



A HOME FOR
EVERY CHILD

Child and Family Services Reviews TB #14 Core Measure and Chaser Measures Analytic Technical Instructions

Overview

These technical instructions provide specific definitions and measurement criteria for the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) *A Home for Every Child* (AH4EC) Program Improvement Plan (PIP) pilot program described in [Technical Bulletin #14](#) (TB #14). TB #14 describes the purpose for offering the AH4EC PIP pilot program as an alternative to a traditional PIP. These technical instructions are designed for states that opt in and are preparing to submit monthly data to the AH4EC Data Tool and need specifications for preparing those data submissions. To access the AH4EC Data Tool, authorized state users must log in to the CFSR Information Portal (<https://www.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/>), navigate to the Round 4 Official Online Monitoring System (OMS), and then select the “AH4EC Data” link at the top right of the OMS landing page. These instructions describe the data required for the Core Measure (the home-to-child ratio) and the wraparound measures mentioned in TB #14, which are framed as four Chaser Measures.

These technical instructions describe each measure in three parts:

1. **Measure Definition**, which provides an overview of the measure, including its numerator and denominator.
2. **Measure Criteria**, which specify detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria relevant to program administrators who need to know the data requirements.
3. **Analytic Logic**, which outlines key considerations for analysts constructing the measure and generating reports for the upload tool.

Throughout the descriptions, references are made to Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) submissions, including technical documents for the data elements of these systems. The purpose of using AFCARS and NCANDS submissions as references is to maintain compatibility between this data reporting and what agencies currently use to report data to the Children’s Bureau (CB). In these technical instructions, data regarding foster homes and children in foster care reference [AFCARS Technical Bulletin #20](#) ([AFCARS TB #20](#)); data regarding child maltreatment references the [NCANDS Child File Codebook](#).

Instructions on how to submit data after it is prepared are provided in the AH4EC Data Tool. The technical instructions explain how to use the OMS import template to upload data. The AH4EC Data Tool requires that all cells, except for those marked as optional, be completed. Therefore, leaving a cell blank (or null) will result in the submission being rejected.

Measure Definitions and Criteria

Core Measure: Home-to-Child Ratio

Measure Definition

The ratio of the count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month (denominator) to the count of homes available to those children (numerator).

Numerator

The count of all licensed homes with an active license on the last day of the month plus all unlicensed homes with a child placed in the home on the last day of the month.

Denominator

The count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month.

Measure Criteria

Home Definition

All homes with an active license (of any kind) on the last day of the reporting month, regardless of whether there is a child in the home, and all unlicensed homes with a child placed in the home on the last day of the month. Agencies should define a home in accord with how living arrangements were declared as homes with respect to [AFCARS TB #20](#), element 113.

Only homes available to, or occupied by, children under age 18 are included. If a child is on a trial home visit (see AFCARS TB #20, element 120, “placed at home”), the home should be counted.

Child in Foster Care Definition

The reporting population is the same as defined in AFCARS TB #20, Out-of-Home Care Reporting Population Section 1355.42(a)(1)–(a)(2), except only children under age 18 should be included in the denominator. Children placed in a juvenile justice facility are excluded from the denominator. Children on a trial home visit are included in the denominator. See AFCARS TB #20, element 120, “juvenile justice facility” and “placed at home.”

Out-of-State Placements

If a child is placed in another state (e.g., under the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children), both the child and home should be included in the data reporting for the state that has care responsibility for the child. If a license ID is known for the home, regardless of whether the sending or receiving state has the license, it should be reported. Otherwise, the home should be reported as unlicensed.

Analytic Logic

Home Data

Reporting Population: Identify all homes with an active license on the last day of the reporting month and all non-licensed homes with one or more children living in the home on the last day of the reporting month. A licensed home is defined in AFCARS TB #20, element 114. The home must accept children under age 18.

Data Reporting: For each home in the reporting population, create a row in the import template, in the “Home Data” tab, as follows:

- Column A: Enter the license ID if the home was entered as licensed in column C. If the home is unlicensed but there is a state ID, enter that ID.
- Column B: Enter the 5-digit county FIPS code where the home is located.
- Column C: Enter 1 if licensed, 0 if not licensed. See AFCARS TB #20, element 114.
- Columns D, E, G, H, I: Indicate the home type. See AFCARS TB #20, elements 115–119, for home type definitions. Enter 1 for ‘yes’ or 0 for ‘no’.
- Column F: If the home is a non-relative, non-kin, resource home without any other special classification, indicate that here. Enter 1 for ‘yes’ or 0 for ‘no’. If 1 is entered, columns D, E, G, H, and I must have value 0 (does not apply).
- Column J: Indicate the number of available beds, including beds that are currently used.
- Columns K–N: For each column, indicate if the home accepts children in that age group. Enter 1 for ‘yes’ or 0 for ‘no’. If a home accepts children of any age within the group, enter 1. For example, if a home accepts children ages 4–7, both columns L (1–5 years old) and M (6–12 years old) would have value 1.
- Column O: If the accepted ages for the home are unknown, enter that here. Enter 1 for ‘yes’ or 0 for ‘no’. If 1 is entered to indicate that accepted ages are unknown, columns K–N should all have value 0.

- Column P: Indicate whether a child was placed in foster care in the home on the last day of the month. Enter 1 for 'yes' or 0 for 'no'. Note that unlicensed homes should never have value 0 because if no child was in the home, the home should not be reported.

In-Care Data—Children

Reporting Population: Identify all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month, regardless of living arrangement, and were under age 18 on the last day of the month. Exclude children who are in a juvenile justice placement on the last day.

Data Reporting (In Care Data): For each child in foster care on the last day of the month, determine their age in years on the last day of the month. In column B of the “In Care Data” tab, report a sum of counts for each of the following age groups:

- Younger than 1 year old
- 1 to 5 years old
- 6 to 12 years old
- 13 to 17 years old

Additional Data—Child Entry/Exit: Indicate the number of children, under age 18, who entered foster care during the reporting month. These are children who have a date of removal (see AFCARS TB #20, element 69) that occurs during the month. Also indicate the number of children, under age 18, who exited foster care during the reporting month. These are children who have a date of exit (see AFCARS TB #20, element 153) that occurs during the month. For the count of exits, do not include children who are on a trial home visit at the end of the month.

Data Reporting (Entry/Exit Data): Sum the number of entries and report in column B, row 1. Sum the number of exits and report in column B, row 2.

Chaser Measure: Maintaining Family Connections

Measure Definition

Of all children in care on the last day of the month, the percentage of those children who were living with a relative or kin.

Denominator

The count of all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month.

Numerator

Of all children in the denominator, the count of those children who were living with a relative or kin on the last day of the month.

Measure Criteria

“Relative” and “kin” are defined in AFCARS TB #20, elements 117 and 119. Only children under age 18 on the last day of the month are counted. Exclude children in juvenile justice placements.

Analytic Logic

Reporting Population: Identify all children who were in foster care on the last day of the month and were under age 18 and not in a juvenile justice placement on that day.

Denominator: The count of all children identified in the reporting population.

Numerator: For each child in the denominator, identify whether they were in a relative or kin living arrangement. Generate a count of the identified children.

Data Reporting: Using the import template, insert values into the “Chaser Measures” tab as follows:

- Denominator: Row 2, Column B
- Numerator: Row 3, Column B

Chaser Measure: Use of Congregate Care

Measure Definition

Of all days children spent in foster care during the reporting month, the percentage of those days that were spent in congregate care.

Denominator

Of all children who were in foster care for one or more days during the month, the sum of the total number of days spent in care, regardless of living arrangement.

Numerator

Of all children in the denominator, the sum of the total number of days spent in congregate care across all of those children.

Measure Criteria

Congregate care is reported at the child level, so it is based on the setting of the child’s living arrangement(s) during the reporting month. This reporting is aligned with AFCARS reporting as defined in AFCARS TB #20. Congregate care is defined as one of the following living arrangements, the definitions of which can be found in element 120:

- 1 = Group home-family operated
- 2 = Group home-staff operated
- 3 = Group home-shelter care
- 4 = Residential treatment center
- 5 = Qualified residential treatment program
- 6 = Child care institution
- 7 = Child care institution-shelter care

No more than one living arrangement can be active for any given day, so if multiple living arrangements were active on a given day, report the living arrangement that was active at 11:59 p.m. A living arrangement ends on the date a child exits (see AFCARS TB #20, element 153) or on the date before a new living arrangement begins (see AFCARS TB #20, element 112).

Only children under age 18 are included.

Analytic Logic

Reporting Population: Identify all children who were in foster care for at least 1 day during the reporting month. Only children under age 18 are included, and if a child turns 18 during the month, include only the days before their 18th birthday. Likewise, if a child enters or exits a juvenile justice placement during the month, include only their days during the month that were not in juvenile justice.

Denominator: For each child in the reporting population, determine the number of days they spent in foster care, regardless of living arrangement, during the reporting month. This count of days includes only days occurring during the reporting month. Sum the count of days in all care settings across all children. All days for all children for whom the agency has care responsibility are included; this includes days as a runaway, whereabouts unknown, and placed at home.

Numerator: For each child in the denominator, determine the number of days they spent in congregate care during the reporting month. This count of days includes only days in congregate care and only those days occurring in a window bounded by the first and last day of the month. Sum the count of days in congregate care across all children.

Data Reporting: Using the import template, insert values into the “Chaser Measures” tab as follows:

- Denominator: Row 5, Column B
- Numerator: Row 6, Column B

Chaser Measure: Recent Maltreatment History

Measure Definition

Of all children with a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition during the month, the percent who had a prior substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition within the prior 182 days.

Denominator

The count of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition during the month.

Numerator

Of all children in the denominator, the count of those who had a prior substantiated or indicated maltreatment report that reached disposition within 182 days.

Measure Criteria

The initial report and subsequent report are both measured based on disposition dates. See the [NCANDS Child File Codebook](#) for definitions of “disposition” (#11) and “report disposition date” (#12). Reports that resulted in an alternative response are not counted.

This is a count of children, so if there are multiple reports for the same child, count the child only once. Only include dispositions for children who were under age 18 at the time of the disposition.

Analytic Logic

Reporting Population: Identify all children who had a maltreatment investigation(s) reach a disposition of substantiated or indicated during the month. Only include dispositions for children who were under age 18 at the time of disposition.

Denominator: The count of all children identified in the reporting population.

Numerator: For each child in the denominator, determine whether a prior investigation of maltreatment reached disposition, with a finding of substantiated or indicated, within 182 days of the reporting month disposition date. Count the child only once regardless of how many prior investigations reached disposition during the 182 days. If the child had multiple investigations reach disposition within the reporting month and the dispositions are for the same incident, use the investigation that has the most recent disposition as the anchor and exclude the prior investigation from the analysis.

Data Reporting: Using the import template, insert values into the “Chaser Measures” tab as follows:

- Denominator: Row 8, Column B
- Numerator: Row 9, Column B

Chaser Measure: Home Disruptions

Measure Definition

Of all homes with a child placed in the home during the month, the percent of those homes with a disruption during the month.

Denominator

The count of all homes with a child placed in the home for at least 1 day during the month.

Numerator

Of all homes in the denominator, the count of homes that had a child move out of the home for a reason other than an exit or a trial home visit.

Measure Criteria

Include all homes with a child, under age 18, placed in the home for at least 1 day during the month, regardless of whether the home is licensed. If a child turned 18 during the month, but was less than 18 for at least 1 day during the month, the home is counted. This is a count of homes, so if the home had multiple disruptions during the month, the home is counted only once. A home is defined in AFCARS TB #20, element 113.

All moves out of the home are considered a disruption regardless of the reason for the move, except for exits from foster care (see AFCARS TB #20, elements 153 and 155) and placements for trial home visits (see AFCARS TB #20, element 120, “placed at home”). The exception is respite care—if a child is in respite care and returns to the same home, that does not count as a move. However, if a child in respite care does not return to the same home, that counts as a move and would be counted in the month in which the living arrangement for the new home begins.

Analytic Logic

Reporting Population: Identify all homes with one or more children placed in the home for at least 1 day during the reporting month, where the child was under age 18 for at least 1 of those days.

Denominator: The count of all homes in the reporting population.

Numerator: For each home in the reporting population, identify whether the home had a child move out of the home and into a new living arrangement during the reporting month. This is the flag for disruptions, and the month in which the disruption occurs is based on the date of the new living arrangement (see AFCARS TB #20, element 112). Generate a count of the homes that were identified. If a home had multiple children move out during the reporting month, count the home only once.

Data Reporting: Using the import template, insert values into the “Chaser Measures” tab as follows:

- Denominator: Row 11, Column B
- Numerator: Row 12, Column B