

Child Welfare Policy Manual

Questions & Answers

3.2A INDEPENDENT LIVING, Data Collection, Data Elements

1. Question: Do tribal youth, youth involved with the juvenile justice system, youth who receive services through the staff of a group home or child care institution, and youth no longer in foster care fall within the served population as defined in 45 CFR 1356.81(a)?

Answer: In general, as required in 45 CFR 1356.81(a), a youth is in the served population if during the report period, the youth received at least one independent living service paid for or provided by the State agency. An independent living service is provided by the State agency if it is delivered by State agency staff or an agent of the State, including a foster parent, group home staff, child care institution staff or the service is provided pursuant to a contract between the State agency and a provider, agency or any other entity regardless of whether the contract includes funding for the particular service. The served population is not limited on the Federal level by age, foster care status or placement type, although State eligibility rules for their independent living programs may restrict which youth receive independent living services. Therefore, tribal youth, youth involved with the juvenile justice system, youth who receive services through foster care providers and youth no longer in foster care are a part of the served population if they receive an independent living service paid for or provided by the State agency during the report period.

- **Source/Date:** 73 FR 10340 (February 26, 2008); (01/26/10)
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act § 477(f)(1)(B)(i); 45 CFR 1356.81(a)

2. Question: How is the served population as defined in 45 CFR 1356.81(a) distinct from or related to the baseline and follow-up population as defined in 45 CFR 1356.81(b) and (c)?

Answer: The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) has two separate but related components: independent living services and youth outcomes. The reporting populations are separate for each component, although not mutually exclusive.

States are to collect and report independent living services information on youth who fall within the served population, as defined by 45 CFR 1356.81(a). The served population is made up of youth who have received at least one independent living service that is paid for

or provided by the State agency during a six-month report period. The youth's age and foster care status is not relevant to whether he or she is in the served population.

States are to collect and report outcomes information on youth who are in the baseline and follow-up populations, as defined by 45 CFR 1356.81(b) and (c) respectively. The baseline population is comprised of all 17-year-olds in foster care during a year in which such outcomes data is due (beginning in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011), regardless of whether the youth receives any services. The follow-up population is a subgroup of the baseline population: youth who participated in the outcomes data collection when they were 17 years old, but who are now 19 or 21 years old. A few simple examples (that do not address sampling) illustrate how the reporting populations may overlap or diverge:

- Example 1. In December 2010, a youth turns 17 years old while in foster care and takes a budgeting class that is paid for by the State agency in January 2011. This youth would be part of the served population for the first report period of FFY 2011 (October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011) and reported as receiving the budget and financial management service. The same youth would also be a part of the baseline population for whom the State must administer the outcomes survey. This is because FFY 2011 is a year in which the States must collect data on the baseline population, which is comprised of those youth in foster care who reach their 17th birthday in the FFY.
- Example 2. In November 2011, a different 17-year-old in foster care takes a budgeting class that is paid for by the State agency. This youth would be part of the served population for the first report period of FFY 2012. However, there is no outcomes data collection due in FFY 2012. Therefore, the youth is not in the baseline population.
- Example 3. In December 2012, the same youth from example 1 reaches 19 years old. By the end of March 2013, this youth had not received any independent living services that were paid for or provided by the State agency during the first report period (October 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013), so the youth is not a part of the served population. However, two years ago, this youth completed the outcomes survey as part of the baseline population. Therefore, the youth is a part of the follow-up population and the State is required to collect and report outcomes data for this youth.
- **Source/Date:** 73 FR 10341 (February 26, 2008); (01/26/10)
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act § section 477(f)(1)(B)(i); 45 CFR 1356.81(a), (b), and (c)

3. Question: Does a youth have to be in foster care on their 17th birthday to be included in the baseline population?

Answer: A youth does not need to have his or her 17th birthday while in foster care, but consistent with the data collection rule in 45 CFR 1356.82(a)(2), the youth must have been in foster care within 45 days following his or her 17th birthday during the specified reporting year.

- **Source/Date:** 73 FR 10342 (February 26, 2008); (01/26/10)
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act § section 477(f)(1)(B); 45 CFR 1356.82(a)(2)

4. Question: Who is included in the follow-up population as defined in 45 CFR 1356.81(c)? Are youth who remain in foster care at ages 19 and 21 in the follow-up population? Would youth in the follow-up population at age 19 need to have participated in the outcomes data collection to be a part of the follow-up population at age 21?

Answer: The follow-up population as defined in 45 CFR 1356.81(c) is comprised solely of youth who are either 19 or 21 years old who participated in the outcomes data collection as part of the baseline population at age 17. A youth is considered to have participated at age 17 if he or she provided at least one valid answer to a question in the outcomes survey. A youth who participated in the data collection at age 17, but not at age 19 for a reason other than being deceased remains a part of the follow-up population at age 21. A youth is in the follow-up population as described regardless of the youth's foster care status at ages 19 or 21 and regardless of whether the youth ever received independent living services.

- **Source/Date:** 73 FR 10342 (February 26, 2008); (01/26/10)
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act § section 477(f)(1)(B); 45 CFR 1356.81(c), 45 CFR 1356.82(a)(3)

5. Question: Are States that sample required, per 45 CFR 1356.83(e), to identify the 19-year-old youths who participated in the outcomes data collection as part of the baseline population at age 17, and who are not in the sample?

Answer: Yes. This information is required so that ACF can determine whether the State meets the outcomes universe and participation rate standards (45 CFR 1356.85(b)). A State must identify such youth in the two semi-annual report periods for the Federal fiscal year in which the State reports actual outcomes information on 19-year-old youth who are in the sample (45 CFR 1356.83(g)(34)). States will not report information on non-sampled youth again when the youth reach the age of 21 years old.

- **Source/Date:** 73 FR 10344 (February 26, 2008); (01/26/10)
- **Legal and Related References:** Social Security Act § section 477(f); 45 CFR 1356.82(b), 45 CFR 1356.83(e) and (g)