



# Child and Family Services Reviews

## Mississippi Final Report 2018



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau

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# Final Report: Mississippi Child and Family Services Review

## INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Mississippi. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Mississippi are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) and submitted to the Children's Bureau on July 24, 2018. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The results of case reviews of 65 cases (40 foster care and 25 in-home) conducted via a Traditional Review process at Hinds, Harrison, and Pontotoc and Union Counties, Mississippi, during the week of September 24, 2018
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
  - Child welfare agency caseworkers and supervisors
  - Child welfare agency commissioner and deputy commissioners
  - Child welfare agency senior managers
  - Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) staff
  - Criminal records check staff
  - Foster and adoptive licensing staff
  - Foster parents and adoptive parents
  - Information system staff
  - Judges
  - Parents
  - Public and private agency training staff
  - Service providers

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- Staff of contracted child care facilities
- Youth served by the agency

In Round 3, the Children's Bureau suspended the use of the state's performance on the national standards for the 7 statewide data indicators in conformity decisions. For contextual information, Appendix A of this report shows the state's performance on the 7 data indicators. Moving forward, the Children's Bureau will refer to the national standards as "national performance." This national performance represents the performance of the nation on the statewide data indicators for an earlier point in time. For the time periods used to calculate the national performance for each indicator, see 80 Fed. Reg. 27263 (May 13, 2015).<sup>1</sup>

### Background Information

The Round 3 CFSR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates 1 or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome.

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state's substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the statewide assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity.

The Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews and in response to feedback from the child welfare field. As such, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides tables presenting Mississippi's overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Mississippi's performance in Round 2.

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<sup>1</sup> May 2017 revised syntax (pending final verification) uses 2 years of NCANDS data to calculate performance for the Maltreatment in Foster Care indicator. National performance is based on FY 2013–2014 and 2013AB files. All other indicators use the same time periods identified in the May 2015 Federal Register notice.

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### I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

#### Mississippi 2018 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes and Systemic Factors

None of the 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity.

The following 2 of the 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Quality Assurance System
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community

#### Children's Bureau Comments on Mississippi Performance

The following are the Children's Bureau's observations about cross-cutting issues and Mississippi's overall performance:

A key finding of the Mississippi CFSR was the state's commitment to CQI as evidenced by its functioning Quality Assurance system. The Children's Bureau believes that ongoing development and integration of CQI activities will serve as a solid foundation for developing improvement strategies for safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes in Mississippi.

The case review results reveal Mississippi's strong practice around ensuring that placements are stable for children in foster care; placing siblings together when possible and appropriate; and using relatives as placement, visitation, mentoring, and permanency resources. Exploration of both maternal and paternal relatives as potential resources, consistent application of licensing requirements, effective criminal background check processes, and corrective action planning with resource families are strengths that may contribute to 95% of children in the applicable cases reviewed having two or fewer placements. Meeting children's educational needs is also an area of strength for Mississippi. The agency works closely with partners in the education system to ensure that children's educational needs are assessed and appropriately addressed. The agency also collaborates with other system partners to coordinate services and seeks stakeholder involvement in strategic planning.

Case review results also showed practice challenges. In both foster care and in-home services cases, ensuring the safety of children through timely, accurate, and comprehensive investigations and risk and safety assessments is an area of concern. The Children's Bureau encourages the state to conduct additional analyses of the decisions to remove children from their homes, the quality of initial and ongoing assessments of risk and safety, and the monitoring and updating of safety plans.

As demonstrated by the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, practice improvements are needed in the engagement of parents and ensuring that they have comprehensive assessments and are provided appropriate services. Two key factors contributing to performance in these practice areas are workforce issues, including turnover resulting in multiple caseworkers assigned to manage cases and the lack of frequent, quality caseworker visits with parents. While improvement in engaging both mothers and fathers is needed, review results showed greater challenges with respect to fathers. Collaboration with court partners, including parent attorneys and those involved with Mississippi's

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quality legal representation initiative, may help identify how parents can be more meaningfully engaged in developing case plans that focus on resolving safety issues and addressing the well-being needs of families.

More than 40% of the cases reviewed involved substance abuse by parents or caregivers. Stakeholders reported concerns about the availability and accessibility of a continuum of substance abuse services, particularly for parents without medical insurance. In addition, a lack of sufficient mental health services for both children and parents, and transportation to services, regardless of location, were noted by stakeholders as significant barriers to timely access to services and the successful completion of case plans. Numerous stakeholders also reported that the use of the In-Circle Family Support Services program is meaningful and effective for families receiving in-home child welfare services, but that waitlists for the program exist. The Children's Bureau encourages the state to develop Program Improvement Plan (PIP) strategies to address the availability and accessibility of services, including substance abuse treatment, transportation, and in-home services, and to improve Mississippi's ability to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families.

Case review findings and stakeholder feedback also noted that improvements are needed in achieving timely permanency for children in foster care. Despite evidence that court and administrative periodic reviews are being held frequently, case review results showed and stakeholders said that permanency goals for children are not consistently established and goals are frequently not achieved timely. Inadequate implementation of concurrent planning, not ensuring the timely filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings, and court continuances and delays appear to affect the timely achievement of permanency for children. Case reviews and stakeholder interviews noted significant delays in the agency's TPR filing process and insufficient attention to Adoption and Safe Families Act timeframes. Collaborative work with the legal and judicial systems is needed to identify successful PIP strategies to improve permanency outcomes for children and families.

## II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide performance summaries from the case review findings. The CFSR relies upon a case review of an approved sample of foster care cases and in-home services cases. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care and in-home services cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to MDCPS. The state is encouraged to conduct additional item-specific analysis of the case review findings to better understand areas of practice that are associated with positive outcomes and those that need improvement.

### **Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Item 1.

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### State Outcome Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 58% of the 33 applicable cases reviewed.

### Safety Outcome 1 Item Performance

#### Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated, and face-to-face contact with the child(ren) made, within the time frames established by agency policies or state statutes.

State policy requires that accepted reports be assigned for a Level One, Two, or Three response. An investigation is initiated when face-to-face contact is made or attempted with the alleged victim(s) and should occur within the timeframes required by the level of the report. Level One reports that do not meet statutory criteria are screened out and may receive a referral for information or a referral for services. Level Two reports require a response within 72 hours from the date and time the call comes into Mississippi Centralized Intake (MCI). Level Three reports require a response within 24 hours from the initial intake report date and time. If a report indicates a child is in imminent danger, it is assigned for immediate response.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 58% of the 33 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- For performance on the Safety statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

### Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

### State Outcome Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 46% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 48% of the 40 foster care cases and 44% of the 25 in-home services cases.

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### ***Safety Outcome 2 Item Performance***

#### **Item 2. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry Into Foster Care**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children's entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 2 because 37% of the 19 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 38% of the 16 applicable foster care cases and 33% of the 3 applicable in-home services cases.

#### **Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 3 because 46% of the 65 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 48% of the 40 foster care cases and 44% of the 25 in-home services cases.

### **Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6.

#### **State Outcome Performance**

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 13% of the 40 applicable cases reviewed.

#### ***Permanency Outcome 1 Item Performance***

#### **Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goal(s).



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- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 4 because 88% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 40% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 28% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- For performance on the Permanency statewide data indicators, see Appendix A.

## Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

### State Outcome Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 43% of the 40 applicable cases reviewed.

### *Permanency Outcome 2 Item Performance*

### Item 7. Placement With Siblings

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 72% of the 25 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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### Item 8. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father,<sup>2</sup> and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 42% of the 31 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 33% of the 9 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation with a sibling(s) in foster care who is/was in a different placement setting was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 50% of the 24 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 64% of the 14 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

### Item 9. Preserving Connections

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, Tribe, school, and friends.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 9 because 60% of the 40 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 10. Relative Placement

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

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<sup>2</sup> For Item 8, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification. The persons identified in these roles for the purposes of the review may include individuals who do not meet the legal definitions or conventional meanings of a mother and father.

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- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 56% of the 39 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father<sup>3</sup> or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 46% of the 28 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 42% of the 24 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.
- In 64% of the 14 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.

### Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

#### State Outcome Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 20% of the 65 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 18% of the 40 foster care cases and 24% of the 25 in-home services cases.

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<sup>3</sup> For Item 11, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification.

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### **Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance**

#### **Item 12. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency (1) made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents,<sup>4</sup> and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family, and (2) provided the appropriate services.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 20% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as a Strength in 18% of the 40 foster care cases and 24% of the 25 in-home services cases.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

#### **Sub-Item 12A. Needs Assessment and Services to Children**

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12A because 52% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 58% of the 40 foster care cases and 44% of the 25 in-home services cases.

#### **Sub-Item 12B. Needs Assessment and Services to Parents**

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 19% of the 57 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 16% of the 32 applicable foster care cases and 24% of the 25 in-home services cases.
- In 31% of the 54 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 19% of the 43 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts both to assess and address the needs of fathers.

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<sup>4</sup> For Sub-Item 12B, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

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### Sub-Item 12C. Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12C because 74% of the 39 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

### Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents<sup>5</sup> and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 36% of the 64 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 38% of the 39 applicable foster care cases and 32% of the 25 in-home services cases.
- In 63% of the 49 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 38% of the 53 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 28% of the 32 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

### Item 14. Caseworker Visits With Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 68% of the 65 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 75% of the 40 foster care cases and 56% of the 25 in-home services cases.

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<sup>5</sup> For Item 13, in the in-home cases, “Mother” and “Father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, “mother” and “father” are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency’s work with multiple applicable “mothers” and “fathers” for the period under review in the case.

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### Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers<sup>6</sup> of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 24% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 20% of the 30 applicable foster care cases and 28% of the 25 in-home services cases.
- In 30% of the 53 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 19% of the 32 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

### Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Item 16.

#### State Outcome Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 71% of the 45 applicable cases reviewed.

#### Well-Being Outcome 2 Item Performance

### Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child

**Purpose of Assessment:** To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children's educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if

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<sup>6</sup> For Item 15, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" is typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable mother and fathers for the period under review in the case.

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the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 16 because 71% of the 45 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 74% of the 34 applicable foster care cases and 64% of the 11 applicable in-home services cases.

### **Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.**

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 using the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

#### **State Outcome Performance**

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 47% of the 57 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 45% of the 40 foster care cases and 53% of the 17 applicable in-home services cases.

#### ***Well-Being Outcome 3 Item Performance***

##### **Item 17. Physical Health of the Child**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 63% of the 46 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 63% of the 40 foster care cases and 67% of the 6 applicable in-home services cases.

##### **Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child**

**Purpose of Assessment:** To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 18 because 49% of the 41 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

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- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 46% of the 26 applicable foster care cases and 53% of the 15 applicable in-home services cases.

### III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item and a description of how the rating was determined. The CFSR relies upon a review of information contained in the statewide assessment to assess each item. If an item rating cannot be determined from the information contained in the statewide assessment, the Children's Bureau conducts stakeholder interviews and considers information gathered through the interviews in determining ratings for each item.

#### Statewide Information System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 19.

##### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

##### *Statewide Information System Item Performance*

#### Item 19. Statewide Information System

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The statewide information system is functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Data and information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that although Mississippi has a written policy on the timeframes for data entry, the timeliness of data entry varies statewide, particularly for current placement information. The accuracy of the data in the statewide Mississippi Automated Child Welfare Information System varies depending on a number of factors, including caseworker understanding of the elements, workload, and turnover. Additionally, data validation processes are applied inconsistently statewide.



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### Case Review System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. One of the 5 items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

#### Case Review System Item Performance

##### Item 20. Written Case Plan

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment. Mississippi agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that although the Family Team Meeting process is used to develop case plans, it does not effectively ensure that parents are engaged in the development of initial and ongoing case plans. Results of a recent statewide case review found that parents were engaged in case planning in a little more than 40% of the cases. The results also showed that a little more than half of mothers and less than half of fathers were actively engaged in case planning.

##### Item 21. Periodic Reviews

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that Mississippi administers periodic reviews, called County Conferences, every 6 months for all children who remain in the custody of the state. The state provided data from a recent time period showing that most of these periodic reviews occurred timely.

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### Item 22. Permanency Hearings

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment. Mississippi agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Data provided in the statewide assessment showed that during a recent time period, slightly more than half of children had a timely initial and subsequent permanency hearing. Mississippi said that court data are not consistently collected and kept statewide; therefore, there are concerns about data quality and availability that affect the state's ability to report performance accurately in this area.

### Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment. Mississippi agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that the filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings is not occurring as required in a consistent manner across the state. Data provided in the statewide assessment showed that of those children who had been in custody at least 15 of the past 22 months in a recent time period, almost 70% had not had a TPR petition filed and did not have an ASFA exception documented in the case file. The state said that there were significant changes in TPR statutes in 2016 and again in 2017 that have resulted in delays in processing and hearing TPR cases.

### Item 24. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
  - Information from the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that caregivers are not routinely notified of reviews and court hearings and that their right to be heard in these proceedings is not

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always guaranteed. Stakeholders reported that practice varies across the state and that in some jurisdictions, caregivers are not allowed to remain in the courtroom or offer information during hearings.

### Quality Assurance System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 25.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

#### Quality Assurance System Item Performance

##### Item 25. Quality Assurance System

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it (1) is operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that Mississippi has an array of CQI mechanisms that ensures the quality assurance system is functioning statewide. The state monitors performance at all levels, produces reports, and has regular local and statewide discussions about findings and improving practice using local improvement plans. Supervisors and managers routinely use data dashboards to manage programs, and performance-based contracts are used with some service providers. Stakeholders reported that data from the different monitoring mechanisms, including data generated from the state's settlement agreement, rarely conflict and provide an accurate picture of practice.

### Staff and Provider Training

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

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### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. One of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

### *Staff and Provider Training Item Performance*

#### Item 26. Initial Staff Training

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information from the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state has a training system in place that ensures that staff are trained in a timely manner, and the training prepares staff with the skills and knowledge required for their positions. Stakeholders reported that once a new hire completes the preservice training, on-the-job supervision begins with trainer and professional development support. Stakeholders said that the on-the-job training is the most beneficial component of initial training because it provides coaching and mentoring, and allows staff to demonstrate what they have learned.

#### Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff<sup>7</sup> that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information from the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state has requirements for ongoing training and a process to ensure that staff have access to relevant ongoing training to support them in carrying out their duties. However, the state's ability to track ongoing training hours was insufficient until recently when the

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<sup>7</sup> "Staff," for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP. "Staff" also includes direct supervisors of all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

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agency moved to a new training platform. In addition, the state does not have necessary data or information about the effectiveness of ongoing training to inform decisions about training needs.

### Item 28. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that initial and ongoing training requirements are in place for foster and adoptive parents and staff in facilities. State licensing staff track training hours to ensure training requirements are met. All foster and relative homes receive the same basic training, with additional training provided for homes that provide varying levels of therapeutic care. The state, however, does not have information or data to demonstrate the effectiveness of initial and ongoing training to inform decisions about the training needs of current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities.

### Service Array and Resource Development

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. None of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

#### *Service Array and Resource Development Item Performance*

### Item 29. Array of Services

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

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- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state does not have an adequate array of services accessible to children and families statewide. Gaps and waitlists for services exist for substance abuse treatment for parents and children, transportation, mental health services for parents and children, Independent Living Services, and housing. Availability and accessibility of services are further restricted for parents without medical insurance.

### Item 30. Individualizing Services

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected from stakeholders during interviews showed that services are not consistently being individualized across the state. Although Mississippi has interpreter services for Spanish, American Sign Language (ASL), Arabic, Chinese, and Vietnamese languages, there are barriers to individualization of services, which include limited services, a lack of flexible funding, and funding approval delays.

### Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. Both of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

#### *Agency Responsiveness to the Community Item Performance*

### Item 31. State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related APSRs, the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment.

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- Information from the statewide assessment showed that the agency actively and frequently engages in ongoing consultation with key stakeholders and Tribes at the local and state levels in developing the goals, objectives, and annual updates to the CFSP. Stakeholders are engaged for updates on joint initiatives and service delivery information to identify and discuss successes and perceived barriers, and to strategize on opportunities for improvement. Mississippi actively collaborates with the CIP, the Administrative Office of Courts, the Division of Youth Services, mental health representatives, Tribes, and Mississippi's Teen Advisory Board.

### Item 32. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that Mississippi has entered Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to strengthen and aid in coordinating services and benefits of federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population. MOUs have been established with the Division of Medicaid, Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Mental Health, Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Department of Health, and Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.

### Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

#### State Systemic Factor Performance

Mississippi is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. Two of the four items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

#### *Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Performance*

### Item 33. Standards Applied Equally

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

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- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state ensures that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds. Monitoring processes are in place for public and private foster homes and institutions to ensure that standards are being met.

### Item 34. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances for foster and adoptive families and staff at group homes and residential child care facilities. The state has a case planning process in place that is routinely functioning to ensure that any criminal history concerns are adequately addressed to ensure the safety of children.

### Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information provided in the statewide assessment and collected during interviews with stakeholders showed that Mississippi is not ensuring that the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in care is occurring across the state.

### Item 36. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements

**Description of Systemic Factor Item:** The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.



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- Mississippi received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment. Mississippi agreed with this rating and felt that additional information collected during stakeholder interviews would not affect the rating.
- Information in the statewide assessment showed that Mississippi effectively uses cross-jurisdictional resources to support the permanent placement of waiting children through AdoptUSKids, Mississippi Heart Gallery, and inquiries from other sources. However, there are concerns about the state's response to requests for home studies to facilitate permanent placements of children in Mississippi from other states. The state does not have an efficient way of tracking the percentage of home studies received from other states completed within 60 days.

## Appendix A

### Summary of Mississippi 2018 Child and Family Services Review Performance

#### I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes and Items

**Outcome Achievement:** Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

**Item Achievement:** Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

#### **SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.**

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 1</b> Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	58% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 1</b> Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	58% Strength

#### **SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE.**

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Safety Outcome 2</b> Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	46% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 2</b> Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Area Needing Improvement	37% Strength
<b>Item 3</b> Risk and safety assessment and management	Area Needing Improvement	46% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 1</b> Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	13% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 4</b> Stability of foster care placement	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
<b>Item 5</b> Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	40% Strength
<b>Item 6</b> Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	28% Strength

### PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Permanency Outcome 2</b> The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	43% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 7</b> Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	72% Strength
<b>Item 8</b> Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	42% Strength
<b>Item 9</b> Preserving connections	Area Needing Improvement	60% Strength
<b>Item 10</b> Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	56% Strength
<b>Item 11</b> Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	46% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 1</b> Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	20% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 12</b> Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	20% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12A</b> Needs assessment and services to children	Area Needing Improvement	52% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12B</b> Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	19% Strength
<b>Sub-Item 12C</b> Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	74% Strength
<b>Item 13</b> Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	36% Strength
<b>Item 14</b> Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength
<b>Item 15</b> Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	24% Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 2</b> Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	71% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 16</b> Educational needs of the child	Area Needing Improvement	71% Strength

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

Data Element	Overall Determination	State Performance
<b>Well-Being Outcome 3</b> Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	47% Substantially Achieved
<b>Item 17</b> Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	63% Strength
<b>Item 18</b> Mental/behavioral health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	49% Strength

## II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The Children’s Bureau determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the 7 systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The Children’s Bureau determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the Children’s Bureau must find that no more than 1 of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the Children’s Bureau must find that the item is functioning as required.

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Statewide Information System</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 19</b> Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Case Review System</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 20</b> Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 21</b> Periodic Reviews	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 22</b> Permanency Hearings	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 23</b> Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 24</b> Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Quality Assurance System</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 25</b> Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Staff and Provider Training</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 26</b> Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 27</b> Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 28</b> Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Service Array and Resource Development</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 29</b> Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 30</b> Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

### AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Agency Responsiveness to the Community</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 31</b> State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment	Strength
<b>Item 32</b> Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

### FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
<b>Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention</b>	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not in Substantial Conformity
<b>Item 33</b> Standards Applied Equally	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 34</b> Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
<b>Item 35</b> Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
<b>Item 36</b> State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment	Area Needing Improvement

### III. Performance on Statewide Data Indicators<sup>8</sup>

The state's performance is considered against the national performance for each statewide data indicator and provides contextual information for considering the findings. This information is not used in conformity decisions. State performance may be statistically above, below, or no different than the national performance. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the Children's Bureau did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Recurrence of maltreatment	9.5%	Lower	12.5%	11.7%–13.3%	FY15–16

<sup>8</sup> In October 2016, the Children's Bureau issued Technical Bulletin #9 (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/cfsr-technical-bulletin-9>), which alerted states to the fact that there were technical errors in the syntax used to calculate the national and state performance for the statewide data indicators. Performance shown in this table reflects performance based on May 2017 revised syntax that is pending final verification.



## Appendix A: Summary of Mississippi 2018 CFSR Performance

Statewide Data Indicator	National Performance	Direction of Desired Performance	RSP*	95% Confidence Interval**	Data Period(s) Used for State Performance***
Maltreatment in foster care (victimizations per 100,000 days in care)	9.67	Lower	13.75	11.84–15.97	15A–15B, FY15–16
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	42.7%	Higher	43.8%	42.1%–45.6%	15A–17B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	45.9%	Higher	36.4%	33.8%–39.0%	17A–17B
Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more	31.8%	Higher	21.0%	19.3%–22.8%	17A–17B
Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	8.1%	Lower	4.6%	3.5%–5.9%	15A–17B
Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days in care)	4.44	Lower	4.90	4.7–5.1	17A–17B

\* Risk-Standardized Performance (RSP) is derived from a multi-level statistical model and reflects the state's performance relative to states with similar children and takes into account the number of children the state served, the age distribution of these children and, for some indicators, the state's entry rate. It uses risk-adjustment to minimize differences in outcomes due to factors over which the state has little control and provides a more fair comparison of state performance against national performance.

\*\* 95% Confidence Interval is the 95% confidence interval estimate for the state's RSP. The values shown are the lower RSP and upper RSP of the interval estimate. The interval accounts for the amount of uncertainty associated with the RSP. For example, the CB is 95% confident that the true value of the RSP is between the lower and upper limit of the interval.

\*\*\* Data Period(s) Used for State Performance: Refers to the initial 12-month period and the period(s) of data needed to follow the children to observe their outcomes. The FY or federal fiscal year refers to NCANDS data, which spans the 12-month period October 1–September 30. All other periods refer to AFCARS data. "A" refers to the 6-month period October 1–March 31. "B" refers to the 6-month period April 1–September 30. The 2-digit year refers to the calendar year in which the period ends.

## Appendix B

### Summary of CFSR Round 2 Mississippi 2010 Key Findings

The Children’s Bureau conducted a CFSR in Mississippi in 2010. Key findings from that review are presented below. Because the Children’s Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a state’s performance in the third round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.

#### Identifying Information and Review Dates

<b>General Information</b>
<b>Children’s Bureau Region:</b> 4
<b>Date of Onsite Review:</b> May 17–21, 2010
<b>Period Under Review:</b> April 1, 2009, through May 21, 2010
<b>Date Courtesy Copy of Final Report Issued:</b> August 5, 2010
<b>Date Program Improvement Plan Due:</b> November 3, 2010
<b>Date Program Improvement Plan Approved:</b> April 1, 2011

#### Highlights of Findings

<b>Performance Measurements</b>
A. The state met the national standards for <b>four</b> of the <b>six</b> standards.
B. The state achieved substantial conformity with <b>none</b> of the <b>seven</b> outcomes.
C. The state achieved substantial conformity with <b>two</b> of the <b>seven</b> systemic factors.

## Appendix B: Mississippi 2010 CFSR Key Findings

### State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	National Standard	State's Score	Meets or Does Not Meet Standard
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	95.4	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	98.28	Does Not Meet Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	127.4	Meets Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	112.5	Meets Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	125.9	Meets Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	86.9	Does Not Meet Standard

### State's Conformance With the Outcomes

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

## Appendix B: Mississippi 2010 CFSR Key Findings

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

### State's Conformance With the Systemic Factors

Systemic Factor	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Statewide Information System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

## Appendix B: Mississippi 2010 CFSR Key Findings

### Key Findings by Item

#### Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
2. Repeat Maltreatment	Strength
3. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-entry into Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	Area Needing Improvement
5. Foster Care Re-entries	Strength
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
7. Permanency Goal for Child	Area Needing Improvement
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement With Relatives	Area Needing Improvement
9. Adoption	Area Needing Improvement
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	Area Needing Improvement
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
12. Placement With Siblings	Area Needing Improvement
13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
15. Relative Placement	Area Needing Improvement
16. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
17. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents	Area Needing Improvement
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement

## Appendix B: Mississippi 2010 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
21. Educational Needs of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
22. Physical Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

### **Systemic Factors**

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
24. Statewide Information System	Area Needing Improvement
25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
26. Periodic Reviews	Strength
27. Permanency Hearings	Strength
28. Termination of Parental Rights	Area Needing Improvement
29. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Area Needing Improvement
30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
31. Quality Assurance System	Area Needing Improvement
32. Initial Staff Training	Strength
33. Ongoing Staff Training	Strength
34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
35. Array of Services	Strength
36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
37. Individualizing Services	Area Needing Improvement
38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength
40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength

## Appendix B: Mississippi 2010 CFSR Key Findings

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Strength
42. Standards Applied Equally	Area Needing Improvement
43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength