



## PUBLIC SECTOR SERVICES

# Foster Care Referrals for Child Support Services

Considerations based on recent policy changes

Child support payments may be retained by the state as reimbursement for the cost of a child placed in foster care. However, studies show that requiring child support payments from parents of a child recently placed in foster care hinders reunification efforts. The Administration for Children and Families recently updated guidance to IV-E agencies to not seek child support except in rare circumstances. This guidance allows states to define when a referral to child support is appropriate, whether and how to “undo” existing referrals, how to make up any perceived lost revenue and to improve interagency communication. **A&M helps states analyze data and develop actionable recommendations that promote collaboration between child welfare and child support and improve family reunification.**

A&M combines a depth of child welfare and child support subject matter expertise to help states re-assess their child welfare referral process and interagency communication. Working closely to bridge the gap between both agencies, we offer an analysis of current processes, regulatory and statutory mandates, child support impacts on reunification efforts, and communication and coordination in serving the same families.

### WHY A&M?

- ▶ Extensive combined experience in child support and child welfare programs
- ▶ Insights based on front-line experience in establishing and enforcing child support orders
- ▶ Experience in over a dozen states conducting HHS program analysis and managing transformational implementations
- ▶ Emphasis on data-driven decisions to help states make informed decisions to drive change for better outcomes



### Implementation Factor



### A&M Role

Under what circumstances is a referral appropriate?



Analysis of when a referral to child support is appropriate, such as when foster children come from non-intact homes where child support from an NCP is in place or should be sought

How much savings will each agency realize by implementing the new guidance?



Faster time to reunification, resulting in cost-avoidance of placement, and reduced time spent on cases with low collection amounts and rates

What should states do about existing, paying cases?



Analysis of existing IV-E caseload with pros/cons analysis regarding closing existing cases, regardless of payment status and forgiving outstanding arrears

How will this change affect agency revenue?



Analysis of lost revenue to IV-E for limiting referrals and recommendations on how to reduce impacts and alternate sources of collection

How can interagency communication be improved to support the goals of each program?



- Facilitate and develop joint procedures and policies
- Improve IV-E information access to determine whether a paternity or support order already exists, locate NCPs and verify income of the parents to decide whether a referral is appropriate

What system changes do I need to make to support this new policy?

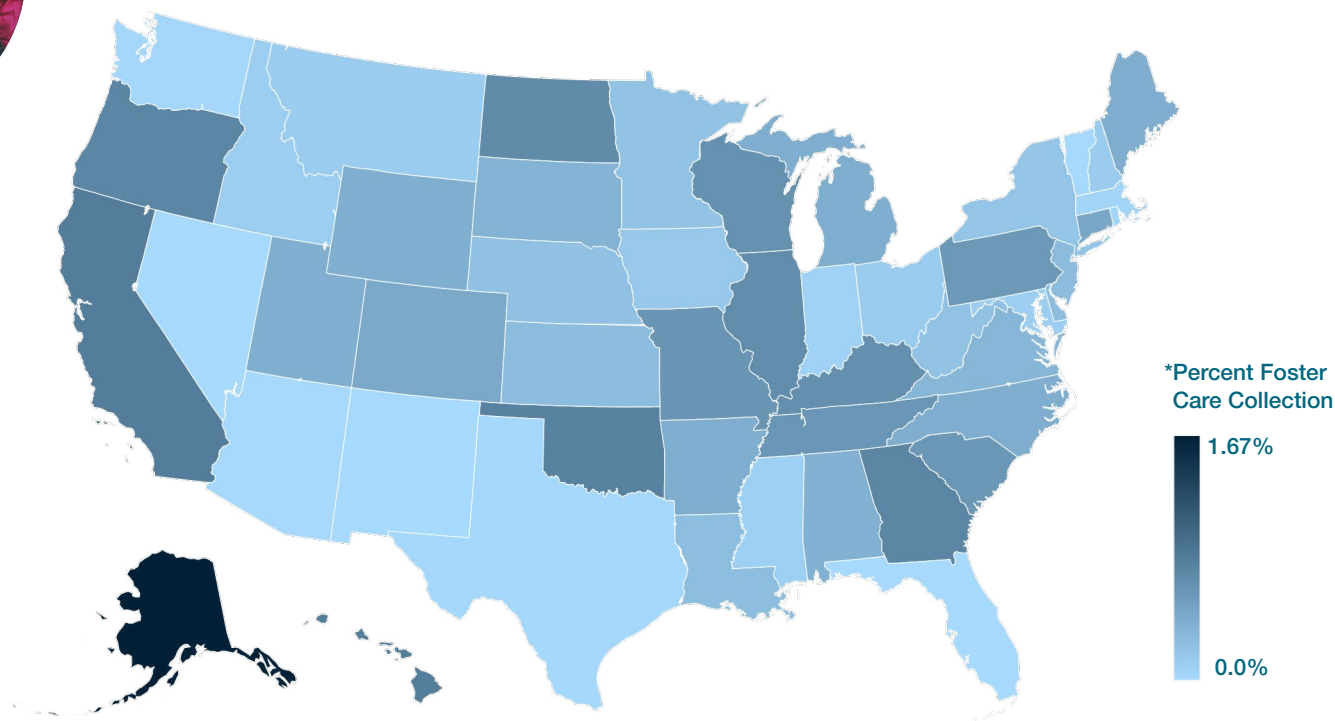


Analysis on how to automate the referral decision-making process sharing of data between the two systems



## IV-E Foster Care Collections as a Percentage of Total Child Support Collections

### 2019 Foster Care Collections Share



#### \*References:

Foster Care Collections Share calculated using:

- Administration of Children and Families Office of Child Support FY 2019 Annual Report, Table 4. Total Distributed Collections for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years
- Administration of Children and Families Office of Child Support FY 2019 Annual Report, Table 12. Distributed Foster Care Collections for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years

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