

State Court Improvement Program 2020 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on required CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and the ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

- I. **CQI Analyses of Required CIP Projects** (Joint Project with Agency, Hearing Quality Project) *It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, but please update according to where you currently are in the process.*

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction. The goal of the Permanency Project is to reduce time to permanency by identifying and eliminating barriers to achieving timely permanency through earlier reunification, adoption or guardianship, and at the same time increase the number of adoptions.

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome(s) this project is intended to address. The Permanency Project is intended to reduce the time to permanency. The project aims to reach safe reunification earlier and increase the number of timely adoptions and guardianships when children cannot be reunified.

Approximate date that the project began: In April 2019, the Juvenile Court held a conference to introduce a differentiated case management program designed to decrease the time to permanency. In July 2019, CIP staff identified key stakeholders to participate in the Adoption Call to Action conference in Washington, DC. During 2019 DCF introduced pilot projects designed to decrease the time to permanency. Those projects have now been rolled out statewide.

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?
Implementation stage.

How was the need for this project identified? CIP, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the Juvenile Court analyzed Juvenile Court data and DCF data and the latest CFSR which indicated delays in reaching permanency, especially for children in care more than 12

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number with expiration date. The estimated time to complete the CIP Annual Self-Assessment is 77 hours. months. DCF data revealed that the rates of adoption within 24 months of home removal had declined between 2015 and 2019, with the FY2019 median time to adoption 38.4 months compared to 31.4 months in FY2015. DCF FY2019 data also revealed that only 13.8% of children had their adoption finalized in less than 24 months following their removal from home, compared to 25.8% in FY 2015. Juvenile Court data indicated that adoption filings had decreased from 681 in FY 16 to 664 in FY17. By FY18, adoption filings increased to 826 and after initiation of the DCF program to track cases weekly, by FY19, were up to 962. We discussed the theory of change and possible solutions and in FY2020 began implementation: DCF began pilot projects focusing on permanency and the Juvenile Court envisioned implementing a new differentiated case management system called Pathways.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II) *If you do not yet have a theory of change and/or would like assistance, please indicate such in the space below.* By developing and implementing collaborative interventions, the Pathways differentiated case management system and the DCF innovative projects, the time to permanency will decrease and the number of adoptions and guardianships will increase.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? YES. **If yes, what is it?** (Phase III) The solution we will implement is a collaborative intervention among CIP, DCF, the Juvenile Court, CAFL, community providers, and the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange.

What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)

The following interventions have been implemented: DCF created two pilot programs. The first program is the initial 6 weeks review after the filing of a Care and Protection petition. The review is held with parents, the attorneys and DCF staff discussing the safety issues that led to removal of the child. If the child cannot be safely returned home at the 6 week review, services which will support reunification will be identified and implemented along with concurrent permanency plans. In addition, DCF introduced a rapid-cycle, data-driven pilot program which reviews cases where children are legally freed for adoption and placed in an adoptive home. Barriers to finalizing the adoption are addressed weekly until no barriers remain and the adoption can be completed, resulting in an increase in the number of adoptions. These two pilot programs have been rolled out statewide. Currently, the Juvenile Court has adopted a differentiated case management system called Pathways with a goal of decreasing time to permanency. CIP has funded a manager to oversee Pathways. Regional meetings supported by CIP funds were held to support implementation of the Pathways model. In addition, CIP supported National Adoption Day where 140 children were adopted. CIP distributed the Child Safety Guidebook to judges, and

social workers and are planning a virtual safety planning conference in the fall. The adoption working group meets regularly to discuss progress of the pilot programs and Pathways, share data and discuss interventions. CIP also funds a Child Welfare Data Analyst position in the Trial Court Department of Research and Planning. The analyst supports continuous quality improvement by providing relevant child welfare data. For example, the analyst will identify which critical stages in the court process act as a facilitator and which as a barrier to permanency.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?* We plan to analyze data to determine if the goals of the Permanency Project are being met. We plan to analyze the impact of COVID 19 on time to permanency and number of adoptions completed.

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or the Children's Bureau to help move the project forward? Assistance with data outcome analysis.

Hearing Quality Project:

Concise Description of project:

To ensure quality court hearings, CIP works to support efforts to provide excellent legal counsel to all children and indigent parents upon the filing of a care and protection petition. Well-trained attorneys contribute to court hearings which protect the due process rights of children and parents and reduce the time to permanency. CIP has encouraged DCF and the Children and Family Law (CAFL) division of the Committee for Public Counsel Services, to draw Title IV-E funds for attorneys who will represent parents and children pre- and post-filing of the care and protection petitions.

Approximate Date Project Began:

The project expanded in December 2018 when the Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts called the lack of available attorneys to represent child and parents in child welfare cases a "constitutional crisis." CIP was asked to continue to support extensive legal training for child welfare attorneys and make efforts to expand the lawyer base, especially in Western Massachusetts, to ensure timely, high quality court hearings. The focus of the project shifted in March 2020, when the courthouses in Massachusetts were closed to the public. Lawyers and judges needed training and devices to conduct virtual court hearings. Parents and children needed devices to communicate with their attorneys and to participate in their virtual court hearings.

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?
Implementation.

How was the need for this project identified?

Data on timely appointment of attorneys indicated that there were insufficient attorneys available in Central and in Western Massachusetts to meet the need. In some cases parents were waiting over a month to have a temporary custody hearing following the removal of their child/children because lawyers were unavailable to represent them. CIP staff interviewed approximately 40 lawyers and 5 judges in Western Massachusetts to determine factors leading to the shortage. With the closing of the courthouses in March 2020, it became apparent that the courts would need to adjust their process to transition from in-person to virtual court hearings. Initially courts were closed to the public and only emergency hearings were held. Currently the courts are slowly expanding the cases that are heard, but are still closed to the public.

Theory of Change: To ensure high quality hearings, lawyers must be available and well-trained. The child welfare attorney base throughout the state must be expanded and well-educated. Courts and lawyers must be trained on virtual court hearings, have the technology to conduct hearings, and ensure that parents' and children's access to justice and due process rights are protected through active, virtual participation in court hearings.

Solutions/Interventions: Recruitment efforts would include advocating for an increase in pay, utilizing Title IV-E funds to pay attorneys, making certification training more accessible, and collaborating with a law school to create a child welfare curriculum followed by fellowships. To ensure high quality hearings, lawyers must be appointed to represent parents and children upon the filing of the petition, knowledge and use of technology must be expanded, and communication devices must be provided to facilitate participation of parties in virtual court hearings.

Implementation: CIP will continue to support extensive high quality training which includes a week-long certification program, a trial practice training, and day-long seminars on relevant topics such as expert witnesses, trial practice, and legal writing. CIP continues to encourage DCF and CAFL to move forward on using Title IV-E funds to support additional legal services to children and families. CIP will continue to work with Western New England School of Law to expand the legal pool in Western Massachusetts. CIP has supported training the trainers to convert legal trainings from in-person to virtual seminars and workshops. CIP has purchased Chromebooks for children and parents providing communication tools to ensure their participation in virtual hearings.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V)

Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc.) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use these data to modify or expand the project?

CIP needs assistance from CBCC or the Children's Bureau to develop a program to evaluate this project.

Assistance or support needed from the CBCC or the Children's Bureau? Yes.

II. Trainings, Projects, and Activities For questions 1-12, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2020 (October 2019-June 2020) in the below topical subcategories. For question 1, focus on significant training events or initiatives held or developed in FY 2020.

1. Trainings

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Child Welfare Data Analyst	1	Virtual online training program	Learn to use Tableau	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges, attorneys	200	Conference, training curriculum program	Improved knowledge and skills	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Improving timeliness/permanency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges, social workers, attorneys	100	Conference training curriculum program	Decrease time to permanency	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Quality legal representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys, judges, social workers	500	Conference, trainings curriculum program, webinars	Improve quality legal representation	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Engagement & participation of parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys, judges, social workers	300	Conference	Improve engagement and participation of parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Well-being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys, social workers, judges	300	Conference, training curriculum program	Increase knowledge of trauma of foster care and abuse/neglect	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
ICWA/Tribal collaboration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	DCF social workers	6	NICWA virtual conference	Understand and improve services to ICWA children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Sex Trafficking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	CAFL social workers	4	Conference	Knowledge of issues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Normalcy/R. Prudent Parent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	CASA	40	Virtual training on using the Guide on Confidentiality and The Answer Book	Facilitate use of these publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys, judges, social workers	200	Webinar on Safety; distribution of Child Safety Guide	Fewer removals from home and increased safe reunifications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other: Motivational Interviewing for Substance Disorders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys, social workers	25	Workshop at conference	Skill building	<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

On average, how many training events do you hold per year? CIP supported 19 training events and sent 707 to in-state or national conferences either in person or virtually.

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys and judges that will participate in a training annually? 750

The Family First Prevention Services Act amends the Social Security Act adding an eligibility criterion for the training of judges and attorneys on the congregate care provisions of the Act. See the highlighted portion below.

(1)¹ IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court shall have in effect a rule requiring State courts to ensure that foster parents, pre- adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State are notified of any proceeding to be held with respect to the child, *shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home*, and shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and including such assurances as the Secretary may require, including—

States have an option to delay implementation of the congregate care provisions by two years. The decision will have a direct impact on when judicial determinations and CIP training requirements must begin.

Do you know when your state plans to implement Family First? ☒ Yes ☐ No If
yes, when? October, 2021

Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First? ☐ Yes ☒ No If
yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved.

Have you been developing your Family First judicial training plan? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Massachusetts DCF is implementing Family First in 15 months. CIP Training Committee is beginning to develop judicial/legal training and bench cards.

¹ Sec. 50741(c) of P.L. 115-123 revised sec. 438(b)(1) to add language regarding training. Effective as if enacted on 1/1/18 (sec. 50746(a)(1) of P.L. 115-123).

- 2. Data Projects.** Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g., AFCARS, CCWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #3)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Funded new child welfare data analyst and provided weekly coaching by CIP staff	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Implementation
Funded Pathways Manager who will implement new case management system.	Case management systems	Implementation
Continue to maintain dashboard reporting for selected Juvenile Court case management processes such as permanent placements and record of assembly.	Data dashboards	Implementation
Worked with Registry of Vital Statistics to develop interface with birth certificates. Hired RVRS consultant. Lack of funding prevented project from moving forward.	Agency data sharing efforts	Selecting Solution

(a) Do you have data reports that you consistently view? ☒ Yes ☐ No

(b) How are these reports used to support your work? Data on time to permanency and time to adoption informed the development of the Permanency Project. Data on available attorneys informed the Quality Hearing Project.

- 3. Hearing Quality.** Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or Title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

Do you have a hearing quality project/activity? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #4)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Springfield project to increase number of attorneys and reduce continuances by training and supporting attorneys from law school to office practice.	Process Improvements	Implementation

8 attorneys participated in NACC conference.	Process Improvements	Implementation
Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Supporting Pathways Manager in facilitating county wide Pathways rollout.	Process Improvements	Implementation

- 4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes.** Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a timeliness or permanency project/activity? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #5)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Pathways case processing project	Continuances	Implementation
Adoption Call to Action	Perm Goal not APPLA	Implementation
2 national adoption summits for key stakeholders	Perm Goal not APPLA	Identifying/Assessing Needs

- 5. Quality of Legal Representation.** Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area. Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #6)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Extensive training and certification program	Other	Implementation
Springfield project with Western New England School of Law	New Practice Models	Implementation
Support 2 training consultants at CAFL	New Practice Models	Implementation

Fellowships for 2 graduates of Western New England School of Law	Law School Clinic	Implementation
CIP provided membership at Docket, a shared office, for 8 attorneys so they could represent parents and children in western MA which has a critical attorney shortage.	New Practice Model	Implementation
Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Funded a speaker on motivational interviewing for attorneys and social workers.	Other	Implementation
Sent 300 attorneys, social workers, and judges to MCLE child welfare conference with theme of engagement.	Other	Implementation

- 6. Engagement & Participation of Parties.** Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Continued distribution of Answer Book 2018	Youth Engagement	Implementation
Adoption Day	Caregiver Engagement	Implementation
Purchased 200 chrome books for distribution to parents, children, youth, foster parents	Youth Engagement	Implementation
Supported social work trainings	Youth and Parent Engagement	Implementation

- 7. Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ+ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #8)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Sent CAFL social workers to national training on trauma	Trauma	Develop Theory of Change
Funded CAFL training on extraordinary medical treatment for children in state custody.	Psychotropic Medication	Selecting Solution
Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Developing training for the Health Law Advocates who represent children with significant mental health challenges.	Trauma	Selecting Solution

- 8. ICWA/Tribal collaboration.** These projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis including of ICWA practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA or tribal collaboration? ☒ Yes

☐ No (skip to #9)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Planned to send DCF ICWA staff to NICWA, instead sent them to virtual training.	Other	Planning
Distributed updated bench cards on ICWA in MA.	Other	Implementation
Distributed resource information to ICWA coordinator at DCF regularly.	Other	Planning

- 9. Preventing Sex Trafficking.** These projects could include work around domestic child sex trafficking, a focus on runaway youth, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on preventing sex trafficking/runaways? ☒ Yes

☐ No (skip to #10)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Sent 4 social workers to conference on sex trafficking	Sex Trafficking	Identifying/Assessing Needs

10. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent. These projects could include any work around normalcy or the reasonable and prudent parent standard or practices, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on normalcy/reasonable prudent parenting?

☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #11)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Statewide virtual training of 40 CASA on use of Guide to Confidentiality, and The Answer Book 2018	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation

11. Prevention. Prevention projects include work around preventing child maltreatment including primary prevention (preventing maltreatment from occurring in the first place), secondary, and tertiary prevention.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on prevention? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to #12)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Collaborating with CAFL and DCF on drawing down IV E funds to pay attorneys to represent parents prefiling of petition.	Secondary or tertiary prevention	Develop Theory of Change

12. Safety. Safety projects are those that focus on decision-making around safety including decision-making practices in substantiation, removal, family time/visitation, and decisions about safety in out of home placements.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on safety? ☒ Yes ☐ No (skip to sec. III)

Project Description:	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Safety decision making training postponed from spring because of COVID, rescheduled for fall.	Removal/Return	Selecting Solution
Distributed 200 <u>Child Safety Guide</u> to judges, attorneys, and social workers.	Removal/Return	Implementation

III. CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

1. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state's CFSP due June 30, 2019.

a. Does the CFSP include any of the following:

- ☒ legal/judicial strategies
- ☒ the CIP/Agency Joint Project
- ☒ the CIP Hearing Quality Project

If yes, please describe. Reducing barriers to permanency and stability for children in placement. MA CFSR, PIP and CIP work focuses on using data to improve permanency outcomes. DCF, Juvenile Court and CIP worked with Registry of Vital Records to implement electronic sharing of birth certificates. Juvenile Court, DCF, CAFL, CIP, and Probate and Family Court have worked on a new case management system, Pathways, to decrease time to permanency for children. All stakeholders are also involved in collaborative on Adoption Call to Action.

2. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in your state. It is likely that CIP will be involved in reviewing the cases to ensure compliance with the federal requirements.

3. Please describe how the CIP is or was involved in preparing and completing the latest round of the CFSR and PIP, if required, in your state. *Please check all the ways that the CIP or Court Personnel were involved (or plan to be involved) in the CFSR and PIP Process. Feel free to add additional narrative to explain your involvement in the process.*

DCF reports that their PIP has been completed and signed off on. There is no current PIP.

- ☐ not involved at all
- ☐ involved in planning the statewide assessment
- ☐ CFSR reviewers
- ☐ interviewed for CFSR

- ☐ invited to the exit conference at the close of the CFSR review
- ☐ invited to the final CFSR results session at the conclusion of the report
- ☐ final CFSR report was shared with you
- ☐ final CFSR report shared with courts broadly across the state
- ☐ part of a large group of stakeholders engaged to assist in design of the PIP
- ☐ high level of inclusion during the entire PIP process
- ☐ made suggestions for inclusion in the PIP
- ☒ suggestions made by CIP for inclusion in the PIP were put forward by the child welfare agency
- ☐ had an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the PIP before it was submitted
- ☐ meet (or plan to meet) ongoing with the child welfare agency to monitor PIP Implementation

The current version of the PIP includes (check all that apply): There currently is no PIP.

- ☐ court strategies
- ☐ court/agency shared strategies
- ☐ the court/agency joint project described above
- ☐ the CIP hearing quality project
- ☐ specific practice changes that judges will make
- ☐ specific practice changes that attorneys will make

4. What strategies or processes are in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement? The CIP Steering Committee is comprised of executive and judicial branch representatives: General Counsel for the Department of Children and Families, Juvenile and Probate and Family Court Administrators, a First Justice of the Juvenile Court, the Training Director at the Children and Family Law Project (CAFL), and the Trial Court's Child Welfare Data Analyst. CIP staff facilitate regular meetings to discuss challenging statewide child welfare issues and to implement plans to address those concerns. At these meetings, we develop collaborative initiatives, trainings, and publications.
- The CIP Training Subcommittee is comprised of CIP staff, a deputy commissioner of DCF, a training coordinator of CAFL, administrators from the Juvenile Court and the Probate and Family Court, and a representative from the Judicial Institute (training arm of the Massachusetts Trial Court). Challenging issues are identified, training strategies are discussed and developed, and trainings are implemented. The CAFL training unit, comprised of five attorneys, plans statewide collaborative trainings with DCF staff on child welfare issues. DCF has a state of the art training facility where many collaborative trainings are held. CIP supports these programs.
- The Juvenile Court Administrative Office is implementing Pathways, a new differential case management program for child welfare cases designed to improve permanency and well-being for children in state custody. This initiative is a collaboration of all child

welfare stakeholders. CIP is funding a position to oversee the statewide roll out of this initiative and offer whatever support is needed.

Other joint child welfare initiatives include the Adoption Call to Action committee comprised of CIP staff, the head of adoptions and the head of foster care at DCF, the Executive Director of the Cambridge Family and Children's Services, a CAFL representative, and a representative from the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Center.

5. What barriers exist in your state that make effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement challenging? Effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement is challenging as each child welfare stakeholder is independent and has its own mandate and priorities. Time is at a premium and seems to be a major barrier to joint planning and implementation. Nevertheless, CIP facilitates joint planning and implementation with stakeholders through the work of the CIP Steering and Training Committees, and the Adoption Call to Action committee. Currently COVID-19 presents additional challenges and some opportunities.
6. Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its Title IV-E Training Plan? NO If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.

If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel? YES.

7. Have you talked with your agency about accessing Title IV-E funding for legal representation for parents or for children? Yes. Is your state currently planning to seek reimbursement? Yes. If yes, describe any plans, approaches, or models that are under consideration or underway. There are ongoing discussions between DCF, CAFL and executive branch officials on drawing down Title IV-E funds for legal representation for parents and children. The types of work that might be undertaken with Title IV-E funding include: pre-petition representation, contracting with social workers to allow for interdisciplinary representation, contracting with parent or youth advocates, creating a client advisory board, and contracting with investigators to support advocacy for kinship placements.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the increase in ability to? Our efforts to improve integration of CQI into our practice were delayed this year due to the length of time it took to hire the Child Welfare Data

Analyst and the Pathways Manager. With their support, CIP will integrate additional data into the CQI.

2. Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in in the 2020 Fiscal Year?

- ☐ Judicial Academy
- ☒ CQI Consult (*Topic: Conducting virtual hearings.*)
- ☒ Constituency Group - Hearing Quality
- ☒ Constituency Group - CFSR
- ☒ Constituency Group - ICWA
- ☒ Constituency Group - New Directors
- ☒ Constituency Group - Virtual Hearings/Court Processes
- ☒ Constituency Group - Other Quality Legal Representation_____
- ☒ CIP All Call -- *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in?* 100 %

3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?

- ☒ CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise
- ☐ Consultants with CQI expertise
- ☐ a University partnership
- ☒ a statewide court case management system
- ☐ Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts ☐

Other resources: _____

3a. Do you record your child welfare court hearings? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, are they ☒ audio ☐ video

3b. Can you remotely access your court case management system? *For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files.* ☒ Yes ☐ No Yes, if you have access to a Citrix license which CIP doesn't have. The court case management system is available remotely with a Citrix license. CIP does not have the license.

3c. What court case management software does your state use? If multiple, please indicate the most common: Oracle

3d. Have you employed any new technology or applications to strengthen your work?
Tableau, Zoom

4. Consider the phases of change management and how you integrate these into practice. Are there phases of the process (e.g., Phase I-need assessment, Phase II-theory of change) that you struggle with integrating more than others? Planning, preparing and

implementing our theory of change is difficult because there is resistance to stakeholder collaboration. Evaluation of initiatives is challenging.

5. Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.) Tips on ways to build collaboration, getting to YES. How to evaluate initiatives.

Self-Assessment – Capacity Continued

We would like you to assess your current capacities related to knowledge, skills, resources, and collaboration by responding to the following 2 sets of questions. In questions 6 and 7, we ask about CQI. When we say CQI we mean the entire change management process including root cause analysis, theory of change, strategy selection, implementation and evaluation.

6. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good understanding of CQI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to integrate CQI into all our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am familiar with the available data relevant to our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to interpret and apply the available data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency have shared goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency collaborate around program planning and improvement efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have the resources we need to fully integrate CQI into practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have staff, consultants, or partners who can answer my CQI questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How frequently do you engage in the following activities?

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
We use data to make decisions about where to focus our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We meet with representatives of the child welfare agency to engage in collaborative systems change efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We create theories of change around systems change projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use evaluation/assessment findings to make changes to programs/practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

We evaluate (beyond monitoring outputs) our efforts.



APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Definitions of Evidence

Evidence-based practice – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

Empirically-supported- less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidencebase, but still has some support for effectiveness.

Best-practices – best practices are often those widely accepted in the field as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts in the field.

Definitions for Work Stages

Identifying and Assessing Needs – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

Develop theory of change—This phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a “theory of change”. The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

Develop/select solution—This phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

Implementation – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

Evaluation/assessment – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.