

## **Alaska Court System CINA Court Improvement Committee** **Updated Strategic Plan FFYs 2012 – 2016**

**State Name:** Alaska

**Date Strategic Plan Submitted:** February 29, 2012. Updated August 31, 2012, August 30, 2013, September 2, 2014; and August 31, 2015.

**Timeframe Covered by Strategic Plan:** October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2016

(note: ~~struck through~~ denotes objectives completed, or deleted for other listed reasons from the CIP strategic plan)

**Activity #1:** Assess and improve Alaska’s data collection capabilities for important performance measures in child abuse and neglect cases to improve timeliness of case processing.

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** While the Alaska Court System (ACS) has made improvements in its case management system and has increased staff awareness of data accuracy, ACS does not systematically collect and analyze information related to timeliness measures. Currently, there is no system of regular review and analysis of data related to permanency hearings, permanent placement, and termination of parental rights. Also, the adequacy of the data regarding continuances has not been examined. Continuances have been identified in both previous assessments as endemic to CINA cases.

Additionally, the CIP has not explored the quality and usefulness of information kept by other agencies. CIP and OCS have explored the feasibility of data sharing but have not yet made any concrete plans. Demand for this information stems from the CIP Committee, court staff, stakeholder agencies (Office of Children’s Services, Attorney General’s Office, Tribal entities, Public Defender Agency, and Office of Public Advocacy), and federally required timelines.

### **Measureable Objective 1.1**

Run reports; identify errors in data entry.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants

**Outcome 1 Activity or Project Description:** Extract data for each superior court judge statewide, analyzing reports for problems with accuracy of data or systematic problems with data entry. Work with judges and court staff to identify errors or issues with data and reporting.

**Collaborative Partners:** CMS Analyst, CIP Director, CIP Committee.

Reports for the Administrative Office of the Court (CIP Director and CMS Analyst); share data with CIP Committee quarterly.

**Timeframe:** 10/30/2011 - 12/30/12, and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** As a result of this activity, CMS Analyst and CIP Director will have a good idea of the relative accuracy and completeness of data related to the five mandatory measures. Judges, court staff and CIP committee members will become familiar with baseline case processing times in their court location, and how that performance compares to other court locations.

**Target Improvement:** Increased awareness and understanding of the CIP committee and court stakeholders about case processing times in their court location and at other, similarly situated court locations. Judges and attorneys examine the data to identify problem areas, positive or negative trends, and areas of achievement.

**Data Source:** ACS Case Management System (CourtView).

**Feedback Vehicle:** Discussions with judges and CIP committee.

**Narrative:** Extract data quarterly from the court's CMS, and ensure the data is reliable. Also, ACS will run the reports for each court location, and show them to the judges at those locations. The data will be broken down by judge for this step. The judges will be asked whether they think this data is accurate, and if not, how inaccuracies might be corrected. If specific cases seem to be out of compliance, then those cases and/or data entry in the CMS will be reviewed. This will be an iterative activity – the results will drive our future actions. So for example as we uncover systematic data entry errors we will address them through data entry training for court staff.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- The CIP's CQI subcommittee meets quarterly to discuss, share, and review data. OCS conducted a project to identify barriers to permanency and shared the information collected with the CQI subcommittee. The subcommittee is in the process of reviewing the data/information to determine the specific areas for CIP to focus on in seeking earlier permanency for youth in care. In addition, CIP has funded a modification to Court View to add a field for the unique person identifier used by OCS – an ORCA ID number. This recently went "live" in Court View and OCS is including the ORCA ID numbers for each child in its CINA petitions filed with the court. This will help ACS and OCS share data by successfully matching identities in each system.

## **Measureable Objective 1.2**

Discuss and establish baseline information. Determine performance targets and expected results.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants

**Collaborative Partners:** CMS Analyst, CIP Director, CIP Committee; OCS; Tribal entities, AGO; Public Defender Agency, and Office of Public Advocacy.

**Timeframe:** 12/30/2012 and ongoing

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** The quarterly reports will be used to establish baseline timeliness and case processing information. The baseline information will be used to inform discussion about setting performance targets.

**Target Improvement:** Acceptance of case processing performance targets by judges and CINA practitioners.

**Data Source:** Court Case Management System - CourtView; AGO ProLaw; OCS ORCA

**Feedback Vehicle:** In April 2010, ACS deployed a new screen in the case management system to track benchmark orders issued in CINA cases. The screen allows the court to track timeliness measures for each order entered. The CMS Analyst also plans to collect data from the hearing information and case disposition records. Monitoring and reviewing this data will provide the CIP Committee with a point to begin identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement. In addition, quarterly reports will be generated for the CIP Committee to analyze for trends and to establish baseline information. CIP will then make recommendations regarding practice modifications for judicial officers and court staff to improve case flow efficiency and reduce CINA case delays.

**Narrative:** Judges, attorneys, tribes and discuss baseline information and whether performance goals or targeted improvements could be set. Some ideas of performance targets include: specifying a certain percentage of cases to be adjudicated within 120 days; a certain percentage of permanency hearings to be held within 9 months, 12 months, and over; the percentage of cases in which a TPR petition is filed within 16 months; and number of ICWA vs. non-ICWA cases.

In addition to the five timeliness measures, two additional measures are of interest to Court Administration and the Supreme Court for reducing delay: 1) number of hearings held per CINA case, and 2) the number of days needed to complete a termination trial. These measures will also be run, analyzed, and shared with CIP.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CMS Analyst will compile data reports again at the end of this calendar year in order to assess and compare baseline data for this calendar year with the baselines from the prior two calendar years. CIP plans to seek consensus from committee members on performance goals during the following calendar year.

**Measureable Objective 1.3**

Measure achievement of performance targets, analyze reasons for failure to reach targets, and where necessary develop initiatives to help courts achieve case processing targets.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants

**Collaborative Partners:** CMS Analyst, CIP Director, CIP Committee; OCS; Tribal entities, AGO; Public Defender Agency, and Office of Public Advocacy.

**Timeframe:** 9/30/2013 and ongoing

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Courts improve their performance as measured via goals adopted by CIP.

**Target Improvement:** More timely CINA case processing leading to earlier permanency for children in care.

**Data Source:** Court Case Management System - CourtView; AGO ProLaw; OCS ORCA.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Using reports developed earlier, CIP will monitor courts' ability to meet those targets, and evaluate obstacles in case flow to achieving targets. Results are reported to judicial officers, court staff, and CIP stakeholder agencies. The data will be provided in a form that can be easily shared and understood by members of the CIP, judicial officers, and court clerks.

**Narrative:** CIP will begin this objective after we have developed our baseline information and performance goals.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- After reviewing baseline timeliness data, as well as nationwide dependency best practices, CIP committee will establish CINA timeliness performance goals and will promote awareness of these goals with CINA practitioners statewide. Additionally, CIP will request that a CINA data dashboard be included in the Court System's E-Filing project to encourage judicial focus on timely case processing for CINA matters.

#### **Measureable Objective 1.4**

Work with the Department of Law and OCS to create a tracking system of the timeliness of filings of petitions to terminate parental rights and to track documentation of compelling reasons to defer filing of a petition, in order to measure the rate of compliance with timeliness measures regarding termination of parental rights.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants

**Collaborative Partners:** CMS Analyst, CIP Director, AGO and OCS

**Timeframe:** Tracking system completed by 2013; ongoing monitoring 2013 – 2016.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Quarterly reports for CIP. Establish baseline information and determine performance targets

**Target Improvement:** Accurate and reliable data on timeliness of TPR filings to reduce delays in the timely filings of TPR petitions.

**Data Source:** ProLaw, CourtView, ORCA.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Reports for the CIP committee, AGO and OCS to review and analyze the reasons underlying delays in the filing of TPR petitions, and gauge the means for making adjustments in CINA practice to reduce delays.

**Narrative:** The Department of Law recently concluded a project to create a statewide procedure to ensure that filing of TPR petitions is not unduly delayed. The Department of Law and CIP will work together to decide how best to track the timing of TPR filings. ACS also created a special docket code to track when a Notice of Compelling Reasons is filed in a case. This new docket code will help identify CINA cases older than 16 months that are missing a TPR petition and Notice of Compelling Reasons. ACS will send a list of the cases quarterly to the Department of Law and OCS to review. CourtView data will need to be compared to Pro Law and ORCA data for consistency.

#### **FY 2016 Update:**

- Tracking of Notice of Compelling Reasons filings has improved; ACS will continue to work with Dept. of Law to ensure accurate tracking, particularly when the Notice of Compelling Reasons is embedded within a Permanency Order rather than a stand-alone filing. ACS sends a list of these cases to the Department of Law to review.

#### **Measureable Objective 1.5**

Assess and evaluate CINA cases within the context of the court's e-filing project and/or identify possible CINA data exchanges with other agencies.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants

**Collaborative Partners:** Office of Children's Services, Attorney General's Office, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy

**Timeframe:** 10/1/2014 and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Input provided by the court's e-filing Governance Committee and other agencies, as necessary. Attendance at e-filing meetings and regular communication with the court's Integrated Justice Coordinator (IJC) to ensure CINA data is taken into consideration for future data exchanges.

**Target Improvement:** An analysis of whether CINA case data would be a good choice to include in the court's electronic filing system and data exchanges, and what priority CINA data should be given.

**Data Source:** CourtView, TBD e-filing system, and other agency databases.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Maintaining communication with the IJC and regular meeting attendance regarding court's E-filing project.

**Narrative:** ACS is moving towards purchasing an electronic case filing system. The purpose of this activity is to ensure that the project decision makers are given good reasons to consider including CINA data in this project. The court plans to pilot e-filing with one case type (Domestic Violence) next year. If that pilot is successful and the e-filing system is purchased, then additional case types will be added to the e-filing project. The CMS Analyst believes CINA cases would be an excellent candidate since documents would be filed by state agencies that are willing to participate. The court's IJC is also working on a pilot for data exchange in the next year (criminal complaints). The CMS Analyst will recommend that CINA cases be considered for future data exchanges.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- ACS signed a contract with a vendor to develop an e-filing solution. The CMS Analyst attends Governance Committee meetings to assist in the development of screens for clerical staff and judges will utilize to process CINA cases electronically.

**Activity #2:** The legal parties in CINA cases will continue to receive relevant and quality training to maintain high performance and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the legal, cultural, and behavioral issues involved in child protection litigation

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** Previous studies have suggested that the quality of legal CINA advocacy in Alaska's courts is relatively good. However, in recent years practitioner turnover, mixed attitudes towards delay, and lack of a core CINA curriculum have been identified as causes of potential under-performance. The CIP uses high-quality training as a way to maintain quality performance, promote professionalism among CINA practitioners, and encourage practitioners to specialize in these cases.

### **Measurable Objective 2.1**

Provide periodic training to new and existing CINA practitioners to enhance their skills in dealing with legal, cultural and behavioral issues related to child protection cases.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building

**CIP Funding Stream:** Training grant

**Outcome 2 Activity or Project Description:** Plan and host a statewide, interdisciplinary CINA conference every other year.

**Collaborative Partners:** Attorney General's Office, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal representatives, Office of Children's Services

**Timeframe:** present - October 2014, and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** The conferences will provide high-quality education for Tribal representatives, social workers GALs, parents' attorneys, AAGs, judicial officers and other legal parties in the CINA system.

**Target Improvement:** Improve the quality of practice for CINA parties, including enhancing advocacy at CINA hearings.

**Data Source:** Participant evaluations.

**Feedback Vehicle:** CINA practitioners (AGs, social workers, GALs, Tribal representatives, and parent attorneys) and judicial officers will complete evaluations regarding the conference. CIP will review the evaluations and consider providing additional training in areas of particular interest/need indicated by the evaluations.

**Narrative:** The CIP intends to host a statewide conference every other fall during the period of this grant. The CINA Education Subcommittee of the CINA Court Improvement Committee planned and hosted statewide conferences in the fall of 2010 and 2012, which were well attended and well received.

#### **FY 2016 Update:**

- The CINA Education subcommittee decided to defer the fall 2014 statewide CINA conference to fall 2015, in order to prioritize CIP resources to support the further development of the CINA core curriculum project (Measurable Objective 2.2, below). CIP has decided to pool efforts and resources with

the Alaska CASA Program to co-host a 3-day joint Statewide Child In Need of Aid Conference in Anchorage, October 22-24, 2015, which will include the rollout of three additional core curriculum modules during the conference. The Alaska CASA Program has historically hosted a 2-day Statewide CASA/GAL Conference every other year and agreed to join with CIP in sponsoring an expanded 3-day multi-disciplinary conference for CINA practitioners.

## **Measurable Objective 2.2**

Provide new CINA practitioners with comprehensive training through the development and implementation of a core curriculum training program.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building

**CIP Funding Stream:** Training grant

**Outcome 2 Activity or Project Description:** Develop a comprehensive, interdisciplinary core curriculum for the legal parties in child protection cases. The CINA Education Subcommittee will adapt the core curriculum developed in Colorado to create an Alaska-specific, comprehensive core curriculum for CINA practitioners.

**Collaborative Partners:** Attorney General's Office, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal representatives, Office of Children's Services

**Timeframe:** Development of curriculum: 9/30/2011 – 10/30/2013 revised to 10/30/2014. Delivery of curriculum: pilot several modules by early 2014; roll out entire curriculum by end of 2015.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** A core curriculum, including substantive units on areas such as the law (including ICWA), culture, substance abuse, family contact, and behavioral health.

**Target Improvement:** Increased competency for both new and experience CINA practitioners.

**Data Source:** Judicial surveys; NACC training evaluation program, including software (beta-testing).

**Feedback Vehicle:** The core curriculum will be shared with the CINA Court Improvement Committee during the development stage and before it is finalized. Following implementation of the curriculum, judges will be surveyed regarding the performance of new CINA practitioners who have completed the curriculum. CIP will review the surveys and make adjustments to the curriculum as needed.

**Narrative:** The Alaska Core Curriculum modules are modeled after Colorado's CIP "training wheel" curriculum (used by generous permission of Colorado

CIP). The curriculum will consist of ten modules of either half or full-day training topics, utilizing adult-learning practices. CIP plans to partner with the University of Alaska Child Welfare Training Academy for hosting and support, but the modules can also be delivered at other locations around the state.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- The first pilot rollout (3-day training of Legal module) was completed in April 2014 with 26 multidisciplinary participants from around the state. The next pilot rollout occurred in October 2014 (1-day concurrent modules -- Family Well-Being; ICWA; and Services/Resources) with 53 total participants. Remaining modules are being completed and all of the curriculum will be finalized by the end of 2015. At the statewide conference in October 2015, two new modules – Information Sharing and Collaboration -- will be piloted, and the Family Well-Being module will also be included again.

**Measurable Objective 2.3**

Promote sponsorship by CIP of regional, interagency conferences throughout Alaska.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building

**CIP Funding Stream:** Training grant

**Outcome 2 Activity or Project Description:** The CINA Education and ICWA Subcommittees will use data from case processing reports and from other agencies to assess needs and opportunities for training and education, including regional, interagency conferences in various court locations in Alaska.

**Collaborative Partners:** Department of Law, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal representatives, Office of Children's Services

**Timeframe:** 10/1/2012 and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** A series of regional, interagency conferences will be hosted. It is anticipated that some of the opportunities and needs will be with Tribal nonprofits.

**Target Improvement:** Enhance relationships among Tribal representatives and other CINA practitioners, respond to specific problems in the system.

**Data Source:** Participant evaluations, CMS or agency data as needed.

**Feedback Vehicle:** CIP will review participant evaluations and consider increasing training in areas of particular interest or need.

**Narrative:** The Alaska Court System has for many years solicited proposals to design, coordinate and conduct regional, inter-agency conferences in each of the four judicial districts. In the past, the court has contributed \$7,500 per conference in

~~partnership with ANCSA (Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) nonprofit corporations.~~

**~~FY 2016 Update:~~**

- ~~• CIP supported a 2-day "Training of the Trainers: Preparing Training Events & Activities for Rural Alaska" workshop in December 2013 for 15 CINA stakeholders, including rural staff attorneys from Alaska Legal Services Corp, with the goal of enhancing the effective delivery of ICWA-related regional trainings by various agencies.~~

~~\*\* Objective has been deleted - CIP has decided to prioritize grant resources to continue to support the development of its CINA Core Curriculum modules, which are intended to be delivered regionally to this same target audience, including Tribal representatives. \*\*~~

**Measurable Objective 2.3**

Increased competency for CINA practitioners by encouraging and sponsoring “teams” to attend statewide or national training opportunities.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Training grant.

**Outcome Activity or Project Description:** The CINA Education Subcommittee will use data and other system feedback to continuously assess opportunities to sponsor or co-sponsor interdisciplinary teams to attend conferences in and outside of Alaska.

**Collaborative Partners:** Department of Law, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal representatives, Office of Children’s Services

**Timeframe:** 10/1/2012 and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** A series of teams will be sponsored to attend conferences which have been chosen by the CINA Education Subcommittee as particularly relevant to issues in Alaska. The team members will receive high-caliber training and gain a broader perspective on statewide and/or national trends in CINA practice.

**Target Improvement:** Enhanced practice by CINA practitioners.

**Data Source:** Participant evaluations

**Feedback Vehicle:** The members of the Education Subcommittee will use information about deficiencies in practice, including data from the five mandatory measures, to identify relevant training. disseminate conference information, solicit participation, and evaluate and approve applications for scholarship reimbursement. Subcommittee members will review participant evaluations to ensure the quality of

training provided and will prioritize conferences based on participant input. Also, training participants will impact overall CINA practice by sharing information learned with their colleagues.

**Narrative:** The Alaska Court System has for several years offered scholarships to Alaska child protection practitioners to attend conferences in multi-disciplinary “teams.”

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CIP sponsored travel for three OPA parent attorneys (2 staff and one contract) and three PDA parent attorneys to attend the ABA’s 4<sup>th</sup> National Parent Attorney Conference in D.C. in July 2015. The CINA Education subcommittee decided to prioritize training geared specifically to parent representation, since it had been some time since CIP had done so. Additionally, the CIP Director and CIP Curriculum Development Project lead attended the 38<sup>th</sup> National Child Welfare, Juvenile, and Family Law Conference in California in August (NACC provided a conference registration scholarship for the CIP Director).

**Measurable Objective 2.4**

Provide additional training to judicial officers regarding CINA cases.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Training grant.

**Outcome 2 Activity or Project Description:** The Judicial Conference Planning Committee, in consultation with the CINA Court Improvement Committee, will assess needs and opportunities for statewide training and education of state court judicial officers.

**Collaborative Partners:** Attorney General’s Office, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Tribal representatives, Office of Children’s Services

**Timeframe:** 10/1/2012 and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Statewide and individual judicial training as practicable and necessary.

**Target Improvement:** No specific change in data has been identified at this time.

**Data Source:** Participant evaluations.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Participant evaluations.

**Narrative:** The Alaska Court System's judicial conference planning committee plans mandatory programming for state court judges. The committee solicits suggestions for training from judges and court management.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- The CIP Director is involved in planning for the Statewide Magistrate Judge Conference in October 2015 and the agenda will include a presentation by foster youth from Facing Foster Care in Alaska (FFCA) regarding implementation of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. Judges have also attended the pilot rollouts of the CINA Core Curriculum modules and judges will attend portions of the Statewide Child In Need of Aid Conference in October 2015.

**Activity #3:** The Anchorage therapeutic child protection court will re-engage with its stakeholders and expand its capacity through restructuring

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** The Anchorage Family Care Court and the Anchorage Family Preservation Court are the state's only therapeutic courts handling child protection cases. An outcome evaluation of that court performed in 2010-11 identified several recommendations and areas in need of re-examination or improvement. In addition, agency stakeholders had expressed concerns regarding the purpose and functioning of the court. The therapeutic court team asked the CINA Court Improvement Committee to facilitate technical assistance regarding the court's future operation. Technical assistance was approved and began in the fall of 2011, with a projected completion in June 2012 and actual completion in August. The technical assistance included an onsite visit in January 2012.

**Measurable Objective 3.1**

Technical assistance is received and acted upon.

**Strategic Category:** Court Function Improvement

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic

**Outcome 3 Activity or Project Description:** The National Center on Child Welfare and Substance Abuse performed an initial values and perspectives assessment with court stakeholders and conducted an onsite visit to Alaska. A scope of work and work plan has been submitted.

**Collaborative Partners:** Family Care Court/ Family Preservation Court Team; managers from Attorney General's Office, Tribal representatives, Public Defender

Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, Office of Children's Services, Division of Behavioral Health; and National Center on Child Welfare and Substance Abuse

**Timeframe:** 9/30/2011 – 9/30/2012; ongoing. Update: TA completed 11/2012, implementation of TA recommendations anticipated to be completed by 12/2013. Pilot project will end 12/2014, after which the Development Committee will review court operations and decide by January 2015 whether the court should be expanded, and if so in what format.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Restructuring of Family Care Court and Family Preservation Court into a single therapeutic court initially as a pilot project (of up to 20 participants) for approximately one year, and then deciding whether to “go to scale” to provide services to a broad population of parents in CINA cases.

**Target Improvement:** Develop a clearly defined target population. Revise policy and practice protocols based on research, evidence-based practices, and the improved use of data.

**Data Source:** Information compiled by therapeutic court staff, information from National Center for Child Welfare and Substance Abuse experts, teleconferences with other states' therapeutic court staff regarding their model and approach. The restructured court will include client satisfaction surveys, as well tracking of court “graduates” compared to a (matching) comparison group.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Regular meetings with therapeutic court team and stakeholder managers.

**Narrative:** Several meetings facilitated by the CIP Coordinator showed significant stakeholder concerns about the functioning of the courts, although different stakeholders had concerns in different areas. These discussions also revealed differing levels of stakeholder commitment to the courts. It is hoped that the technical assistance will provide a productive forum to work through these issues.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- The restructured court (CINA Therapeutic Court [CTC]) began its initial 1-year pilot phase in July 2014. The CTC pilot was reviewed in July 2015 and has been extended for another year.

**Activity #4:** Examine and where necessary enhance information about the quality of representation for the legal parties in CINA cases

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** Previous studies have concluded that the quality of legal practice in Alaska's courts is relatively good. In recent years, however, practitioner turnover, mixed attitudes towards delay, and lack of a core CINA curriculum have been identified as causes of potential under-performance in the quality of legal representation.

**Measureable Objective 4.1**

Begin to gather data collected by other agencies related to quality of legal representation.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Data and Basic grants.

**Outcome 4 Activity or Project Description:** Gather and assess existing performance measures from executive branch agencies.

**Collaborative Partners:** CMS Analyst, CIP Director, Attorney General's Office (AGO), Public Defender Agency (PDA), Office of Public Advocacy (OPA).

**Timeframe:** 9/30/2011 – 12/30/2013, and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** A written assessment of the nature of data currently collected by other agencies and the strength of its correlation to Indicators of Quality Legal Representation from the Program Instruction.

**Target Improvement:** Better information is available regarding quality of legal representation.

**Data Source:** ProLaw, PDA system, OPA system

**Feedback Vehicle:** Report for the CIP Committee

**Narrative:** As mentioned elsewhere, quality of legal representation has not previously been identified as an issue in Alaska. Because of that, the CIP has not been active in this area. This activity is intended to provide the CIP more up-to-date information so that it may decide whether any action is needed.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CIP has collected the quality performance measures currently in place for each respective CINA stakeholder agencies and will work to develop additional measures based on the concepts in Attachment B of the Program Instruction. CIP plans to incorporate this Measurable Objective into its evaluation of training effectiveness (via the NACC prototype program) for its CINA Core Curriculum project, including assessment of quality improvements in practice and representation.

## **Measurable Objective 4.2**

Basic data on the performance of AAGs, parents' attorneys, and GALs is shared between the executive branch agencies and the CIP.

**Strategic Category:** Capacity building.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic and training grants.

**Outcome 4 Activity or Project Description:** Sharing of existing performance measures from outside agencies, and review by the CIP. This information is regularly submitted by the executive branch agencies to the Governor's office. CIP will review the information at the same time that it is submitted to the other reviewers.

**Collaborative Partners:** Department of Law, Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy.

**Timeframe:** 10/1/2011- 12/30/2013, and ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Data will be compiled quarterly for review and evaluation by the CIP.

**Target Improvement:** Better understanding by CIP and agency stakeholders of how attorney and GAL performance is measured.

**Data Source:** Existing data collected by Public Defender Agency, Office of Public Advocacy, and Department of Law.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Reports will be reviewed by CIP and, based on information from the performance data, CIP will make recommendations to the Education Subcommittee regarding focus areas for training.

**Narrative:** The Department of Law, Public Defender Agency, and Office of Public Advocacy already keep information on the performance of their attorneys and non-attorney GALs.

### **FY 2016 Update:**

- The CIP committee will review the available agency-based performance measures and will target additional measures to capture priority CINA performance areas for Alaska. CIP plans to supplement the existing measures with more comprehensive performance targets for all CINA stakeholders.

**Outcome #5:** The CIP collaborates with Alaska Native entities working to enhance Tribal engagement in the legal process.

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** This outcome responds to the currently existing disproportionality in out-of-home placement for Native children in Alaska's child welfare system. The disproportionality may or may not be caused by unjustified disparate treatment; however, the fact of the disproportionate representation is distressing to those who work in Alaska's child welfare system, to those who are served by it, and to outside observers and commentators.

Court data show that the percentage of filings involving Native children is disproportionately high compared to their representation in the population. However, a previous study showed that once they enter the litigation system, Native children have similar outcomes to non-Native children. Taken together, these data suggest that the disproportionality is being created at the front end, and not due to some flaw in the litigation process.

Whatever the reasons for the disproportionality, it seems clear that improving the frequency and quality of tribal engagement in state litigation would help. Thus, the focus of this outcome continues to be to encourage tribal efforts and engagement in the state court litigation process by reaching out to tribal entities and groups working in Alaska's child protection system.

### **Measurable Objective 5.1**

The CIP coordinator will reach out to the Tribal/State Collaboration group to assess opportunities for shared goals and activities.

**Strategic Category:** Systemic Reform.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic.

**Outcome 5.1 Activity or Project Description:** The CIP Coordinator will, as practicable, attend Tribal State Collaboration group meetings and collaborate as needed on any projects involving tribal representation in CINA litigation.

**Collaborative Partners:** CIP, Tribal State Collaboration Group.

**Timeframe:** Fall of 2013 and ongoing (quarterly T/S Collaboration Group meetings).

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Reports to the CIP.

**Target Improvement:** Tribal services and courts are enhanced.

**Data Source:** Discussions with tribal stakeholders and others regarding effectiveness.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Quarterly CIP meetings.

**Narrative:** The CIP coordinator will monitor the agendas and work plan of the Tribal/State Collaboration group for opportunities to share information, collaborate, or solicit feedback on CIP projects. The CIP membership will continue to include tribal members from the Tribal State Collaboration group.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CIP Director is a member of the Tribal/State Collaboration Group. A TSCG update/report is a standing agenda item for CIP committee meetings. CIP currently has 5 Tribal regional representatives. CIP is working with Tribal representatives in the Western Region to convene a CINA/Bench Bar meeting in Fall 2015, with long-range plans for a CINA Summit event for Western Region.

**Measurable Objective 5.2:**

The CIP Director will reach out to other tribal entities and groups working in Alaska's child protection system, including tribal councils, tribal courts, entities that train tribal judges and ICWA workers.

**Strategic Category:** Systemic Reform.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic.

**Outcome 5.2 Activity or Project Description:** The CIP Coordinator will invite selected tribal court judges to attend joint training with the state court judges at the October 2013 statewide judicial conference.

**Collaborative Partners:** CIP, Alaska Court System Judicial Conference Planning Committee.

**Timeframe:** Fall of 2013.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Reports to the CIP.

**Target Improvement:** Tribal judges' ability to handle child protection cases is enhanced.

**Data Source:** Discussions with tribal stakeholders and others regarding effectiveness.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Quarterly CIP meetings.

**Narrative:** The CIP coordinator will invite the tribal court judges to attend the fall judicial conference. The CIP coordinator will assess, with the Chief Justice and the Judicial Conference Planning Committee, future opportunities for similar joint training.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CIP is working to include state & Tribal court cooperation programming into both the Magistrate Judge Conference and Judicial Conference agendas. Additionally, the CINA Core Curriculum ICWA module rollout has included

participation by Tribal representatives, which will be broadened as the Curriculum program is taken statewide in the next calendar year.

**Outcome #6:** The CIP understands the process and the results of any future IV-E audits scheduled for Alaska.

**Measurable Objective 6.1:**

The CIP director coordinates with the OCS director and Region X to attend the entrance and exit interviews associated with any IV-E audits scheduled during the 2012–2016 timeframe. The CIP Director is provided with information about any problems that are found to be associated with court findings.

**Strategic Category:** Systemic Reform.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic.

**Outcome 6.1 Activity or Project Description:** It is important for the CIP director to understand the audit process, the results of the audit, and to know of any deficits associated with court findings.

**Collaborative Partners:** OCS, CIP, IV-E auditors.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Participation in exit and entrance interviews; written findings or notes regarding court issues.

**Target Improvement:** Problems related to inadequate or absent court findings are communicated to the CIP with enough detail to enable the court system to address them with judges and staff.

**Data Source:** Audit.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Meetings.

**Narrative:** Although IV-E audit results have for years been shared with the CIP, at least in oral form, sometimes more detail or additional information would have been helpful or necessary in order for the CIP director and the court system to analyze the exact nature of the deficit. It is hoped that closer coordination, especially on the front end, will enable the CIP director to ask questions and have a better understanding of the findings.

**FFY 2016 Update:**

- CIP Director has confirmed with Region X staff participation in the IV-E Review planned for November 2015.

### **Measurable Objective 6.2**

CIP analyzes the findings and takes action as needed.

**Strategic Category:** Systemic Reform

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic

**Outcome 6.2 Activity or Project Description:** To the extent that court-related deficits are identified, the CIP will discuss and take appropriate action.

**Collaborative Partners:** OCS, DOL, CIP, IV-E auditors.

**Timeframe:** Next scheduled IV-E Audit.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Written analysis; letter to judges or training as needed.

**Target Improvement:** Increased IV-E reimbursement for OCS.

**Data Source:** Future audit; OCS system.

**Feedback Vehicle:** Meetings.

**Narrative:** As before, the CIP coordinator will analyze the written audit results and consult with OCS, the Department of Law, and the CIP committee to determine whether any deficiencies were related to or could be improved by a court-related response. To the extent that all parties agree that a court response is necessary or desired, the CIP coordinator will work with the committee to implement the response. If a PIP is created, CIP will offer to be included in quarterly PIP update and monitoring meetings.

**FFY 2016 Update:**

- Continued planning & coordination with Region X leading up to November 2015 IV-E Review.

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| <p><b>Outcome #7:</b> CIP will participate in the CFSR process</p> |
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**Need Driving Activities & Data Source:** The child welfare agency plays a critical role in the CINA litigation system in Alaska. It is important for the court system to understand the challenges facing the agency, as well as its strengths, so that the courts and the agency can collaborate on system improvements.

### **Measurable Objective 7.1**

CIP is notified of and invited to CFSR planning meetings, kickoff meetings, and progress meetings. If a PIP is required, CIP is invited to help create and monitor the PIP. Any court-related items are included in the CIP's strategic plan.

**Strategic Category:** Systemic reform

**Outcome 8 Activity or Project Description:** The court system and OCS have achieved good cooperation and joint participation in the CFSR process. This successful partnership has relied primarily on personal communications between the OCS Director and the CIP Coordinator, and those communications are expected to continue. As per the program instruction, CIP intends to continue to be an active participant in CFSR planning and implementation, as well as PIP planning and implementation in the future.

**CIP Funding Stream:** Basic

**Collaborative Partners:** OCS, Region X

**Timeframe:** Unknown.

**Anticipated Outputs and Results of Activity:** Court system participates in planning meetings, kickoff meeting, and other meetings as needed; court system participates in PIP development and implementation. Also as part of its participation, CIP will provide OCS with any performance, outcomes or other relevant data collected through required CIP activities.

**Target Improvement:** None identified

**Data Source:** None identified

**Feedback Vehicle:** Reports to CIP, conversations with Region X and OCS

**Narrative:** CIP and OCS are uncertain when the next round of CFSR will be scheduled in Alaska. This Item will be updated when information becomes available.

**FY 2016 Update:**

- CIP Director has discussed the initial planning process, and the Onsite Review Instrument, for the 2017 Alaska CFSR with Region X staff. CIP Director will participate in ongoing planning discussions with Region X and OCS staff regarding the upcoming CFSR.