

Agency 070 - FOSTER CARE REVIEW

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

As Nebraska's IV-E review agency, the Foster Care Review Office collects, evaluates, & disseminates data on children in out-of-home care; uses trained citizen volunteers to review children's plans, services and placements to assure safety, security, and progress to permanent homes; disseminates FCRO findings & recommendations; takes legal standing/attends court if the FCRO finds children's best interests are not being met; visits foster care facilities to ascertain if a child's psychological, physical & sociological needs are met; and sponsors educational programs as outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1301 to §43-1318, and the federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (PL 96-272).

VISION:

The vision of the Foster Care Review Office is that every child and youth in out of home care is helped to heal from the harmful effects of abuse and/or neglect, and goes on to live in a safe, permanent home, experience an enduring relationship with one or more caring adults, and have every opportunity to grow up to become a responsible, productive adult. The FCRO works towards this goal by tracking children, reviewing cases, visiting facilities, taking legal standing on cases where the FCRO believes the children and youth's best interests are not being met, and collecting and disseminating data and findings through the annual report, community meetings, and legislative hearings.

MISSION AND PRINCIPLES:

The Foster Care Review Office's mission is to ensure the best interests and safety needs of children in out-of-home care are being met through maintaining a statewide independent tracking system; conducting external citizen reviews; disseminating data, analysis, and recommendations to the public, the child welfare system, and the Legislature; and monitoring youth placements.

GOALS:

Over the next two bienniums the Foster Care Review Office's goals include: tracking all children in foster care, reviewing the plans of children in foster care using citizen review, promoting the best interests of children placed in foster care on case, regional, and statewide levels, and disseminating data, analysis, and recommendations per statute. To do this will require participation in the SACWIS upgrade or replacement group (LB1160, 2012), pro-active response to changes in the child welfare system, further collaborative efforts, and an exploration of how various forms of technology can be used to greater effect.

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Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	1,431,077	1,379,348	1,534,822	1,398,917	1,532,572	1,418,925
Cash Fund	1,535	5,700	5,700	5,700	5,700	5,700
Federal Fund	301,354	400,000	451,825	406,523	451,075	413,192
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	1,733,967	1,785,048	1,992,347	1,811,140	1,989,347	1,837,817
Aid Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funding						
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Program 116 - FOSTER CARE REVIEW

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Legislature enacted citizen review in 1982 with the Foster Care Review Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1301-1318, updated in 2012.) The Act was created in response to PL 96-272, federal legislation that mandated permanency planning and periodic review of children in foster care, and due to other issues in the Nebraska foster care system, such as the inability to track children in the child welfare system. The FCRO is an independent state agency mandated to independently track children in out-of-home care, review their cases, and report on their conditions.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

Maintain independent tracking system on all children in out-of-home care. Collect/verify information on children and youth in out of home care. Review the plan, services, and placements of children in out of home care. Make findings based on the review and providing the rationale. Share findings/rationale with all legal parties to the case. Promote safety, security and permanency for children. Improve children's foster care experience. Take legal standing and/or attending court. Visit foster care facilities. Organize, sponsor and participate in educational programs. Disseminate information on children in out-of-home care. Release annual report with data, analysis, and recommendations.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

As Nebraska's IV-E review agency, the Foster Care Review Office tracks all children in foster care, utilizes trained citizen volunteers to review the plans of children in foster care, invites participants to reviews, works to promote the best interests of children placed in foster care through disseminating the FCRO's findings, attending court, visiting children in their placements, advocating for children on an individual and systems level, and reporting information on children in foster care as outlined in Nebr. Rev. Stat. §43-1301 to §43-1321. The FCRO determines the outcomes and results of the child welfare program through the measures outlined in the supporting documentation.

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