



SSIS Update



Issue 285

Social Services Information System

July 24, 2009

VA-CEP "Send to Lead Agency" sends maltreatment report data only

The original - and still primary - purpose of the "Send to Lead Agency" function is to electronically send the Common Entry Point (CEP) reports of alleged maltreatment of a vulnerable adult (VA) to the MN Dept of Health's Office of Health Facility Complaints (OHFC) and DHS Licensing Division. Neither of those agencies has an Intake module. Rather, they need to receive the VA reports that are to be investigated by their offices as soon as possible. SSIS sends only the VA-CEP report (the report of alleged maltreatment to a vulnerable adult) to OHFC or DHS Licensing. The intake is not sent,

so anything entered in the intake rather than in the maltreatment report is not sent.

This is also why it is so important that workers enter all the information they have into the VA-CEP report data fields rather than just into the description fields; OHFC and Licensing rely on this data to be available to enter into their systems' data fields.

If you use the "Send to Lead Agency" function to send a report to another county, remember to follow up with a phone call, so that the receiving county knows to check the assignment log for the VA-CEP report.

Worker Focus

Complete entry of social worker contact data

Social work staff must review their contact/activity entries to ensure that ALL monthly contacts with ALL children in care are correctly entered. Minnesota has made continuous improvements in meeting monthly contact requirements, but it needs more consistent efforts in order to reach the 90% goal.

The August upload will be used for third quarter reporting to the federal government for federal fiscal year 2009. The report includes contact data for monthly visits to children in out-of-homecare for the first quarter of 2009 (January through March) and second quarter of 2009 (April through June).

Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of Minnesota's children.

Worker Focus

Mentor-abilia_____

Worker Mentor Meeting via VPC

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

9:00 a.m.-noon

Agenda will be sent soon.

NWT courses have August openings

New Worker Training sessions are scheduled at the Metro lab (DHS @ 444 Lafayette) on August 4-6 and at the Willmar lab on August 25-27. Please register promptly on [TrainLink](#).

CountyLink Updates_____

- ◆ Participant Entry training module, V5.2
- ◆ 2010 County Allocations Fiscal
- ◆ Surplus IT Equipment
- ◆ MPAC meeting minutes, 7/21/09

SSIS Phone Numbers

Main Line 651-431-4800

Help Line 651-431-4801

Fax 651-431-7521

ssishelp@state.mn.us

Worker Focus

Clarifications required by AFCARS Improvement Plan

Federal policy staff clarified AFCARS reporting requirements after reviewing a sample AFCARS report. SSIS is completing final steps to close out the AFCARS Improvement Plan (AIP). The policy shared in this article will be presented at the next Worker Mentor Meeting on September 1, 2009.

For foster care, four elements have federal policy clarifications: Person Race, Removal Condition – Disability, Removal Condition – Relinquishment, and Discharge Reason.

Person Race, “Unable to determine” may only be reported for abandoned infants according to current AFCARS policy. However, when the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) on youth aging out of care is implemented in October 2010, SSIS will add selections for “Declined” and “Unknown” for situations where a parent is incapacitated and unable to state a child’s race.

Disability as a removal condition may only be entered if the disability is known at the time of removal. You may not enter any professionally determined disability as a condition at the time of removal if the evaluation and diagnosis occur after the removal.

When a child age three days or fewer enters care via Minnesota’s “Safe Place for New-borns” law, enter the *removal condition* of “Relinquishment.” (Do **not** enter Abandonment” since that cannot be charged under the “Safe Place” law.)

When a child is discharged into the care of the previously non-custodial parent, record the *discharge reason* as “Reunification.”

There are also four AFCARS data elements, two foster care and two adoptions elements that are missing or inconsistent across Minnesota counties

at a higher-than-recommended rate. Although we are not in the penalty range of 10% or more errors, the federal guideline for considering a state’s data reliable is at 2% or fewer errors for each element.

Foster Care:

Entering foster care discharges into SSIS remains at about 8% being entered 60 days or more after the event. Many counties have successfully reduced this problem by aiming for a 30-day time limit, assigning specific staff to monitor, and keeping in close contact with other agencies (such as corrections) to make certain they are notified of all discharges immediately after the fact.

Recording the most recent placement review is typically at about 5% error rate. Administrative or Court Placement reviews are required within 180 days of removal and at least once every six months after that. Reviews are required for all children in placement, including those placed solely because of a disability. In Minnesota, many of the reviews are done by the courts. If you enter the review as a Court action, remember to click the button for “Judicial review meets placement review requirements” on the Child findings tab. You may record both administrative and court reviews on the Continuous placement screen, Reviews tab.

Adoption:

When you enter on SSIS that the primary barrier to adoption is a documented disability, a qualifying disability or diagnosis must be entered on SSIS. Several of the available disabilities do not qualify for AFCARS barriers to adoption, including chemical dependency, specific learning disability, emotional disturbance – not severe, and physical disability – not ambulation limiting. A diagnosis that covers the same condition is often a qualifying diagnosis. We recommend that a diagnosis be entered whenever possible.

AFCARS continued

Father's TPR date is frequently missing in the Adoption file for nearly 10% of the children with finalized adoptions. A child is not legally free for adoption until both birth parents' rights to raise the child have ended in some manner. When the father is not known to the mother, it is possible to select an "Unknown male" as the father on the SSIS Relationship screen. If a father's name is known, but he cannot be located to get a verified birth date, enter an estimated birth date that represents him as being approximately the actual age. This allows clearing of the father to SWNDX and will reduce the number of totally unknown fathers for children who are adopted in Minnesota. More complete reporting of TPR dates is crucial to Minnesota's improved permanency outcomes for the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) process.

Thanks to all county staff who work tirelessly for the children, then promptly complete documentation. We appreciate all of your work!

Upload Update

The next upload is due on July 31. It provides a general update of information for statewide research and reporting.

Server racks available to counties

The SSIS Enterprise Operations Team (EOT) has several server racks that are available for county use. They are stored at DHS (444 Lafayette, St. Paul) and need to be picked up.

Each rack is pictured with its dimensions on a new CountyLink page located at SSIS Resources> Support>"[Surplus Equipment](#)" document link.

There will be an alert in *SSIS Update* each time this page is updated with additional equipment. If interested, call Greg Doyle at 651-431-4773 or e-mail gregory.doyle@state.mn.us.