

AL DHR Glossary

Admin Memo's

A means of for communicating updates to policy manuals to DHR employees.

Adoption (AD)

Provides for the recruitment and approval of adoptive homes, matching available children with appropriate adoptive placements, and services to the adoptive family and children after placement.

The Adoption and Forster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)

A federally mandated computerized data system for foster care and adoption that must retain a 90-100% accuracy in reporting, or may be subject to a financial penalty.

Adoption Petition (AP)

Provides for the investigation of all independent and private agency adoptions including stepparent, grandparent, one parent and non-relative adoptions to determine the availability of the child and the suitability of the adoptive home.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)

A piece of federal legislation enacted to clarify P.L. 96-272, addressing when “reasonable efforts” (services to prevent removal of the child or reunification of the child with the family) would not be required and emphasizes the safety and health of the child as the paramount concern. ASFA mandated the state to file a petition for termination of parental rights when the child has been in foster care 17 of the last 22 months, unless criteria for exception is met and documented.

Child Care Services (CCS)

The state's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrator, responsible for the child care subsidy program and quality initiatives. Child Day Care provides Alabama's families equal access to affordable quality child care services and is responsible for the licensing and renewal of licenses for Child Care Centers. In addition, the Division is also responsible for monitoring and licensing child care centers and homes for compliance with minimum standards.

Child Protective Services (CPS)

Provides the following functions for the Family Services Division of DHR: (1) maintains the Central Registry on Child Abuse and Neglect (CANS), (2) applies for and monitors grants for protective services projects, (3) provides case consultation services

Family & Children Tracking System (FACTS)

A federally funded comprehensive data system including AFCARS (adoption and foster care data) and NCANS (child protection data) which interfaces with other child welfare related systems such as courts, Child Support, AFDC/TANF/FITAP agencies.

Family Services (FS)

Provides intensive in-home services to families in which a report of abuse/neglect has been validated, a family has requested services, or the court has ordered DCFS to provide services.

Foster Care (FC)

Provides temporary substitute care for children who, as a result of validated abuse/neglect, are in the custody of the state.

Independent Living Program (IL)

A program that shall be developed in every county to guide youth toward success as adults. This is accomplished by providing independent living services for all eligible youth as authorized in their ISP and, when possible, through group activities. IL services shall occur concurrently with continued efforts to achieve permanency.

Individualize Service Plan Team (ISPT)

A collaborating of the case manager, the youth, the family/caretakers and other team members in an effort to support the family while they work with the department. Team members can include professionals involved with the case, such as foster parents, attorney's and the child's CASA worker. However, the long-term goal is to assist the family in accessing the natural support systems around them, including family, friends, church members, pediatricians, and teachers, and may sometimes involve repairing damaged relationships. This team helps the family to understand their situation, recognize their own strengths, needs, identify challenges, make decisions, set goals and achieve desired outcomes. These functions work to reduce safety threats to the child by enhancing caretaker protective capacities. The process begins with the first contact with the family and continues until the day of case closure, with the goal of developing a sustainable resource for support after DHR involvement.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

The legislated agreement among the states to cooperate in the placement of children from one jurisdiction to another to assure children are safe, and their service needs are met prior to moving the child out of state.

Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA)

Legislation that aimed to reduce time overrepresented children of minority groups spent in foster care, restricting states from denying placements based solely on race, color, and/or national origin, and created more opportunities for adoptions by opening placements across jurisdictions.

National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)

A voluntary national database for computerized information on abuse and neglect. NCANDS was established in response to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1988. The data are used to examine trends in child abuse and neglect across the country, and key findings are published in the Child Welfare Outcomes Reports to Congress and annual Child Maltreatment reports.

Protective Services Day Care

Provides for the direct care and protection of infants, preschool, and school age children in licensed day care centers.

Quality Assurance (QA)

A process that ensures service delivery meets best practice, policy, and national accreditations standards. It also measures how well the agency is accomplishing its mission of helping children and families achieve better outcomes.

Resources

Provides for the development and/or retention of substitute family homes for temporary and/or permanent placement of children in state custody.

State Central Registry (SCR)

A mandated method for tracking perpetrators of all valid findings of abuse/neglect in a computerized system.

Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC)

Treatment foster homes. Treatment and family home services shall be provided for foster children who have a diagnosed condition resulting in a severe level of physical or behavioral impairment. The primary focus of this placement type is children with emotional disturbances and/or severe behavior or physical disorder that prevent their placement in regular or specialized foster homes.

Title IV-B

Section of the Social Security Act that provides states with a federal funding source, placing an emphasis on pre-placement and prevention. IV-B is capped entitlement program allocated on a 75/25 federal funding/state funding match.

Title IV-D

Section of the Social Security Act that provides federal funding, with focus on providing aid and services to families and children in need. These funds allow each state to run its own local child support enforcement programs, for collecting child support monies, establishing paternity, and related administrative costs.

Title IV-E

Section of the Social Security Act that provides states with a federal funding source for foster care services. IV-E allows for a 50/50 federal/state matched for program administration, and 75/25 federal funding/state funding match for training.

Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)

A legal proceeding in which the court involuntarily removes the rights of parents and makes a child available for adoption.