Resource Parent/adoptive providers to enter information to apply to be a Resource Parent/Adoptive Family Home. This template generates applications which are sent to a staging table and reviewed by DCFS staff members to determine if the applicants should be formally pursued as Resource Parent/adoptive providers.

⁹ For information on all .NET applications please see Section 1.11 and Exhibit 2 in the Bidders Library.

The platform for these determinations is a .NET application (Inquiry Admin Tool) referred to informally as “the Tank.” This entire process occurs outside of the CHRIS system. The Future System **shall** provide a solution for Providers to apply to be a Resource Parent or adoptive home, be recruited and credentialed, and allow DCFS to track the application process.

1.7.4.2 Approved Applications

Applicants approved in the Tank will next require the creation of an entry in the Provider Resource Directory in the Future System. The Future System will track these applicants’ completion of the required training, credentialing, screening and other steps to becoming a Resource Parent/Adoptive Family Home. A specialized team of resource workers manages this process. The Future System may allow DCFS staff to validate and change or add additional information to the information provided on an initial Resource Parent or adoptive parent application.

Applicants are also presently issued log-in information for the Foster and Adoption Family Portal, another .NET application of DCFS. This portal (which presently draws information from CHRIS) allows users to track their status in completing these required approval steps. Once all these steps are completed, this same portal allows users to track other information such as placements, payment, continuing education fulfillment, licensure, and certification requirements. The State is interested in how the Future System might replace the functionalities of the Foster and Adoption Family Portal.

1.7.4.3 Provider Re-evaluations

The Future System **shall** track when Providers require re-evaluation, provide reminders of re-evaluation needs to users, and track Providers who become ineligible due to re-evaluation failures (*see* Section 1.7.5).

When Providers render two or more service types, they may have different re-evaluation dates. For example, Resource Family Homes, pre-adoptive homes, and adoptive homes need to have a certain number of training hours and home approvals annually. Foster services and adoptive services are two different service types with potentially different re-evaluation dates. DCFS has a business need to have a streamlined process to manage this scenario.

Another example is regarding background checks – rather than doing background checks for a provider each time their re-evaluation occurs for a specific service type; one background check should suffice for all service types for that provider.

1.7.5 Provider Ineligibility and Unavailability

The Future System **shall** ensure that Providers are marked as ineligible when the Provider does not meet all required conditions or the status of a condition changes (e.g., their licensing expires) and disallows that Provider from receiving a placement if that Provider is a placement Provider. An ineligible status effects the payment source to a Provider whereas marking a Provider unavailable does not have any ramifications other than staff not being able to place new children in that home during the unavailable time period.

The Future System may automatically mark a Provider as ineligible based on the

expiration of any required training, licensure or inactivity for over two years. Authorized users can mark a provider as unavailable for things such as receiving hotline reports against a Provider or member of a Provider's household or the family choosing to take a break for a certain period of time. To avoid this preventable occurrence, the Future System may provide notice to the Providers and to the applicable DCFS staff for providers who are at risk of this type of automatic disqualification. It is possible for providers to go into ineligible status while the provider is unavailable. The Future System may allow certain State users to override any automatic ineligibility determination. In addition, the Future System may allow authorized users to manually mark a Provider as unavailable in certain circumstances.

1.7.5.1 Unavailability and Improper Provider Conduct

Abuse-Neglect allegations may be linked to Providers and substantiated or unsubstantiated through the referral and investigation due process. Allegations against a Provider also cause a Provider to be deemed unavailable. The Future System **shall** allow users to record allegations against Providers and the results of any investigations within that Provider's record. While these allegations may result in a Referral and Investigation as those terms are contemplated herein, the Referral and Investigation functions will be separate from the ability to log accusations and investigation results in a Provider's record.

1.7.5.2 Licensure

DCFS tracks eligibility and approval of their Resource Parent homes. Licensing and standard compliance of Resource Parent Homes is tracked by the Placement Residential Licensing Unit (PRLU) within the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE). The Future System **shall** interface with DCCECE's Placement and Residential Licensing System (PRLS) system in order to obtain pertinent licensure information.

Private licensing agencies and Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) homes keep up their own licensing status. DCFS staff presently receives information from these private licensing agencies and TFC homes in order to track the licensing status of Providers.

Other specialized Resource Parent Homes (*e.g.*, Developmental Disability or "DD" homes) have unique licensure processes. DD placements are specifically exempt from Minimum Child Welfare Licensing Standards because some of the DD placements are not true Resource Parent Homes. Some of the youth were placed in the community with 24-7 supportive living staff; therefore, DCCECE did not view them as Resource Parent Homes. DD has its own licensure, and this is where DD Resource Parent Homes and DD supportive living placements are monitored. Although DD Resource Parent Homes are not licensed by DCCECE, the providers are still required to follow the Resource Parent Home standards as it relates to background checks and training.

The Future System may be able to track all applicable licensing statuses for all Providers. Approval data is currently entered into CHRIS manually, but the State is interested in the extent to which this information may be automatically incorporated into the Future System.

DCFS would like the licensing agencies to input license information directly into the system and would like to know how the Respondent's system handles this activity.

1.7.5.3 Training

Providers are presently trained by a contracted entity, MidSouth, along with other training venues. Currently, CHRIS receives some data from MidSouth and tracks that data to ensure Providers maintain their required training to remain eligible (and not marked ineligible).¹⁰ Training that is not conducted by MidSouth is not captured in CHRIS. DCFS would like to capture all training information in a streamlined process (incorporated into overall training file and in each Provider's file). Training is presently validated through a "quick-check"¹¹ process when a home is opened or reevaluated.

The Future System may electronically receive information regarding provider training and automatically incorporate it into the Providers' records.

DCFS would like to understand how the Respondents' systems track training records.

1.7.5.4 Home Studies

Providers are subject to home studies to ensure their residence is appropriate for placements and the Providers are physically and psychologically able to provide services. DCFS Staff, contracted entities, or volunteers conduct multiple rounds of interviews with household members and do site visits in accordance with the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE). The Future System may maintain the results of each home study and link them to the respective Provider record.

1.7.5.5 Alternative Compliance and Policy Waivers

DCFS maintains an Alternative Compliance policy that allows Providers to furnish valid justification for deviating from licensing regulations, so long as that justification demonstrates substantial compliance with the intent of the regulation. In addition, Providers can request to deviate from DCFS policy by submitting a Policy Waiver.

FSWs determine if Alternative Compliance or a Policy Waiver should be requested. In addition to the form, three personal references, a home study, and a copy of the Central Registry Check, criminal background check and/or FBI check must be attached. Supervisors and Area Directors then determine whether the requested Alternative Compliance or a Policy Waiver is appropriate for approval. From there, the approval process goes through the Assistant Director of Community Services and the DCFS Director. In the case of Alternative Compliance, the approval process also includes a board hearing and additional approval from the PRLU Board.

The Future System **shall** track Providers' requested and approved Alternative Compliance or Policy Waivers, as outlined in the policy manual. The Future System may allow Alternative Compliance and Policy Waiver information to be scanned into the system. For additional information, both Alternative Compliance and Policy Waivers are defined in the DCFS policy manual (available in the Bidders' Library), Appendix 8.

¹⁰ Data about Provider training is available to other DCFS staff members to remain abreast of Provider eligibility risks.

¹¹ Under the current system, a "quick-check" process is when CHRIS automatically validates that any required fields are populated prior to the record (in this case a provider) being opened or closed. If elements are missing, the system informs the user of the missing elements.

1.7.6 Volunteers

DCFS maintains volunteers who handle a variety of responsibilities (chiefly, transportation) based on their interests, skill-level, and training. Volunteers are sorted into two categories - direct and indirect volunteers. Direct volunteers are in contact with children and thus subject to similar required checks as other Providers. Indirect volunteers help DCFS's broader child welfare mission, but do not come into direct contact with children. Currently, volunteers can only be entered into the system by the designated volunteer manager. Volunteers are handled separately from Providers by DCFS.

The Future System **shall** allow all Volunteer information to be entered, tracked, and closed, including but not limited to background checks, training hours, references, emergency contacts, demographics, confidentiality statements, auto insurance, and whether they are available, temporarily available or unavailable.

1.7.7 Master Provider Index

The State is developing a Master Provider Index (MPI) for DHS (*See also* RFP Section 2.2.5) The precise universe of which Providers will be tracked is still being determined but it is likely that at least some of the Providers used by DCFS will be among them. Thus, the Future System will interface with the MPI.

The protocols for this interface and the duty to "maintain" Provider information which is considered CCWIS Information will comply with the Final Rule. (*See* Section 1.6.1.1 for a discussion of this Final Rule requirement.)

1.8 Title IV-E Eligibility

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 671-679b) determines the federal funding stream for foster care costs. The State is reimbursed a portion of the maintenance and administrative costs for foster children who meet the eligibility requirements, for children receiving a federally subsidized guardianship assistance payment, and for adopted children receiving a federal adoption subsidy. Additionally, as of October 1, 2019 the State is also reimbursed a portion of the administrative and programmatic costs for services approved under the Family First Prevention Services Act provided to children, who have been designated as a candidate for foster care, their caregivers, and foster children who are pregnant or parenting.

The federal portion or federal financial participation ("FFP") is based on the State's Medicaid matching rate. The State's accurate and appropriate claim for reimbursement and Title IV-E eligibility determination **must** be documented in the Future System and is subject to federal monitoring. Inaccurate or incomplete Title IV-E eligibility information may subject the State to corrective action, substantial financial penalties and a loss of federal funding.

This Title IV-E functional area covers:

- IV-E Eligibility Determination
- Medicaid Eligibility Determination
- Eligibility Unit Resource Management and Quality Assurance

1.8.1 IV-E Eligibility Determination

The Title IV-E unit of DCFS (the “Eligibility Unit”) determines initial and ongoing eligibility for Title IV-E funds for foster children as well as subsidized guardianship cases. Upon the entry into the foster care system (within one (1) working day of the date the child enters DHS custody), the Future System **must** automatically trigger an initial application for title IV-E Payments/Medicaid to the Eligibility Unit.¹² Within seven (7) working days from the date the child entered the out-of-home placement, the Completed IV-E application (CMA) must be sent to the Eligibility Unit for further determination.

The eligibility factors for initial Title IV-E application include (but are not limited to):

- Age
- Removal from Specified Relative
- Citizenship
- Deprivation
- Residency
- Court Ordered Removal with “contrary to welfare” and “reasonable efforts to prevent removal” language
- Determination of the appropriate Eligibility Month based on the petition file date stamp
- Household Compositions
- Child Support Referral
- Gross and Net Income Tests
- Resources test

Once eligibility has been established, the Title IV-E Eligibility Unit is also responsible for determining continued eligibility in appropriate cases. Redeterminations must be done annually for foster care, ICPC and ICAMA cases. The factors to make this determination include (but are not limited to):

- Care and Placement Responsibility
- Reasonable Efforts to achieve the specified goal(s) of the case as evidenced in Court Orders
- Any factor that would result in an interruption of a IV-E claim

Presently, the Eligibility Unit gathers some of this information from Arkansas’s current eligibility systems, the Arkansas Network System for Welfare Eligibility and Reporting (ANSWER) and Cúram. Presently much of the information viewed in these systems is manually captured and input into CHRIS. However, both of these systems are slated for replacement by a single, DHS-wide eligibility platform called the Arkansas Integrated Eligibility System (ARIES). *See RFP Section 2.2.3.*

The Future System shall provide a platform for users to complete Title IV-E eligibility determinations. As such, the information supporting Title IV-E eligibility determinations will be

¹² See DCFS Policy PROCEDURE III-A2: Out-of-Home Placement Services Case Opening - H. – L. for further clarification, available in the Bidders’ Library.

stored electronically in the Future System and preserved for review and audit purposes. The Future System may have the ability to receive and store scanned and electronic documents as part of an eligibility determination file. The Future System may ensure that information concerning Title IV-E eligibility determinations is capable of being summarized, printed and produced.

The State is interested in how information in other systems like ARIES can be automatically incorporated into the Future System and maintained there as required by the Final Rule. (*See also* Section 1.6.1 for a discussion of this “maintenance” requirement as applied to the Master Client Index).

All Title IV-E eligibility factors as well as initial and ongoing determinations will be fully documented in the Future System. The Future System’s Title IV-E eligibility determination platform **shall** utilize business rules established by the State (in accordance with Federal requirements) to support eligibility determinations. The Future System may allow the modification of Title IV-E eligibility decisions including a mechanism for identifying the reason for the change as well as the user, the date, and the time the decision is changed, and an ability to change retroactively as appropriate. The Future System may include a Title IV-E eligibility redetermination due date, provide reminders to the assigned Eligibility Unit user of the pending redetermination required, and provide an automated tracking mechanism for both the user and management staff regarding the status of pending determinations and redeterminations.

1.8.1.1 Court Orders and the Finding of “Reasonable Efforts”

A court order is required within 72 hours for children placed in foster care to keep them in care. If there isn’t a court order, those children are deemed non-IV-E eligible. There is specific language¹³ in the orders that must be included in order to qualify for federal funding. The Eligibility Unit must review and verify the language in the court order for the required language. The State is interested in how the Future System might more effectively present these court orders to the Eligibility Unit for review as well as store the order for audit purposes. (*See also* Section 1.10 regarding Courts).

1.8.2 Medicaid Eligibility Determination

The Eligibility Unit determines initial Medicaid eligibility for adopted children receiving a subsidy and determines both initial and ongoing Medicaid eligibility for the following:

- children placed in foster care;
- children receiving a Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP) payment from Arkansas or other states;
- children in the ICAMA (Interstate Compact for Adoption Medical Assistance) Program; and
- foster children placed in Arkansas from other states via the ICPC (Interstate Compact for Placement of Children) Program.

¹³ “Reasonable efforts to prevent removal” within 60 days of the date the child entered foster care that the continued placement in the removal home is “contrary to the welfare of the child” in the initial court order, and “reasonable efforts to achieve the goal of the case” for continued eligibility.

Medicaid eligibility should be determined for children placed in foster care within 24 hours of the removal. Thus, upon the entry of any child into foster care, the Future System will automatically trigger an initial application to make a Medicaid determination to be completed by the Eligibility Unit.

Presently, the Eligibility Unit manually enters information from CHRIS into the eligibility systems (ANSWER and Cúram) to perform Medicaid eligibility determinations. After the State transitions to ARIES, the State is interested in how the Future System could electronically transfer necessary data into ARIES automatically for Medicaid determination and changes that affect Medicaid such as but not limited to entering or exiting a detention facility, entering or exiting the state, etc.

All Medicaid eligibility factors and determinations will also be documented in the Future System and stored for later review or audit. The Future System may enable the summary, printing and production of information concerning Medicaid eligibility. If there are changes in a Client's Medicaid Eligibility in ARIES (the Medicaid eligibility system of record), the Future System **shall** reflect this change and adjust any Medicaid eligibility dependent functions as necessary. The eligibility information for Medicaid determinations should be available to users of the Future System so that the Medicaid results do not need to be manually entered into the Future System. Security must be sufficient so that only appropriate staff are able to create, update, and review Medicaid eligibility determinations and results.

1.8.3 Eligibility Unit Resource Management and Quality Assurance

The work of the Eligibility Unit is presently assigned, managed and quality controlled entirely offline (*i.e.* manually tracked on spreadsheets, printed paper applications reviewed for quality), though CHRIS does reflect the assigned user once it is manually entered. The Eligibility Unit team presently specializes based on the type of Client or Case as well as geography.

The State is interested in tracking and assigning the work of the Eligibility Unit within the Future System. This would include assigning users to different tasks (manually or automatically based on business rules established by the State), tracking the aging of these tasks and any outstanding items, tracking the timeliness of task completion, and the provision of reminders to assigned users. *See also* Section 1.1.5.

The State is also interested in how the Future System could support the quality assurance review of Eligibility Unit work prior to its finalization.

1.9 Staff Management

DCFS/CACD manages information about its full-time and temporary employees (collectively known as "Staff")¹⁴ and the work assigned to those Staff.¹⁵ The Staff Management functional area covers:

¹⁴ Volunteers are tracked in the Providers functional area, please see Section 1.7.6.

¹⁵ Information like a Staff member's payroll, vacation, benefits, driver's license information, and other information typically the domain of Human Resources will not be maintained in the Future System.

- The Staff Directory
- Security Level Management
- Unit Group Management
- Workload Management
- On-Call Management

1.9.1 Staff Directory

DCFS/CACD maintains a Staff Directory for which each Staff member will have an entry. At a minimum, the entry for each Staff member will include that Staff member's:

- Name
- Phone Number (including Work Cell Phone Number, Work Office Phone Number, and Alternate Phone Number)
- Work Address (*i.e.* Office)
- Position (including a history of any past positions at DCFS)
- Supervisor and direct reports, as appropriate
- Summary of the work assigned to that Staff member (*See* also Section 1.9.3 below regarding Unit Group Management and Section 1.9.4 below regarding Workload Management)
- Credentials (a login and identification number) issued by the Department of Human Services' Office of Systems & Technology ("OST")
- Security Level (*See* Section 1.9.2 below)
- Ability to end-date a current Staff member or add a new Staff member
- History of position and county/area

The current system includes checkboxes that indicate other important interactions with the system, examples include but are not limited to DHS/DR staff indicator, Board Payment Review, area manager, view screen outs. The Future System **shall** include a Staff Directory which tracks the information about each Staff member per DCFS requirements.

Given the information in the Staff directory, the State plans that only individuals who are either a system administrator or Supervisor or above will have access to the Staff Directory. However, all users need the ability to view their own Staff Directory profile. *See* Section 1.9.2 regarding Security Level Management.

1.9.1.1 Staff Directory Search

DCFS/CACD Staff often search the Staff Directory. The search functionality in the Future System may include the ability to search by the criteria captured in the Staff Directory, including a combination of criteria. Search returns will allow a user to click on a return to pull up that Staff member's Staff Directory profile. The State desires a "back button" which enables users to go back to the search returns from a reviewed Staff Directory Profile rather than requiring a new search.

In addition, DCFS/CACD workers often utilize "wild card" searches, where the system identifies matches that are close to what the user searched, as well as sound-based tools (e.g.,

SoundX) to aid in searches. The Future System may support these capabilities.

The Future System may allow users to print the full results of a Staff search (not just print the data shown on the screen) in accordance with State specifications.

1.9.1.2 New Staff Member Data Entry

DCFS/CACD often adds and removes Staff member profiles as employees enter and exit the department. The Future System may allow authorized users to create Staff member profiles in the Staff Directory. The Future System **shall** allow the State to designate required fields in a Staff member's Directory Profile in order for that profile to be completed.

1.9.1.3 Tracking of Staff Training or Certifications

Staff are often required to maintain certain training or certifications necessary for the responsibilities of their job. Possible examples include, but are not limited to, certification to perform a certain Assessment or certification in first aid. Some of these training or certification requirements are required in order for Staff to perform certain functions.

DCFS tracks the fulfillment of training and certification of Staff members by obtaining information from a variety of entities. The Future System may have to interface with the DCFS training contractor's system in order to obtain some of this information. However, DCFS's training contractor does not house all of the information on Staff training.

To the extent the training or certification has an expiration date, the Future System may track this expiration date and provide reminders to the Staff member and their Supervisor of the pending expiration date. For particular functions accessible through the Future System that require particular training or certification (*e.g.* an Assessment), if a Staff member fails to perform this training or obtain this certification, or their certification or training expires, then the Future System may block access to this function until the training or certification requirement is satisfied. However, it is important to note that with the new assessment, DCFS may not need certifications or expiration dates on certifications. The Future System may allow certain users (those with appropriate access authority) to manually override this blocking feature. The Future System may allow certain authorized users to manually update training fields.

1.9.2 Security Level Management

DCFS maintains role-based security access. With this access, DCFS, CACD, UAMS staff, contracted employees and OCC Staff members are granted or restricted access to different information and functions based on their designated security level. Access to Staff information, Client information, Case information, Referral information, Investigation information, Differential Response information, Adoption information, Eligibility information, or Provider information requires the user to have the appropriate security level access. The State adheres to an access philosophy which grants the least privileged access to each role (*i.e.* "role-based, least privileged access.")

DCFS needs to identify different access profiles for different roles or profiles. The ability to designate this security access mapping will be, itself, something that requires a particular role or profile. The Future System's security level management system **shall** allow the State to create

user-specific access profiles in addition to role based profiles.

DCFS would be interested in a periodic printed report for quality reviews of security access.

1.9.2.1 Restricted Items

In the event that a Referral is made alleging maltreatment by ASP and DCFS Staff, or an Investigation, case or Differential Response involves an ASP and/or DCFS Staff member, such Referral/Investigation/Case/Differential Response will need to have further access restrictions. These restrictions may include restricting who may create, access, alter or close the restricted item. As it may not be immediately clear upon receiving a Referral or during the pendency of an Investigation, case or Differential Response, this restriction on an item placeable at any time.

1.9.3 Unit Group Management

DCFS/CACD's workload structure allows for certain users to assign work ("Supervisors") to other users ("Assignees.") This includes but is not limited to the assignment of Cases, Investigations and Differential Responses to Family Service Workers, Provider screening to Resource Workers, Eligibility work to team members of the Eligibility Unit, Investigation assignments for CACD staff, and Adoption Cases to the Adoption Unit.

DCFS/CACD has inboxes by county, and also organizes their Staff members into unit groups to delineate workflows. Unit groups (and county/area) determine the pathway of work assignments from Supervisors to Assignees.

Presently, Supervisors are notified when they have work to assign via an inbox specific to their unit group. This work is typically routed to Supervisors' inboxes based on their geographic location or other business rules defined by the State. DCFS needs the Future System to allow certain users to change the work designated to a Supervisor for assignment.

Presently, there is no notice when a new case arrives in the county inbox, however, there is a system report that details all cases that have been in a county or unit group inbox for over five days. The Future System may be able to send a notification when a new case arrives in the unit group queue/inbox to expedite this process.

Supervisors are responsible for assigning both a Primary and a Secondary staff member to a case (and to Investigations, DR, and provider).

Supervisors utilize different methodologies to assign cases. Some assign cases in a set order, while others take into account the complexity of an Assignees' current workload. DCFS has a business need to assign different pieces of work within a case to different Assignees. DCFS currently uses a graduated caseload plan for new staff assignments. The graduated caseload plan ties new Family Service Workers' workload to their progress in Staff training. The State would prefer that the Future System integrates logic to help Supervisors know that a worker is under a graduated caseload plan.

DCFS would prefer to keep a unit group structure to delineate workflows and have the Future System record data on organizational structures and reporting relationships but is open to

other solutions if they optimize workflows and assignments.

1.9.4 Workload Management

DCFS currently uses two kinds of inboxes for work that needs to be assigned, a county inbox and a unit inbox for the supervisor. Supervisors search and view the amount of work assigned to their Assignees. DCFS desires the capability to view a summary of Assignees' workload (both assignments that are recently completed and those that are ongoing) in a printer-friendly format; it is preferred that multiple summaries may be viewable simultaneously so that Supervisors can compare the work of Assignees when making assignment decisions.

In certain instances, DCFS may allow the temporary designation of Supervisor's assignment abilities and access to another user (*e.g.* when a Supervisor goes on vacation, that user's assignment responsibilities can be granted to another user). The State is interested in how the Future System might summarize or otherwise capture the assignments made during this temporary period for the original Supervisor's duties (*i.e.* when a Supervisor returns from vacation, a summary of the work that was performed pursuant to the temporary designation).

If an Assignee leaves State service, their workload has to be reassigned (either in bulk or by individual case) before they can be end-dated in the system. If a Supervisor leaves State service, their workload has to be reassigned before they can be end-dated in the system. In both instances, active security levels are also end-dated. DCFS is open to new solutions for end-dating Staff members.

DCFS needs the ability to ensure that when Staff members' role or information is changed, it is reflected in all new work assignments. However, all of their previous work assignments will reflect their old information. For example, if a person is promoted to Supervisor, that role shouldn't be applied retrospectively to work assignments when the Staff member did not work as a Supervisor.

The State also utilizes extra help workers and is interested in how the Future System might distinguish those workers from full time staff (currently there is a checkbox on the Staff Origination screen and the information is displayed at the top of the users workload).

1.9.5 On-Call Management

Since Family Service Workers and CACD investigators are responsible for responding to cases and other inquires outside of regular business hours, DCFS Family Service Workers and CACD investigators are periodically designated as "on-call" during hours outside of the regular business hours to ensure continuous coverage. The Future System **shall** maintain a schedule of on-call Family Service Workers for DCFS and CACD by area.

DCFS has a business need to maintain a schedule of on-call Workers for both DCFS and CACD by county/area. This schedule will have flexible date/time fields individually for each county/area. In addition, the schedule will reflect the date and day of the week. Information included in the schedule must meet DCFS' business needs and include both mandatory and optional fields.

On occasion, DCFS needs multiple Workers to be on call for one office or county, and for

one Worker to be on call for multiple counties/areas. The Future System may allow for multiple Workers to be on call for the same county/area and for one Worker to be on call for multiple counties/areas. The Future System may be able to document the role of the Staff member who is on call, for example, “The investigator for this county ...” “ The resource worker for these four counties is...”. DCFS envisions this capability incorporated into a picklist/drop down box selection, however the State is open to other formats.

The on-call schedules should not be editable after a date has passed and the past records of the on-call system will be stored and viewable indefinitely.

To facilitate sharing of on-call schedules with law enforcement and other external parties, the Future System may allow for the export of on-call schedules into a file format such as Excel, PDF, Word or other file format approved by the State.

Specific Supervisors are designated as responsible for creating the on-call schedule for a given area. Supervisors create on-call schedules anywhere from a week to a year in advance. The Future System may allow users to create the on-call schedule up to a year in advance. The Future System may provide notice to the user if they have not created the on-call schedule within a specified period of time.

If a Staff member leaves State service and is end-dated in the Staff Directory, the on-call shifts assigned to that Staff member will be returned to an unassigned status for reassignment. The Future System may provide a notice of this change to the party responsible for creating that on-call schedule.

1.10 Courts¹⁶

DCFS’s duties and mission often requires it to appear before, or furnish information to, the State’s judiciary. The Future System will support DCFS’s interaction with its counsel and the State judiciary. Specifically, this section reviews:

- 1.10.1 Tracking of Court Information
- 1.10.2 The Office of Chief Counsel
- 1.10.3 Interface with the Administrative Office of Courts
- 1.10.4 The Provision of Information to Courts (Court Reports)
- 1.10.5 Affidavits
- 1.10.6 Administrative Review/Appeals Hearings

1.10.1 Tracking of Court Information

Many types of Cases require periodic hearings, judicial findings memorialized in orders, or other periodic or as-needed interactions with the court system. This information is presently tracked in CHRIS through a combination of a Courts screen, Case narratives (which sometimes include copy/pasted court orders), and a physical Case file. The Future System **shall** track court

¹⁶ Please note: within this section, the word “case” when not capitalized, refers to a judicial proceeding. When capitalized, Case refers to a child welfare Case discussed in Section 1.5.

information including hearing dates, docket number, judge, and other information determined by the State. The Future System **shall** store, and provide for viewing, copies of court filings, including Court Orders. This functionality includes generation of alerts for key events and the ability to run reports. Much of this information will be obtained through interfaces with the Office of Chief Counsel and the Administrative Office of Courts, as described herein.

1.10.1.1 Insight in and Management of Court Cases

There is an expected timeline associated with each type of case with which DCFS is associated. This includes the approximate timeline for when DCFS will need to furnish information to the court, attend certain hearings, and other key or procedural events. The specifics of cases, the periodicity of hearings, a court's availability to hear child welfare cases, and other factors may contribute to a case exceeding these timeliness expectations.

Presently, timeliness is manually tracked for a given court case, if tracked at all. Accordingly, DCFS has only limited insight into its performance managing the timeliness of these cases as well as the operations of judges or courts. DCFS desires that the Future System actively track the timeliness, operations, and outcomes of all court cases based on docket information and provide alerts to users regarding pending case-related requirements or hearings. DCFS desires that the Future System also be able to track the aggregate performance of units or DCFS staff related to court case timelines, as well as the aggregate performance or timeliness of specific courts or judges.

1.10.2 The Office of Chief Counsel

The Office of Chief Counsel (OCC), among other things, represents DCFS as its attorney in the myriad of judicial and administrative matters related to the Division's responsibilities where DCFS requires attorney representation. OCC is presently implementing the litigation management tool Rocket Matter.¹⁷ *See also* RFP Section 2.28. In Rocket Matter, OCC will track docket information, including but not limited to hearing calendars, copies of court filings and orders, *etc.* OCC anticipates the full deployment of Rocket Matter in 2021.

The Future System **shall** interface with Rocket Matter to obtain docket information and copies of court filings and orders.

Currently, DCFS and the courts track cases using different name choices, which causes difficulty for DCFS. DCFS is interested in using the Master Client Index as a name link between Rocket Matter and the Future System to standardize tracking of court cases.

1.10.2.1 OCC Future System Access

As DCFS's counsel, OCC requires access to information about Cases and Clients. Presently, staff at OCC can access CHRIS through a view-only role. The Future System will support a configured role for OCC attorneys.

1.10.3 Interface with the Administrative Office of Courts

¹⁷ Please find a copy of the State's contract to obtain Rocket Matter in the Bidders' Library.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is an agency within the State’s judicial branch which supports the State court system, including the district courts, the venue for a substantial portion of DCFS’s matters. The majority of district courts have adopted the State’s electronic file platform,¹⁸ eFile, and Case Management System Contexte.¹⁹ However, given the degree of local control and administration of the district courts, adoption has not been uniform, and the modernization of the courts system is an ongoing effort.

Historically, DCFS has interfaced with the courts through DNET, a .NET application connected to CHRIS. DNET interfaces with Contexte on a nightly basis, and additionally gets information via data entry and from CHRIS. The data exchange between DNET and Contexte is bidirectional, with both systems obtaining and sending information from/to the other. The information presently obtained through DNET presents quality, completeness, and timeliness challenges to DCFS.

The Future System **shall** interface with the systems maintained by the AOC in accordance with the CCWIS Final Rule.

1.10.4 Provision of Information to Courts

1.10.4.1 Court Reports

Arkansas Code Annotated § 9-27-361 (the “Court Report Statute”) requires DHS to create and distribute reports which contain information germane to a number of types of hearings (“Court Reports”). The Court Report Statute specifies the hearings that require Court Reports, the information required in the Court Reports, the parties to whom copies of the Court Reports must be furnished, and the timing of the Court Reports’ distribution.²⁰ Presently, these Court Reports are generated in CHRIS, printed and signed, and physical copies are delivered to the relevant court for distribution to the required parties or, in some instances, distributed by OCC to the relevant parties.

The Future System will support DCFS in its obligation to generate and distribute these Court Reports. Specifically, the Future System **shall** support the automatic generation of Court Reports (as defined by ACA § 9-27-361) through the development of forms for each type of Court Report. Along with court reports, the Future System **shall** facilitate the completion of court exhibits packets (See Section 1.1.13 and 1.5.1).

In addition to providing the platform to efficiently create the Court Reports, the State desires the Future System to provide prompts or reminders to ensure the Court Report’s timely creation. Such reminders or prompts would be informed by hearing dates or removal date maintained in the Future System.

The State also desires the Future System to support the distribution of the Court Reports, electronically where possible. This may include the provision of the court reports to Rocket Matter for OCC’s subsequent distribution, a Court Report distribution functionality within the Future System, the provision of the court reports to the AOC through an interface with its

¹⁸ For more information about this platform, please see <http://efile.aoc.arkansas.gov>

¹⁹ For more information on Context please see <https://www.arcourts.gov/administration/acap/contexte>

²⁰ See also Procedure 6G1 and Policy 6G in the DCFS Master Policy.

systems, or support for the printing and mailing/delivery of physical court reports. The State is interested in how the Future System may facilitate distribution in accordance with the requirements of the Court Report Statute.

1.10.4.2 Other Information Provided to Courts

After legal review through the DHS privacy office, DCFS furnishes additional information to a court other than the provision of Court Reports pursuant to the Court Report Statute. These include, but are not limited to, the provision of progress reports or letters for Family in Need of Assistance (FINS) cases, production of information pursuant to third party subpoenas, or other court requests. The preparation of this information occurs with sufficient uniformity and frequency that DCFS desires the Future System to have forms available to support these processes. Such forms may auto-populate certain fields from within the Future System and offer editable fields specific to the type of form required. Some of these forms will be a letter, some will be a report, and others' format will be determined.

1.10.5 Affidavits

There are several instances in which a CACD or DCFS team member must prepare a notarized Affidavit to provide to an OCC attorney for filing with a court. For example, an FSW or Investigator must provide an Affidavit to OCC, who must file with the court of jurisdiction within three business days of the removal of a child. The Future System may have business rules which prompt users when they need to prepare an Affidavit. The Future System may maintain a number of forms to develop Affidavits that will auto-populate salient information from fields within the system and provide editable fields specific to the requirement of the Affidavit. As an Affidavit must be notarized, the Future System may support the printing of all Affidavit forms upon their completion. The Future System may also maintain an image of the Affidavit filed with the court (the copy will be obtained from either OCC or AOC through the relevant interface).

1.10.6 Court Information on the Foster Adoption Family Portal

Foster/Pre-Adoptive/Adoptive parents are considered as team members working with other child welfare professionals for the family. As such, foster/adoptive parents are entitled to receive certain information regarding children who are placed in their home (See DCFS POLICY VII-H: PROVIDING INFORMATION TO FOSTER PARENTS in Exhibit 12 Master DCFS Policy Manual). The State desires some of this information to be readily available on the Foster/Adoptive Parent portal. Foster/Relative/Fictive Kin/Pre-Adoptive/Adoptive parents are entitled to receive notification of court hearing dates, the right to be heard in those proceedings, and other case related documents. The Future System may support the sharing of certain records and information on the portal.

1.10.7 Administrative Review/Appeals Hearings

Some decisions of DCFS are appealable to administrative law judges within the State's Office of Appeals and Hearings. This process provides an opportunity for parties to contest certain DCFS decisions. Actions which may be appealed include, but limited to the following:

- True child maltreatment determinations;

- Denials of adoption subsidies; or,
- Denials or modifications of guardianship subsidies
- Decisions of the Name Removal Board

True child maltreatment determinations involve a separate process involving the Child Maltreatment Registry. *See* Section 1.3.5.

The adjudication by the Appeals and Hearings Administrative Judge is final unless the decision is subsequently appealed to a circuit court and overturned.

Accordingly, DCFS must retain complete case documentation in the event of appeal. Information must be complete and contain necessary information to support the DCFS initial decision. Additionally, there must be functionality to override and edit previously entered information and findings in the system in the event of that a previous determination is changed by the Administrative Law Judge.

The Future System may support the assembly and preparation of required documentation for this process and memorialize the Appeal’s occurrence and outcome. The Future System **shall** support memorializing the outcome of hearings conducted by the Office of Appeals and Hearings. This may include, but is not limited to: changing Investigations determinations, subsidy amounts, or other changes which may require retroactive effort.

1.11 Interfaces, Data Exchanges, and Integration with Evident Change Portal

The Future System **shall** support efficient, economical, and effective bi-directional data exchanges to exchange relevant data with systems designated as Critical in Federal CCWIS regulations. For the purposes of this RFP, an Interface is defined as a process where data from one system or application is extracted and loaded into another system through a batch process, real time transfer, or other data exchange. The Future System’s Interfaces **shall** meet State and federal security standards, including those related to confidentiality and privacy.

Beyond interfacing with external systems, the Future System **shall** integrate certain tools developed for the State. The State, in conjunction with Evident Change (formerly known as NCCD) has undertaken to develop the suite of Structured Decision Making® (SDM) tools within Evident Change’s Portal (also known as the Data Collection System or DCS). The State also plans to work with Evident Change to develop the Team Decision Making tool within the DCS portal as well. As discussed herein, the Future System **shall** integrate these tools (SDM and TDM) in accordance with the requirements below such that they can be seamlessly accessed by Future System users and appear to be an integrated component of the Future System. A copy of the State’s contract with Evident Change can be found in the Bidders’ Library.

1.11.1 Anticipated Data Exchanges and Data Exchange Partners at Implementation

DCFS, based on current system functionalities, can anticipate a number of required Data Exchanges and Data Exchange partners for the Future System at implementation. The legacy system currently exchanges data with many of the partner systems and applications listed below.

It is expected that the Future System will effectively exchange data with these systems and applications, utilizing a real-time interface via the State’s enterprise service bus for all partners wherever possible. Many of these data exchanges should be accomplished through the use of the State’s ESB and, if practicable, be real-time.

System / Database / Application	Description	Current or Future	Platform / Programing Languages Used	Type of Access and Minimum Frequency	Mandatory, Tier 1 or Tier 2
Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System (AASIS)	State’s payment interface and provides HR information, Provider Members and Addresses	Current	AASIS is an SAP based system	Real-time interface required (Presently this is a nightly batch interface; monthly batch interface)	Mandatory
AR-OPTS (formerly OASIS)	State’s overpayment accounting system	Current	Oracle, SQL server, SSIS	Real-time (presently Nightly batch interface; Monthly batch interface)	Mandatory
National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)	National mandatory data collection system.	Current	Oracle	Twice a year report to federal government	Mandatory
Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)	Data exchange with federal system collecting case-level information on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with title IV-E agency involvement	Current	Oracle, SQL server	Data is sent to the federal government semi-annually, a batch interface is acceptable	Mandatory
National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)	Data exchange with federal required data collection system that gathers information about reports of child abuse and neglect	Current	Oracle	Data is sent to the federal government annually; batch interface is acceptable	Mandatory
DCCECE KidCare System	For information regarding Day Care payment Information; this system is targeted for replacement; This process is in the early stages. <i>See RFP Section 2.2.7.</i>	Current	Powerbuilder 12.5, Oracle, SQL server, SSIS	Real-time interface required (Presently a combination of real-time and nightly batch interfaces are used)	Mandatory

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	The Court's information system. Currently, the State uses a .NET application (called DNET) to communicate with this system. DCFS will require the Future System to directly interface with this system and improve business processes.	Current	Oracle, .net	Real time (if this is to be the portal to secure copies of signed court orders; presently this is a four times a day batch interface)	Mandatory
RocketMatter - Office of Chief Counsel (OCC)'s Litigation Management Tool	OCC is in the process of implementing Rocket Matter to manage its case portfolio, the majority of which are cases for DCFS. It is expected to be fully implemented in 2021.	Future	Cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS)	Real-time	Mandatory
Arkansas Integrated Eligibility System (ARIES) ²¹	Welfare, eligibility, and reporting system	Future	Real-time interface via the state's enterprise service bus	Real-time	Mandatory
Arkansas Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS)	Automated data processing system that verifies the eligibility of beneficiaries and processes Medicaid claims among other requirements	Future	Modular system composed of: DXC InterChange system, Optum Data Warehouse, Magellan Pharmacy system	Real-time	Mandatory
Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) System	State child support enforcement system. Currently an online interface and data exchange. Used for Putative Father DNA referrals as well.	Current	Oracle, web service	Real-time required (Presently uses real time and nightly batch interfaces)	Mandatory
MidSouth's training platform (MidSouth Training Academy Site)	DCFS training provider's system. Will require that Contractor provide a training environment of the Future System to MidSouth for training. Separately, includes data exchange of completed class information (foster and adopt parent and employee training hours)	Current	Oracle, SQL server, SSIS	Real-time	Mandatory
Social Security Administration (SSA) System	U.S. Social Security Administration, maintaining Social Security Numbers (SSNs)	Current	Oracle, SSIS	Real-time via State On-Line Query required (presently a Monthly batch interface)	Mandatory

²¹ARIES is presently under development. In the event that its implementation does not keep pace with the Future System, there is the potential that the Future System may need to interface with ANSWER and Curam.

Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion	Private credit bureaus used to run credit checks for eligible children. Currently, OIT uploads a .csv file for Equifax and Experian to run, then OIT gets information back from these companies regarding credit histories. DCFS has not yet started an interface with TransUnion.	Current (data exchange)	Oracle	Real-time (currently twice yearly; March and October)	Mandatory
RiteTrack (subject to replacement by a yet to be announced system)	Division of Youth Services (DYS) Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS). Currently there are two DYS CHRIS Net Reports which get data from these systems.	Future	Oracle, SSRS	Real-time is desired, but may depend on system changes	Mandatory
Department of Education (DOE) System	Contains information on grade level, school, attendance, grades, and other educational information. This interface will help inform the Client Information module (see 3.5.2.5.5 Education Records)	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory
Optum Decision Support System (DSS)	Claims data warehouse administrated by Optum. This interface will obtain medical information about clients, such as pharmaceuticals, psychoanalysis, medical visits, etc.	Current (Presently, information is obtained through AMIS-COGNOS, which obtains the information from DSS. The Future System shall interface directly with DSS)	TBD (AMIS-COGNOS presently uses Extract Spreadsheet, SQL SERVER SSIS jobs)	Real-time	Mandatory
Optum ARIA	Independent eligibility assessment platform administrated by Optum. Presently, the interface does not exist and the Future System shall interface with ARIA to obtain eligibility assessment data	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory

Department of Workforce Services	Verify employment and unemployment benefit information as reported to the DWS	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory
DCFS Travel System	TR1 – separate system that needs to interface with the new system. DHS is in the process of investigating replacements to the current TR1 system. This process is in the early stages. See Section RFP Section 2.2.6.	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory
MCMS (future system should replace MCMS and connect with the NEICE clearinghouse)	Modular Case Management System (MCMS) is the existing function for the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE) Project. The future system will replace MCMS and connect to the Clearinghouse, which will allow the state to connect directly to NEICE for state-to-state transfer of data on children who need placements across state lines as part of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).	Future	TBD	Real-time (presently through the MCMS)	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide the function of MCMS and connect with the NEICE Clearinghouse)
Master Client Index	See Section 1.6.1 and RFP Section 2.2.4.	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory
State enterprise content management platform	If the Future System does not include its own document storage solution, the Future System will interface with the State’s platform (e.g. Edoctus, DocuShare)	Future	TBD	Real Time access via API through Future System UI	Mandatory
Bank interface for Purchasing Card	Various DCFS staff utilize a purchasing card (P-Card) for incidental purchases in the field. Presently, the P-Card is a Mastercard issued by US Bank. Presently, DCFS obtains a spreadsheet from US Bank. US Bank does interface with AASIS. The State desires the ability to link this P-Card data to the	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory

	applicable Client for purposes of tracking and obtaining federal match as applicable.				
ABA Routing number checks	For direct deposits for Foster Parent. This is presently accomplished through Lyons Commercial Data.	Current	Web service	Real-time	Mandatory
DF&A	Driver's license checks (including for both Arkansas and other states)	Future	TBD	Real-time	Mandatory
DHS Enterprise Criminal Background Check System	New system implemented in late 2020, development for conducting criminal background checks to streamline processes and provide more consistency for the Agency.	Current	Web application	Real-time	Mandatory
University of Arkansas Medical School (UAMS) Family First Data Exchange	Provision of a monthly data extract to UAMS	Current		Batch interface, one way to UAMS	Mandatory
Immunization Records	Interface with State immunization tracking system (see Section 1.6.5.3)	Future	TBD	Real-time	Tier 1
QRTP Assessment Vendor System	Interface with the State's QRTP Assessment Vendor (presently, eQHealth)	Future	TBD (presently, QRTP assessment data is manually obtained from a vendor portal)	Real-time	Tier 1

1.11.2 Current Applications External to CHRIS

The following systems are external or web applications where the State prefers the functionality provided by the application be replaced by the new system. If any of these are not replaced, an interface will be needed.

System / Database / Application	Description	Current or Future	Platform / Programing Languages Used	Type of Access and Minimum Frequency	Desirable or Critical
Great Plains	Third party tool that maintains trust fund accounting information for clients	Current	Microsoft Dynamics stand-alone application	Real time and nightly batch interfaces	Mandatory
Foster Care Trust Fund (TFREIM)	Creates accounting entries for Foster Care children who have a Federal and/or State Trust Fund account and passes information to Great Plains software for reimbursements. Creates entries based on Foster Board (CHRIS) payments and Contract Payments (CFM).	Current	SQL server	Application runs monthly. There are some daily processes + EOM reconciliation processes	Mandatory
Rave Texting	Third party tool to send text messages to administrators and providers	Current	Oracle, SQL server, SSIS	Nightly batch interface	Mandatory (if not replaced by the Future System)
National Youth in Transition web-based survey	Current NYTD data exchange is supported by a DCFS web-based survey of impacted youth-Baseline and Follow-Up NYTD Population	Current	.net	Twice a year report to federal government	Mandatory
Court Connect - DNET	Currently, the State uses a .NET application (called DNET, owned by the Courts) to communicate with the AOC court information system. DCFS will require the Future System to directly interface with the court system and improve business processes.	Current	.net	Real time (if this is to be the portal to secure copies of signed court orders); Four times a day batch interface	Mandatory
Appeals and Hearing Search	A .net website with appeals and court hearing details. Looks at SQL backend of Appeals and Hearing database.	Current	Web application	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary)
CHRIS Financial Management (CFM)	DCFS financial coordinators document encumbrances for non-placement services. DCFS Staff reviews and approves	Current	Web application, SQL server	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future

	invoices.				System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
Foster and Adoption Family Portal	Public facing site available for foster care and adoption providers to sign up to have foster care board or adoption subsidy payments deposited directly into the vendor's bank account. and other functions	Current	Web application, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
DHS 9190	Online DCFS contract form	Current	Web application, SQL server	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
DCFS Foster Family Home and Adoptive Home Inquiry Admin Tool	DCFS Inquiry tool DCFS designated staff use to create Providers in CHRIS.	Current	Web application, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
DCFS Foster Family Home and Foster and Adoptive Home Inquiry site	Public facing DCFS Inquiry .NET that allows interested parties to apply to be a foster parent or an adoptive parent and for DCFS staff to subsequently create a Provider in CHRIS.	Current	Web application, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
Resource Parent Home Matching Tool	Tool to match foster children to potential Resource Parent Homes	Current	Web application, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)

Adoption Matching Tool	Tool to match foster children to potential families for adoption	Current	Web application, SQL server	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
Provider Invoice Entry (PIE)	PIE enables service providers with DCFS contracts to create, review and print invoices and perform other related activities.	Current	Web application, SQL server, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
SSRS Reports and Admin Tool	350+ SSRS Reports (CHRISNet Report Management); Management of DCFS SSRS reports, Listing of reports based on security roles	Current	Web application, SQL server, Oracle	Real Time	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)
DCCECE PRLS System (Placement and Residential Licensing System)	Used for tracking licensing deficiencies	Current	Desktop application, Programming Language - C# Database - SQL server with synchronization framework	User login based on FIM group, DB sync process occurs upon login and log out.	Mandatory (the State prefers that the Future System will provide this function and render an interface unnecessary.)

1.11.3 Future Interfaces and Interface Partners

The Future System will accommodate changes in Interfaces and Interface partners during the life of the Contract. Presently, the State anticipates requiring the Interfaces listed in Section 1.11.1 and potentially interfaces with the systems in 1.11.2, but the State may replace and modernize any number of these Interfaces and systems during the design, development, and implementation phases of the project. The Future System **shall** accommodate changes in Interfaces and Interface partners during the life of the Contract. Such changes will be made pursuant to the Change Management protocol as agreed to by the Contractor and the State.

1.11.4 Interface Security and Quality

The Future System **shall** meet or exceed all federal CCWIS and State data exchange

standards, including but not limited to data definitions, formats, frequency, security, and quality for all Interfaces. In addition, the Contractor will ensure all Interfaces exchange and communicate required data without error and within required timeframes. In the Future System, data sent or received via data exchanges will be selected and processed according to DCFS business needs.

1.11.5 Integration of Evident Change Portal (DCS)

The Portal developed by Evident Change and the State (DCS) will include six tools which **must** be seamlessly integrated into the Future System. These tools are:

- **Intake Assessment.** This tool has been built and has been in use by Hotline Staff since summer of 2020. Presently, Hotline staff re-enter information captured during a Referral into the Intake Assessment tool. The tool provides a suggested pathway (*e.g.* CACD, DCFS) in accordance with State operating rules. Hotline users manually implement this pathway in CHRIS. In the Future System, the Intake Assessment tool **shall** automatically draw data from the information captured during Referral (eliminating the present need for duplicate entry). The Future System **shall** also automate the output pathway from the Intake Assessment provided there is an opportunity for manually changing that outcome in accordance with State rule. There need not necessarily be a “screen” for the Future System users for the Intake Assessment tool like there is today, in light of the Future System automatically drawing the information that is presently entered manual and in light of the Future System implementing the output of the tool which is presently entered into CHRIS by the hotline user.
- **Safety Assessment.** This tool provides a structure for assessing the presence of immediate danger to a child. At the time of this RFP this tool has been developed but not deployed. Its deployment is planned for 2021.
- **Risk Assessment.** This tool is a research-based assessment that classifies families by their likelihood of future involvement with the State’s DCFS. At the time of this RFP this tool has been developed but not deployed. Its deployment is planned for 2021.
- **Case Planning Tool.** Formerly known as the “Family Strengths and Needs Assessment,” this tool provides a reference to ensure that all workers consider each family’s strengths and needs in a clear, consistent format. At the time of this RFP this tool is in early development. Deployment is planned for 2021.
- **Reunification Assessment.** This tool is used for children who have been placed in out-of-home care to ensure that local and federal policies regarding reunification, permanency planning for children, and termination of parental rights are effectively translated into practice. At the time of this RFP this tool is in early development. Deployment is planned for 2021.
- **Risk Reassessment.** This tool is completed at regular intervals for in-home cases to determine whether a case should remain open and, if so, at what level of intensity or services. At the time of this RFP this tool is in early development. Deployment is planned for 2021.
- **Team Decision Making.** This tool facilitates the collaborative approach to a meeting focused on determining whether a child must leave home due to safety concerns. Development is not begun but the State expects it to be completed prior to the Future System and requires its integration. Note: the TDM work is not presently contemplated in the attached contract with Evident Change.

At the time the Future Systems goes live, the Safety Assessment, Risk Assessment, Case Planning Tool, Reunification Assessment and Risk Assessment will be the only “Assessments” used by the State. *See* Section 1.4 on Assessments. All six of these assessments (including the Intake Assessment) are automated and hosted in Evident Change’s DCS.

1.11.5.1 Technical Requirements to Integrate Evident Change-hosted Systems into the Future System

The DCS portal is built in the Microsoft Azure cloud and leverages standard, modern security practices, including end-to-end encryption and zero-trust access control strategies. To allow seamless integration of these tools into the Future System, Evident Change provides micro front ends and micro service application programming interfaces (APIs). Respondents **must** propose a Future System which integrates the Evident Change portal that will support seamless integration of SDM and TDM into the CCWIS solution.

This required integration **shall** include:

- Single sign-on, via OIDC or SAML protocols
- Participant demographics (child, caregivers, siblings, family members, collateral individuals)
- Data return
- Supervisory approval of SDM assessment, when required by DCFS policy
- Assignments

Additional integration points may be required depending on the nature of the proposed Future System, including:

- Caseload
- Policy and standards
- Agency structure

As part of its contract with DCFS, Evident Change will engage with the Contractor to support a high quality and stable interface, including:

- Support for technical implementation of the Evident Change interface
- Integration environment for testing the technical integration into the Future System
- Identification of proper integration points for Evident Change tools within the Future System
- Support for themes in the Evident Change UI for a more seamless user experience
- Software administrator and user manual documentation for the Evident Change portal
- Review of customized Future System documentation where Evident Change systems are integrated.

Evident Change may be engaged in other activities related to the Future System and integration of the Portal, at the State’s discretion (*i.e.* a Respondent may not assume more involvement of Evident Change than outlined herein).

1.12 Reporting

The production of numerous reports for State, Federal and operational needs is an essential function of the Future System. This Functional Area will cover:

- Key Federal Reports
- Other Existing Reports
- Additional or Ad Hoc Reports
- Report Builder Features

1.12.1 Key Federal Reports

Certain reports to the Children’s Bureau of the Administration of Children & Families are of paramount importance to DCFS and are required for federal, legislative, and local reviews. Often their generation today is a source of frustration as the data presently exported by CHRIS requires manual clean up to meet Federal Standards.

1.12.1.1 AFCARS

The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) collects case-level information from state and tribal title IV-E agencies on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with title IV-E agency involvement. Examples of data reported in AFCARS include demographic information on the foster child as well as the foster and adoptive parents, the number of removal episodes a child has experienced, the number of placements in the current and all prior removal episodes, and the current and all prior placement settings. Title IV-E agencies are required to submit the AFCARS data twice a year based on two 6-month reporting periods. *See* 45 CFR §1355.40, otherwise known as the “AFCARs Regulations.”

The Future System **shall** capture and maintain all information needed for submission to the AFCARS. The Future System **shall** produce the AFCARS data submissions from data within the Future System pursuant to the AFCARS 2.1 2020 Final Rule.²² The State requires the ability to manually intervene, inspect, and remedy defects in this data prior to submission. However, the State is interested in a Future System that minimizes the need for inspection and remediation of AFCARS data.

1.12.1.2 NCANDS

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) is an ACF data collection system that gathers information about reports of child abuse and neglect. The data are used to examine trends in child abuse and neglect across the country with key results being published. The data elements submitted by the State to the NCANDS can be found in the NCANDS Child File Code Book²³ and the NCANDS Agency File Codebook.²⁴

The Future System **shall** capture and maintain all information needed for the submission

²² The AFCARS 2.1 2020 Final Rule is available here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/05/12/2020-09817/adoption-and-foster-care-analysis-and-reporting-system>

²³ The NCANDS Child File Codebook is available here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/ncands-child-file>

²⁴ The NCANDS Agency File Codebook is available here: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/ncands-agency-file>

to the NCANDS. The Future System **shall** produce the NCANDS data submission from data within the Future System pursuant to the Final Rule. The State requires the ability to manually intervene, inspect, and remedy defects in this data prior to submission. However, the State is interested in a Future System that minimizes the need for inspection and remediation of NCANDS data.

1.12.1.3 NYTD

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is an ACF reporting system designed to collect information on youth transitioning out of foster care who are served by state agencies. The purpose of the NYTD Review is to evaluate comprehensively states' policies and practices related to collecting and reporting timely, reliable and accurate data on youth in transition. The regulations setting forth a state's obligations for NYTD are located at 45 CFR § 1356.80-86.

To facilitate the collection of information necessary for the State's NYTD submission the State developed the NYTD Survey, a web-based survey sent to all eligible youth in transition via email. Additionally, Family Service Workers sometimes complete the NYTD Survey with the subject youth (either in person or over the phone). The NYTD Survey includes additional information, not required for the State's NYTD submission, gathered by the State for its own use. Information gathered through the NYTD Survey is paired with information presently in CHRIS for the State's submission.

The Future System **shall** support the generation and submission of NYTD data in accordance with federal laws. The Future System **shall** capture and maintain all information needed for NYTD submission. The Future System **shall** offer a survey or similar alternative for gathering and utilizing information from eligible Clients in accordance with NYTD requirements and according to DCFS security and privacy requirements.

1.12.1.4 Title IV Reports

The Administration for Children and Families conducts a comprehensive review of Title IV-E eligibility every three years. This review requires a payment history report of each individual selected for review by ACF. The report must include all payments made on behalf of the individuals selected and must include all data elements required by the Federal Agency. The report must combine all payment sources into a single, comprehensive report to comply with federal requirements. The Future System **shall** support the generation of a payment history report that combines all payment sources into a single, comprehensive report to comply with federal requirements to support the ACF comprehensive review of Title IV-E eligibility.

The Future System **shall** support the generation of the Title IV-E Programs Quarterly Financial Reporting Form (Form CV-496) and the CFS-101.

1.12.1.5 Family First Reporting

The Family First Prevention Services Act ("Family First"), a component of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (H.R. 1892) does, among other things, require additional tracking and reporting for the State. Many of the Family First changes took effect October 1, 2019, including

the State's ability to use Title IV-E funds for new purposes. These new purposes will require tracking and reporting. The Future System **shall** comply with the Family First tracking and reporting requirements.

1.12.2 Functional and Operational Reports

Functional and Operational reports provide formatted information to support specific DCFS activities. Functional reports allow users to run them using parameters built into the report, such as selecting a client and/or a date range. Operational reports are standardized templates that do not have any selection criteria; they are typically family-focused, such as a case plan or a court report. These reports can be physically printed or previewed and saved in .pdf format.

1.12.3 Other Existing Reports

DCFS has developed business processes and compliance protocols reliant on the availability of certain reports presently created by CHRIS. To ensure seamless and continued operations of DCFS' responsibilities after the transition from CHRIS to the Future System, these reports or their equivalent must be available from the Future System. Some reports, such as those required by the Social Security Administration, must be available upon implementation of the Future System as these are reports used to keep the Federal Agency apprised of the status of foster children for whom DHS is the representative payee. The frequency of these reports is not to be interrupted as the state transitions from CHRIS to the Future System. A roster of the reports produced by the current system is attached as Exhibit 14 in the Bidders Library for reference.

1.12.4 Development of Additional or Ad Hoc Reports

In the course of the design, implementation and early use of the Future System DCFS may identify additional reports it requires to be built by the Contractor as part of the Future System's design and development. A reasonable number of these reports will be included in the scope of (and part of the price for) the development of the Future System. Specifically, the Contractor **shall** prepare up to 50 low complexity reports, 50 medium complexity reports, and 25 high complexity additional reports.

For the purpose of this RFP, the complexity definitions are:

Low: These are reports which require single queries to the data or have been previously developed and are part of the solution to be implemented, with minimal modification.

Medium: These are reports that may require joining data from 1-3 data sources and up to 20 data tables. Operational performance and Program Management reports are often in this category.

High: These are reports that may require joining data from 4 or more data sources and more than 20 data tables. These may be operational and executive dashboards or trend analysis which support drill-down.

1.12.5 Report or Query Builder

The State is interested in how the Future System may empower State users to build their own queries or reports without requiring the assistance of developers. This would include

running queries and reports on an aggregate basis, as well as queries, reports, or dashboards that would provide individuals the ability to check their work (e.g., caseloads). To that end, the State is interested in any integrated or native reporting and/or dashboard features in the systems proposed by Respondents, but does not wish for Respondents to propose a separate reporting engine (e.g. a Cognos or Business Objects).

1.12.5.1 Safe Measures

The State presently maintains a contract with Evident Change to provide the features described in Section 1.12.5 through Evident Changes' Safe Measures system. Depending on the nature of what is proposed by the Contractor, the State reserves the right to maintain the Safe Measures system instead of a Contractor's proposed report or query tool. In the event the State elects to maintain Safe Measures in lieu of what is proposed by the Contractor, the State will reduce the contract remuneration accordingly.

1.13 Financial Management

DCFS is responsible for managing certain financial and contract information that is of critical importance to the agency's functions. This Functional Area covers:

- Provider payment information and processes
- Provider contract information and processes
- Encumbrance
- Client-board payments
- Provider overpayments and recoupments
- Title IV-E Payment Determination and Tracking

1.13.1 Provider Payment and Contracts

Some Providers are paid pursuant to contracts held by the State while other providers are paid via Client board payments. The Future System will accommodate both forms of payment discussed below and **shall** support the Provider contract development process and may allow providers to register for direct deposits.

The Future System **shall** track and maintain Provider payment history indefinitely.

1.13.1.1 Providers Paid Pursuant to a Contract for Services

Providers who are paid pursuant to contracts held by the State submit invoices in accordance with those contracts. Presently, most Providers that submit invoices for billable services use the Provider Invoice Entry (PIE), a .NET application. PIE allows entities to create and submit invoices via the Arkansas Department of Human Services website. These invoices are reviewed and approved by DCFS staff through another .NET application called the CHRIS Financial Management ("CFM") system. In CFM the information on invoices from non-placement services is checked against the State's records in PIE. The approved payments are

issued through the AASIS, the State's Financial and Administrative system.²⁵ The Future System **shall** link money paid pursuant to a Provider invoice information with a particular Case and Client(s).

Presently, in order for a Provider to be paid in the above-described process that Provider must have a contract with the State, and that contract must have certain pieces of information memorialized in CHRIS, PIE and CFM. Presently, DCFS requests a contract for a new Provider by completing a 9190 form within the "DHS 9190" .NET application.²⁶ This 9190 form triggers the development of a contract by DHS procurement (this process adheres to the required procurement protocol). DHS 9190 also provides information about the "units" of work to be performed by the Provider and the associated cost and amount of work that may be performed under the contract. By way of example, if DCFS wishes to contract with a counselor for \$1,000, that \$1,000 is converted into "units" (in this case, counseling hours) at the rate associated with that counselor in the Contract. If this hypothetical counselor charged \$100 an hour, there would be 10 units (in this case hours) of counseling available under this contract in the systems. When multiple Providers have been authorized for a particular service on one 9190, the authorized units are distributed across the Providers as much as possible. DCFS can redistribute the units with a contract amendment, if needed. CFM is the tool used to track the allocation of these units, how they are used up (*i.e.* which invoice), and the associated Client.

A present challenge is CHRIS and CFM's requirement that a "unit's" use may only be associated with a single Client. Some services are provided to multiple Clients simultaneously. In order to better support Family First reporting (which requires, among other things, the tracking of the dollars spent on each Client for certain services) the Future System may have the ability to allocate the cost of a unit across multiple Clients to more accurately track spending by Client.

The Provider must also have a profile in AASIS in order for payment to be possible. AASIS contains detailed and updated Provider, contract, and funding information. The Future System **shall** be able to extract all relevant Provider information from AASIS, including but not limited to: vendor information, contract information, and funding coding information. This information is currently gathered independent from CHRIS.

The State desires a Future System that offers a single platform (notwithstanding AASIS's role) for these functions rather than the present solution which spans multiple applications. The Future System may help support the Provider contract development process, receive invoices from providers and facilitate the review of those invoices, maintain information about Provider contracts (the type of services, cost of services, service units, amount of services used under a contract, the amount remaining on the contract, and the Client or Clients which used the associated services), and interface with AASIS to ensure the timely payment of approved invoices.

²⁵AASIS is the State's implementation of SAP. Issues like Provider enrollment in direct deposit are handled through AASIS. More information on AASIS may be found at <https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/aasis>

²⁶ DHS9190 also draws contract information for contracts held by DHS and not DCFS specifically from a system called STAR.

1.13.1.2 Types of Contracts

DCFS maintains two distinct types of contracts with Providers: Professional Consultant Services (PCS) contracts and Technical and General Services (TGS) contracts. *See* ACA § 19-11-105 for a definition of PCS and TGS Contracts. Presently, the vast majority of contracts are PCS contracts maintained in the DHS 9190 system described above. TGS contracts, by contrast, are presently not maintained in the DHS 9190 system (they are kept on paper) and CHRIS is only used as a reference to verify the invoice's suitability (*e.g.* is there a note of the invoiced service in a case file). The majority of contracts DCFS enters into result from a competitive solicitation. In total, DCFS maintains approximately 170 contracts with Providers.

The Future System includes **must** detail contract information, including, but not limited to:

- the services the provider is contracted to offer
- the rate of those services
- the units of those services which remain available for State use (i.e. how much of the contract money remains unencumbered)
- the amount used
- the contract amount
- amount encumbered
- amount invoiced
- amount encumbered and not invoiced
- remaining amount for each contract
- how much has been invoiced
- how much remains in the current SFY
- how much remains for each quarter

The Future System maybe able to link contract information to the respective Client receiving the contracted service. DCFS is amenable to maintaining both PCS and TGS contracts' information in the Future System.

1.13.1.3 Encumbrance

Certain Providers can have services pre-authorized and later encumbered. This is the means by which DCFS tracks the utilization of the "units" of work under a contract. Presently, a caseworker initially fills out a paper encumbrance form and sends it to a financial coordinator (there are currently eleven coordinators), who then enters the information into CFM and forwards that information to Providers to let it know what has been encumbered. This notification to the Provider often is the communication to that Provider to reach out to a Client to schedule the Provider's provision of services. The Future System may allow users to pre-authorize the encumbrance of contract funds for later invoicing and maintains a record of the pre-authorization.

Encumbrances may need to be connected to multiple Clients. Invoices from encumbrances often reflect services provided for multiple Clients. Each Client's services are reflected on separate lines on the invoices.

The majority of this process is conducted outside of CHRIS (with the exception of

information gathering) but the State is interested in how it may be incorporated into the Future System and the encumbrance process becomes paperless.

1.13.1.4 Providers Who Are Paid via Client Board Payments

Resource Parent Homes are primarily paid based on a system-driven formula which calculates the disbursement based on placement information for the child and the approved board payment scale per child (each child could have a different rate). The Future System may allow the State to review/preview board payments before issuance.

In certain instances, Special Board Payment rates are used instead of the system-driven formula's board payments. Special Board Payments may require approval to be utilized. A Special Board Payment may consist of an alternative rate programmed in the system, or a rate calculated by the user and manually entered into the system.

The Future System **shall** have the ability to pay placement providers based on the placement and rate information maintained in the system. The Future System may also allow this system-driven board payment calculation to be over-ridden by authorized users to 1) assign a new board payment rate available in the system, and 2) manually calculate (offline) the board payment rate based on DCFS policy and type the calculated rate into the Future System for its use in lieu of a rate stored in the system. The State is interested in how the Respondent's system can help with the facilitation of board run payments, including the potential for the system to run automatically at night, and an expedited process for management review of board payment runs prior to actual payment.

Adoptive homes are paid a subsidy. Subsidized guardianships are paid a stipend. Some providers are paid according to their contracts. The Future System **shall** be able to pay and recoup all types of provider payments according to the funding streams or cost allocations.

1.13.1.5 Provider Overpayments and Recoupments

DCFS recoups overpayments from Providers for multiple situations. CHRIS automatically recoups some payments from Providers who are paid periodically and offer the opportunity to offset overpayments from subsequent payments. However, adoptions subsidy recoupments are currently handled outside the system and tracked in a spreadsheet. The Future System **shall** facilitate overpayment calculation and overpayment recovery, including the ability to withhold portions of subsequent payments to off-set identified overpayments from the same Provider. If the overpayment is due to an error in the Future System, the Future System may allow authorized users to correct the data issue.

Currently, when an overpayment on a contract occurs but the provider later discovers they should not have billed for a client/service and they have already been paid, so they submit a check for the overpayment back to the department, the system does not have a way to add those units/funding back to their contract. DCFS would like a solution to this issue in the Future System.

The recovery of some overpayments will require use of the State's overpayment recovery platform AR-OPTS. AR-OPTS allows the State to establish payment plans, garnish future

payments, and intercept other disbursements to state payees (*e.g.* child support.) The Future System will interface with AR-OPTS as appropriate. *See* Section 1.11.

1.13.2 Daycare Providers

DCFS is responsible for ensuring children who have a case with DCFS attend Daycare as appropriate. Many of these children qualify for daycare subsidized by the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE).²⁷ In order for a child's attendance at daycare to be subsidized by DCCECE, the attendance must be preauthorized. DCCECE's system of record for the pre-authorization and payment of daycare subsidies is called KidCare.

Presently, DCFS pays for the above discussed day care and then seeks reimbursement from DCCECE. Reimbursement from DCCECE requires that the services were authorized, and that the day care provider submitted timely and accurate invoices to DCFS. Day care provider invoice errors often require DCFS correction in order for DCFS to obtain reimbursement from DCCECE. CHRIS does not track how much money has been spent per child on daycare, however, DCFS will need to track that information in the future.

Often, there is a delay in the data entry by the FSWs of the childcare authorizations which trigger the payment. DCFS is interested in solutions to allow daycare providers to enter data directly into the system, or other solutions to get more accurate and timely payments.

DCCECE's tracking of the child care subsidy program is done through a system called KidCare which is the platform in which day care is pre-authorized and payment is issued and tracked. The State is interested in how the Future System can help support this program, including but not limited to an interface with KidCare if it is not replaced (*See* RFP Section 2.2.7).

1.13.3 Payment Determination and Tracking

The Division of Children and Family Services staff also reviews, adjusts and distinguishes all types of payments made on behalf of a child including but not limited to board payments (field staff), contract payments (financial staff), purchases (financial staff unless the purchase is from a foster care trust fund account), and child care payments, etc. to ensure that the proper source of funding is utilized in light of the Eligibility Unit's eligibility decisions. The State is interested in how the Future System will allow DCFS staff to perform these duties and how the complex rules associated with this responsibility can be accommodated in the Future System.

While there is functionality in CHRIS to generate a federally required payment history report, the current report does not include information regarding all payments made on behalf of a child in the Foster Care Program. The Future System may have the capability to generate a report that includes all expenses paid on behalf of an individual child, including but not limited to board payments, contract payments, personal needs expenses, day care, and administrative costs.

²⁷ For more information about this program please see <https://humanservices.arkansas.gov/about-dhs/dccece/programs-services/child-care-assistance>.

Each payment must also distinguish the funding source and funding amount including any retroactive or current adjustments to the amounts or funding source. A sample of the existing report is available for analytical purposes but does not include all expenses required by the federal reviewers.

The Eligibility Unit is responsible for tracking income and assets that might affect eligibility payments and/or amounts. Examples include but are not limited to foster care trust accounts,²⁸ Social Security Income and Title II income, child support income, third party accounts maintained by entities other than DHS (Integrity, Arkansas Support Network, etc.), ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) coordinated through the Arkansas Treasury, and private accounts.

Currently, trust account information gathered from another application (Great Plains, which is a Microsoft Dynamics third-party application) is received in a daily report that is electronically uploaded into CHRIS for this purpose. As a result, the data available to the DCFS field staff is not real-time data. The State is interested in the Future System streamlining this process and having a real-time data exchange with Great Plains or an alternative solution in order to accurately provide trust account balance information to field staff. Additionally, the Future System **shall** have functionality to enable the user to administer ABLE accounts.

In relationship to SSA payments, the State is interested in the Future System having functionality to:

- track the payee of SSA related benefits
- identify any portion of SSA related payments that are retroactive lump sums and apply the disregard appropriately to the available balance in a foster care trust fund
- assist staff in board and contract payments that may be modified based on payee and SSA related benefit data.

1.14 Mobility

The ability for certain system users to access the Future System outside of the office to support their activities while in the field, improve overall productivity, and provide operational efficiencies is very important to the State. Specifically, many of the Future System's functions and features **shall** be accessible on a mobile phone or tablet. The Future System **shall** also allow users to access the Future System from remote desktop and laptop locations. This includes the ability to access information and perform job functions on mobile devices, as described in greater detail in sections above.

Presently, DCFS staff are equipped with Apple iPhones, but Future System mobility should not be limited to Apple devices as the State may switch hardware at a point in the future.

Connectivity is not uniformly available throughout the State. Accordingly, the mobile features of the Future System need to be able to locally cache data on the mobile devices when

²⁸ For more information on trust accounts, please see the Bidders' Library.

connectivity is lacking so that the users work is not interrupted. Certain Future System functions available on mobile devices (*e.g.* display, edit, query) should work regardless of device connectivity. When connectivity is restored, the Future System **shall** allow synchronization of work done on a user's mobile device with the system.