

Partnership Fund Pilot Award Summary

Concept Name: Supporting Permanent Placements of Foster Care Children through Electronic Records Exchange

Lead Agency: Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Funding Level: \$1,250,000

Number of States/Pilot Sites: At least five

Summary of Funded Concept: This pilot implements real-time, on-line data exchange for States to share records and other information to support permanent placements of foster care children in homes across state lines. The Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC)¹ has identified current paper-based processes as causing excessive delays. Children may wait an unnecessarily long time for the paperwork for placement in a permanent home to be manually executed. Anecdotally, States have indicated that mailing documents back and forth alone can take about two months

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) ensures safe and suitable interstate placements for children in foster care. In many cases, permanent placement with relatives or adoptive families in other states is in the best interests of the child. But to make these interstate placements – after doing the required due diligence to ensure that the placement is appropriate for the child – states currently use paper-based processes to share and exchange case files, information, and evaluations, as well as collect, track, synthesize and report comprehensive data. The pilot will test whether an automated system reduces the time to process such cross-state exchanges to determine whether a placement is safe and suitable.

The pilot evaluation will measure timeliness of communication, expeditious exchange of case documentation and similar immediate outcomes as well as utilization and adherence to streamlined ICPC processes. Additional questions, such as those related to the permanency of child placements and the associated savings, may be addressed if it is feasible to do so within the project period. Results, which will be included in a final public report, will inform further adoption of the system across states.

Addressing the Partnership Fund's Goals:

Administrative Efficiency: Reduce the amount of time and staff resources needed to share the documents necessary to make interstate placements of foster children.

Service Delivery: Support timelier resolution for foster care children awaiting permanent placements in other states.

Changes from the Original Pilot Concept Submission: The funded pilot has no substantive changes. ACF has discretion over pilot implementation.

Original Concept Proposal Submitted by: Collaborative Forum Ideas Committee, led by the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC)

¹ The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) provides for the movement and safe placement of children between states when the children are in the custody of a state, being placed for private/independent adoption, or under certain circumstances, being placed by a parent or guardian in a residential treatment facility. ICPC has been enacted by all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

