

<h1 style="margin: 0;">ACF</h1> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">Administration for Children and Families</p>	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Administration for Children, Youth and Families	
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	3. Originating Office: Children's Bureau	
	4. Key Words: Sampling Procedure - Triennial Section 427 Reviews	

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: State Agencies and Indian Tribal Organizations
 Administering Title IV-B of the Social Security Act
 Regional Administrators, HDS
 Regions I-X
 Regional Program Directors
 ACYF Regions

SUBJECT: New Sampling Procedure for Triennial Reviews - Decision Table V

LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES: Sections 427 and 475 of the Social Security Act (the Act)

BACKGROUND: Section 427 provides that a State may be eligible for additional title IV-B fund if, among other things, it "has implemented and is operating to the satisfaction or the Secretary" certain systems and programs providing protections for children in foster care. States are permitted to certify themselves as eligible for these incentive payments.

To ascertain that States are, in fact, eligible to receive additional section 427 funds, the Department has established a system of compliance reviews during which the State's administrative procedures are examined and a sample of foster care case records is reviewed. If a State is determined to be eligible for funds after an Initial Review and a Subsequent Review, no additional confirmation of eligibility is required until the third year following the Subsequent Review, at which time a Triennial Review is conducted.

Recently, in some States, after the full sample of case records has been reviewed, the Decision Table has not provided a decision as to whether the State has passed or failed the case record survey. The tabulation of acceptable and unacceptable case records leaves the file in the "zone of

indifference," i.e., the cumulative total of unacceptable case record reviews is between the Acceptance and Rejection numbers in the Table.

In a decision by the Grant Appeals Board (GAB) regarding the Subsequent Review for Delaware, it was recommended that when a State file remains in the zone of indifference after all of the records in the sample have been read, additional records should be reviewed to assure that the risk of Alpha, Type I error, does not exceed .05. This would reduce the probability that a State file will be rejected, based upon a sample of case records, when a review of the entire State file would indicate that the State would pass.

ACTION REQUIRED: Therefore, a new Decision Table V has been prepared to accommodate this recommendation and certain procedures have been changed which will affect all States and Tribes. The use of Decision Table V for all States, Tribes and other political jurisdictions is a change of policy.

INSTRUCTION: The attached Program Instruction supersedes only the sampling instructions and Decision Tables III and IV, described in PI-85-2.

Effective Date: Immediately

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/s/
Dodie Livingston
COMMISSIONER

[Attachment](#) - Instruction for section 427 Triennial Review, Case Record Survey Sample

Attachment

INSTRUCTION FOR SECTION 427 TRIENNIAL REVIEW CASE RECORD SURVEY SAMPLE

TRIENNIAL REVIEW DECISION TABLE V

Triennial Review Criteria

The Triennial Review, completed for the third year after a State has passed its Subsequent Review, requires a 90 percent level of acceptable case records from the State file of open and closed cases in which the child was in foster care for at least six months during the year under review. This necessitates the use of Decision Table V for all States and Indian Tribal Organizations, and other political jurisdictions.

Sample Size

A random sample of 163 case records of open and closed cases are necessary for the review. This will require the random selection of 200 case records to allow for oversampling for ineligible case records. The entire random sample should be arranged in random reading sequence, using a table of random numbers, if the random selection process results in an "ordered" sample that mirrors the filing order of the State file. This will occur when the State uses a sampling fraction procedure in which the first case is selected randomly and all subsequent cases are multiples of the sampling fraction plus the number of the first case. Some States have a capacity for random digit generation, and this will generate a random sample in random reading sequence if the records are pulled and kept in the sequence of the random digits.

For those States and Indian Tribal Organizations having fewer than 200 children in foster care eligible for review, all cases are read.

Decision Table V

Decision Table V is used for all States and Indian Tribal Organizations. In approximately 95% of the reviews a decision will be reached by the 163rd case record reviewed. A decision will occur when the cumulative number of unacceptable case records meets the boundary of either the acceptance zone or the rejection zone. It is advisable to continue reviewing an additional six case records whenever the rejection zone is reached. This may avoid the need for further review in the future in the event that a decision on one or more unacceptable case record reviews is reversed. If, after the 163rd case record is reviewed, the cumulative number of unacceptable case records remains in the zone of indifference the review is truncated and no further records are reviewed. The decision to pass or fail the case record review under this circumstance is based on the numeric values of 23 or less unacceptable records in the sample from the State file for passing and 24 or more unacceptable case records for failing.

The instructions for Decision Table V are as follows:

- Col. 1. Case Record I.D. - The Review Supervisor enters the case record I.D. of every case that is reviewed in the sequence in which the review is completed. This would follow the random reading sequence allowing for deletion of case records that do not meet selection criteria.
2. Number of Records Reviewed - This is a sequential listing of the cumulative number of records reviewed beginning with 1 and ending with 163 for the last record that may be evaluated, e.g., the number 54 would indicate that a total of 54 records have been reviewed.
3. Acceptance Number - This column represents the maximum number of "Unacceptable" case records in the sample for a State to pass. This is the boundary of the acceptance zone. No decision to accept a State can be made before 26 case records have been reviewed. At that point, if the first 26 records are acceptable, the State file is passed without further review of case records.

4. Unacceptable: Actual/Cumulative - This represents the actual and cumulative total of "Unacceptable" case records. The Review Supervisor enters the actual and cumulative total number of "Unacceptable" case records in this column as each record review is completed and the results are transferred from the Reviewer's Tally Sheet to the Decision Table. Enter "0" for an "Acceptable" case record and "1" for an "Unacceptable" case record. This cumulative total of "Unacceptable" case records is compared row by row with the corresponding figures in columns 3 and 5. Whenever the number in this column equals the number of either column 3 or 5, the review process stops and a decision is made. If the cumulative numbers in column 4 equals the number in column 3, the review process stops and the decision is made to pass the State file. If the cumulative number in column 4 equals the number in column 5, the review process stops and the decision is made to fail the State. However, it is advisable to review an additional six case records in the event that a case record review decision is subsequently changed from unacceptable to acceptable. If the cumulative total in column 4 is greater than the number in column 3 and less than the number in column 5, the review process continues until the 163rd case record is reviewed.

Do not stop reviewing cases when the number in column 4 is between the values in columns 3 and 5 regardless of the number of unacceptable case records. Specifically, do not terminate the review as soon as there are 24 or more unacceptable case records as long as that total is less than the value in column 5. This is to avoid the need for further review if a decision is made to change the rating at a later date on one or more care records reviewed. Continue reading until the acceptance boundary value is reached or until the 163rd case record is reviewed. Read an additional six case records when the rejection boundary is reached.

5. Rejection Number - This column represents the minimum number of "Unacceptable" case records that are necessary to make the decision that the State file has failed the case record review. This is the boundary of the rejection zone. No decision to fail a State file can be made until the first seven case records are reviewed and all are found to be Unacceptable.
6. Reviewer's Initials - The reviewer initials the entry made by the supervisor for each completed case record reviewed.
7. Supervisor's Initials - The Review Supervisor initials the entry made for each completed case record reviewed.

Truncated Review

The case record review is truncated after the review of the 163rd case record and the value in column 4 is between the values in columns 3 and 5. The State file is then considered to be in the zone of indifference. A decision is made based on the values in the row labeled "Truncated" for

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4	-	-
5	-	-
6	-	-
7	-	7
8	-	7
9	-	7
10	-	8
11	-	8
12	-	8
13	-	8
14	-	8
15	-	8
16	-	8
17	-	9
18	-	9
19	-	9
20	-	9
21	-	9
22	-	9
23	-	9
24	-	10
25	-	10
26	0	10
27	0	10
28	0	10
29	0	10
30	0	10
31	0	11
32	0	11
33	1	11

34	1	11
35	1	11
36	1	11
37	1	11
38	1	12
39	1	12
40	2	12
41	2	12
41	2	12
42	2	12
43	2	12
44	2	13
45	2	13
46	2	13
47	3	13
48	3	13
49	3	13
50	3	13
51	3	14
52	3	14
53	4	14
54	4	14
55	4	14
56	4	14
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58	4	15
59	4	15
60	5	15
61	5	15
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63	5	15

64	5	15
65	5	16
66	5	16
67	6	16
68	6	16
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147	17	27
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152	18	28
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154	18	29
155	18	29

156	18	29
157	19	29
158	19	29
159	19	29
160	19	29
161	19	30
162	19	30
163	20	30
Truncate	23	24

*Accept = 0

Reject = 1