



# Planning Title IV-E Prevention Services: A Toolkit for States

## Developing a Plan for Title IV-E Prevention Services



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## DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR TITLE IV-E PREVENTION SERVICES



The suggestions and information in this toolkit can help states develop plans for offering a comprehensive service array to address the needs of families with children who are at risk for foster care placement. As discussed throughout this toolkit, effectively planning prevention services involves considering a range of strategies and funding sources.

States that want to receive Title IV-E reimbursement for prevention services must complete a five-year Title IV-E prevention program plan. This part describes how states can translate information from earlier parts of the toolkit into developing a Title IV-E prevention program plan.

### A. Using this toolkit to help create a five-year Title IV-E prevention program plan

Your state's Title IV-E prevention program plan will define your strategy for addressing the statutory requirements referenced in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) pre-print (see attachments to [ACYF-CB-PI-18-09](#)). Appendix D of this toolkit contains text from the pre-print (without relevant attachments). The pre-print prompts states to include information about compliance with statutory requirements related to the following topics:

1. Service description and oversight
2. Evaluation strategy and waiver request
3. Monitoring child safety
4. Consultation and coordination
5. Child welfare workforce support
6. Child welfare workforce training
7. Prevention caseloads
8. Assurance on prevention program reporting
9. Child and family eligibility for the Title IV-E prevention program

**Creating the plan in partnership.** As discussed in the “Identifying and engaging partners” companion document in this toolkit, planning prevention services in close collaboration with partners and stakeholders can help ensure that your planning efforts create a prevention system that is responsive to community needs. It also helps partners and stakeholders to see

how they fit into the overall effort and can serve as a foundation for discussions about roles in implementation. Your Title IV-E prevention program plan requires consultation with other state agencies and stakeholders (see pre-print Section 4), which is important for moving your plans into action. In addition, it is important to consult with your ACF Children's Bureau Regional Office for up-to-date information on the law and guidance regarding state plans.

**Tips:**

- **Working with partners to co-create your plan** can help ensure that your plan best addresses population needs and most effectively leverages resources across systems. After you develop a draft of the plan, receiving feedback from additional stakeholders can improve the plan.
- **Developing an implementation timeline** to review with partners and other stakeholders helps them take ownership and will enable them to assess their potential level of involvement in implementing the plan.
- **Identifying small steps** to complete in the beginning helps encourage participation and engagement in executing the plan.
- **Revising the plan with partners periodically over time** can help to keep partners engaged and ensure that your efforts account for progress, barriers, and lessons learned.

**Assessment of needs and opportunities.** The “Assessing population, service needs, and service coverage” companion document in this toolkit offers questions to consider in assessing (1) population and service needs, (2) the landscape of services and providers, and (3) insurance coverage and funding. This assessment will then lead to conversations about selecting priorities—including broad goals and goals for Title IV-E prevention services specifically—and determining what is most important for stakeholders. For example, a survey of evidence-based practices (EBPs) and coverage opportunities will enable you to understand where you might be able to scale up EBPs. In addition, as part of planning, you will need to consider how to monitor and evaluate services and whether you are meeting population needs. It could help to consider up front what sources of information will help you monitor and evaluate services, including whether the data sources that you use in initial planning can also help to track progress.

- **Tip:** Collaboration with child welfare researchers or local universities could help you identify data that can help with identifying population needs and with continuously improving services.

**Determining vision and priorities.** To develop your state's five-year Title IV-E prevention program plan, you will have to describe the parameters outlined in the Administration for Children and Families pre-print. Although the Title IV-E prevention program plan pre-print does not have to include a statement of the broad vision for and goals of your planning efforts, as discussed in the “Determining priorities, goals, and actions” companion document in this toolkit, it is crucial to articulate your vision and goals before determining the strategies

to address them. Implementing Title IV-E prevention services reimbursement can be one piece of broader efforts to move toward a more prevention-based system. In Table 1 of the “Determining priorities, goals, and actions” companion document, Virginia’s documentation from the Family First Prevention Services Act planning efforts provides an example of how one state has articulated a broad vision and then developed related goals and strategies.

- **Tip:** Creating a one-page map of your goals and priorities and how they relate to your overall vision can help you communicate what you seek to accomplish. This map can indicate how various activities and funding streams, such as Title IV-E prevention services reimbursement, support your broad goals.

**Mapping funding to service needs.** The “Understanding roles of funding and decision points” companion document in this toolkit offered a comprehensive list of available federal funding mechanisms to consider for filling gaps in services and for better understanding nuances of the current landscape of funding and services. It provided examples of which services could be covered by Medicaid as well as a variety of funding mechanisms. A holistic picture of your funding options can help you match your need to the options that exist and make the most efficient use of resources.

- **Tip:** It could be helpful to have a specific subcommittee in your planning process that focuses on bridging the needs in your state with available funding. This committee could include a senior financial executive and others who have experience with Medicaid financing and working with state, local, and federal funding streams to finance child welfare services.

## B. Additional considerations

This toolkit focused on processes and analyses to help states describe the main parameters of what services they will deliver and to whom, as in pre-print Sections 1 (services description and oversight), 4 (consultation and coordination with other agencies), and 9 (child and family eligibility). In addition, it will be important to define operational details about *how* your state will implement and monitor these services—such as those related to the following:

1. **Child welfare workforce (as mentioned in pre-print Sections 5, 6, and 7).** It is important to consider how your workforce will learn about any new practices or policies involved in implementing Title IV-E prevention services and be trained to implement them. It is helpful to include your staff in conversations as early as possible. For example, if case managers will be trained in motivational interviewing, it will be important that your planning committee detail such plans (for example, who will provide training, who will receive it, where, how it will impact staff’s time and ability to complete other work, and how it will be paid for). You might also consider whether you will require more staff to offer prevention services.

2. **Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation (as mentioned in pre-print Sections 2, 3, and 8).**<sup>1</sup> States will have to develop data collection processes or use current tracking systems to monitor services and outcomes. The “Determining priorities, goals, and actions” companion document in this toolkit briefly discusses monitoring data. Some states will also choose to evaluate an EBP that is not approved by the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse to determine effectiveness within their context (as discussed in [ACYF-CB-PI-19-06](#)). Using a logic model, as discussed in Box 2 in the “Determining priorities, goals, and actions” companion document, can help you articulate your service components and target outcomes. Hiring or collaborating with people who are proficient in research and improving data quality can be essential for effective monitoring and evaluation. In addition, you might wish to create data-sharing partnerships with other agencies to best monitor and evaluate services.
3. **Other operational considerations about service delivery.** It is important to consider how you will operationalize delivery of Title IV-E prevention services, such as payment rates and payment types for services, as well as which providers you will reimburse for EBPs and how. For example, to identify providers of EBPs, Nebraska released a request for qualifications.<sup>2</sup> Other states surveyed providers to identify which were already providing EBPs or leveraged surveys by other entities regarding current use of such practices. For example, Tennessee used a survey that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Center for Excellence completed in the state to assess current use of EBPs. You will also have to consider how to fund EBP-related infrastructure and administrative activities, such as staff training and fidelity monitoring (see Section C.3 of the “Understanding roles of funding and decision points” companion document in this toolkit for more information about funding these activities).

## C. Conclusion

The Family First Prevention Services Act offers an exciting opportunity for states to consider prevention in a broad sense and leverage additional resources to meet the needs of families with children at risk of entering foster care. Although only some prevention services will be reimbursable by Title IV-E, planning prevention services offers the opportunity for broader cross-system efforts to align resources in support of a common vision. States can engage a wide range of partners and stakeholders, including families with lived experience, to help design a comprehensive array of prevention services in order to strengthen families and communities. Understanding available funding and how agencies can work together to improve family outcomes is an important step toward better meeting the needs of children and families. Finally, monitoring and evaluating services will help you understand the

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<sup>1</sup> For relevant guidance from the Administration for Children and Families, see [Technical Bulletin #1: Title IV-E Prevention Program Data Elements](#) and [ACYF-CB-IM-19-04: Evaluation Plan Development Tip Sheet](#).

<sup>2</sup> For the state’s news release and links to the request for qualifications, see <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Nebraska-Takes-a-Significant-Step-Toward-Families-First-Prevention-Services-Act-Implementation.aspx>.



effectiveness of services, including whether services help to reduce the incidence of maltreatment.

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