

Federal AFCARS Resource List

September 2024

When reporting AFCARS data, you will need the most current federal guidance to help ensure that your data submissions are compliant and high quality. This guide will help you find the official federal guidance on topics such as the reporting population, data elements, data extraction and submission, and compliance. It will also point you to where the federal AFCARS team has answered questions from other agencies.

The information in this guide comes from the Children's Bureau's [AFCARS Resources page](#), where you can always find the most up-to-date AFCARS resources and information. In particular, the guide draws from the AFCARS 2020 Technical Bulletins and the archive of Children's Bureau technical assistance webinars and trainings. The guide is current as of August 2024.

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
General Information		
Federal Guidance and Technical Assistance	AFCARS guidance and technical assistance	AFCARS Technical Assistance
	Other resources	Children's Bureau AFCARS Resources
AFCARS Background	History, laws, and AFCARS regulations (called AFCARS Final Rule)	Webinar: An Overview of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) 2020 Final Rule pg. 8-10 [transcript]
Tribe's EPA identifier	Tribe's EPA Identifier	Appendix C (Technical Bulletin 20)
AFCARS Reporting Populations	Out-of-Home Care Reporting Populations	Out-of-Home Care Data File Elements, Reporting Population and Requirements (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar: An Overview of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) 2020 Final Rule pg. 12 [transcript] Webinar: Early Planning for the Submission of AFCARS: The Second Webinar in the AFCARS Final Rule Training Series pg. 9-13 [transcript]
	Adoption and Guardianship Assistance reporting population	Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Data File Elements, Reporting Population (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 23-25

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
	Movement Between Out-of-Home Care file and Adoption and Guardianship Assistance File	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 16
	Child case examples	Webinar: Early Planning for the Submission of AFCARS: The Second Webinar in the AFCARS Final Rule Training Series pg. 18-26 [transcript]
	Youth over the age of 18	Webinar: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 9, 12, 13, and 15 Webinar: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 7
	Children not receiving title IV-E funds	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 14 Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 7
AFCARS Data Elements: Out-of-Home Placement File		
Child Information	Child Demographic Information	Child Information, Elements 5-21 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Child Health Information Qualifications to perform health assessment screening and exam for diagnosed condition Known but undiagnosed health condition ICD-10 and DSM-5 Mappings of AFCARS Diagnosed Conditions	Child Information, Elements 22-34 (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 12 Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 13 Appendix B (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Child School Information Children not of school age	Child Information, Elements 35-37 (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 10

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
	Child never enrolled in school	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 9
	Child Pregnancy and Parenting	Child Information, Elements 38-40 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Child Prior Adoption or Guardianship	Child Information, Elements 41-46 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Types of Financial Assistance/Foster Care Maintenance Payment	Child Information, Elements 47-55 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	IV-B funding clarification	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 19 Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 10
	Child Sibling Information	Child Information, Elements 56-58 (Technical Bulletin 20)
Parent or Legal Guardian Information	<p>Parent or Legal Guardian Demographic Information</p> <p>Parent or guardian year of birth</p> <p>Termination of Parental Rights</p> <p>TPR and putative fathers</p> <p>TPR reversals</p>	<p>Parent or Legal Guardian, Elements 59-62 (Technical Bulletin 20)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 27-28</p> <p>Parent or Legal Guardian, Elements 63-68 (Technical Bulletin 20)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 25-26</p> <p>Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 20</p>
Removal Information	Removal Information	Removal Information, Elements 69-105 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Sex Trafficking Information	<p>Removal Information, Elements 106-111 (Technical Bulletin 20)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 16-17</p>

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
Living Arrangements	Living Arrangement Information	Living Arrangement and Provider Information, Elements 112-122 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Placed at home with parent	Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 20-21
	Short-term or interim location	Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 18-19
	Short hospital stay	Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 31 Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children's Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: March 2023 – pg. 13
	Trial home visits	Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 33-34
	Definition of kin	Webinar: AFCARS TB#20: AFCARS 2.1 - Questions and Answers: Webinar 4 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series: November 2020 – pg. 18-20
	Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP)	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 21 Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 30
	Foster Parent Information	Living Arrangement and Provider Information, Elements 123-146 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Same Sex Couples	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 17
	Single Fathers	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 18
Permanency Planning, Periodic Review, and Caseworker Visits	Permanency Plan Information	Permanency Planning, Elements 147-148 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Number of permanency plans to record	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children's Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 14

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
	Periodic Review Permanency Hearing	Permanency Planning, Elements 149-150 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Caseworker Visits	Permanency Planning, Elements 151-152 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Performance measurement Number of caseworker visits to record	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 22 Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 14
Exit Information	General Exit Information Child exits to custody of non-perpetrator parent	General Exit Information, Elements 153-156 (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 11
Exit to Adoption and Guardianship	Adoptive Parent or Guardian Information	Exit to Adoption and Guardianship Information, Elements 157-183 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Intra or Interjurisdictional Adoption or Guardianship	Exit to Adoption and Guardianship Information, Element 184 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Assistance Agreement Type	Exit to Adoption and Guardianship Information, Element 185 (Technical Bulletin 20)
	Siblings in Adoptive or Guardianship Home	Exit to Adoption and Guardianship Information, Element 186 (Technical Bulletin 20)
Data Elements: Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Data File		
General Information	Title IV-E agency identifier, report date, and child record number	General Information, Elements A1-A3 (Technical Bulletin 20)
Child Demographics	Date of birth, sex, race, Hispanic or Latino origin	Child Demographics, Elements A4-A14 (Technical Bulletin 20)
Adoption and Guardianship Agreement Information	Assistance agreement type, subsidy amount, finalization date, termination date, placing agency Last monthly payment not a full payment	Adoption & Guardianship Agreements Information, Elements A15-A19 (Technical Bulletin 20) Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 23
	Placement agency is a contracting organization	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 12

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
Missing Data	Values for missing or unknown data	<p>Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children's Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 8, 9, and 11</p> <p>Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation of AFCARS 2020: Aug-October 2022 – pg. 8</p>
File Submission and Extraction		
XML Data File	Training video: XML Concepts	XML Concepts
	Training video: Validating an XML file	Validating an XML file
	Data file structure	Data File Structure (Technical Bulletin 21)
	Encryption	Encryption (Technical Bulletin 21)
	Group element diagrams	Appendix A & B (Technical Bulletin 21)
	Data elements and XML tags	Appendix C & D (Technical Bulletin 21)
	XML Schema Definition (XSD) Files	<p>Webinar: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children's Bureau Data Analytics: February 2023 – pg. 15-18</p> <p>Graphic schema file: [zip file]</p> <p>Schema assistance file: [zip file]</p>
Data File Extraction	Data file extraction for Out-of-Home Care file	<p>Out-of-Home Care Data File Extraction (Technical Bulletin 22)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS 2020 New Technical Bulletins Webinar 7 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series Technical Bulletin #22: June 2021 – pg. 5-17</p>
	Extraction Rule Examples	Appendix A (Technical Bulletin 22)
	Data file extraction for Adoption and Guardianship Assistance file	<p>Adoption and Guardianship Assistance Data File Extraction (Technical Bulletin 22)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS 2020 New Technical Bulletins Webinar 7 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series Technical Bulletin #22: June 2021 – pg. 19-21</p>
File Submission through National	NCWDMS Users Guide	State, Tribe, and Territories (STT) Users Guide
	NCWDMS overview	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours for the implementation

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
Child Welfare Data Management System (NCWDMS)	Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)	of AFCARS 2020: December 2022 – pg. 25-31 MFA Fact Sheet
	Submitting data files	Submitting Data Files to NCWDMS (Technical Bulletin 23) Upload a Transmission File (State, Tribe, and Territories (STT) Users Guide)
	File size limits	Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 12
	Corrected submissions	Corrected Submissions (Technical Bulletin 22) Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 13
	XML upload failures	Webinar and Technical Bulletin: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics: February 2023 – pg. 8
Compliance and Penalties	Overview of compliance and penalties	Webinar: An Overview of the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) 2020 Final Rule: June 2020 – pg. 14-16 [transcript] Webinar: AFCARS 2020 New Technical Bulletins Webinar 7 in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series Technical Bulletin #23: June 2021 – pg. 22-30
	File submission standards	File Submission Standards (Technical Bulletin 23)
	Data errors	Data Errors (Technical Bulletin 23) View Compliance Report (State, Tribe, and Territories (STT) Users Guide) View Data Quality Report (State, Tribe, and Territories (STT) Users Guide) Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours , pg. 3-10
	Compliance determination	Compliance Determination (Technical Bulletin 23)

Subject	Where Do I Find	Federal Resource
		<p>Notices of Noncompliance and Penalty from the Children’s Bureau (Technical Bulletin 23)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS 2020 Compliance & Penalties Webinar in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series Technical Bulletin #23: June 2022, pg 11-12</p> <p>Webinar Q & A: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics and Reporting Team: April 2023 – pg. 15-16</p>
	<p>Penalties</p> <p>Funds subject to a penalty</p> <p>Revision to penalties process</p>	<p>Penalties (Technical Bulletin 23)</p> <p>Webinar: AFCARS 2020 Compliance & Penalties Webinar in the AFCARS 2020 Final Rule Training Series Technical Bulletin #23: June 2022, pg 16-23</p> <p>Webinar and Technical Bulletin: AFCARS Open Office Hours: Children’s Bureau Data Analytics: February 2023 – pg. 7-8</p> <p>Webinar: Updates on AFCARS Technical Bulletins and the Penalty Process Office Hours, pg. 11-15</p>
	<p>Compliance rules – Out-of-Home Care File</p>	<p>Appendix A (Technical Bulletin 23)</p>
	<p>Compliance rules – Adoption and Guardianship Assistance file</p>	<p>Appendix B (Technical Bulletin 23)</p>