

Child and Family Services Reviews Onsite Review Instrument Instructions

The Onsite Review Instrument is used to review both foster care and in-home services cases during the onsite review component of the child and family services reviews of State child welfare agencies.

The process for gathering information to complete the Onsite Review Instrument includes conducting case record reviews and case-related interviews with children, parents, foster parents, caseworkers, and other professionals involved with the child.

The instrument is organized into a Face Sheet and three sections. On the Face Sheet, reviewers document general information about a case, such as the type of case.

The three sections focus on the outcome domains that form the basis of the child and family services reviews: safety, permanency, and child and family well-being. For each outcome, the reviewers collect information on a number of “items” related to that outcome.

Reviewers will include the names of individuals on the Face Sheet only and should use titles (for example, mother) when documenting the ratings for the items and outcomes.

While reviewers use the Onsite Review Instrument to review both foster care and in-home cases, they complete the permanency section only if the case under review is a foster care case.

For children in foster care, reviewers should consider items 21–23 only as they apply to the specific child whose case is under review. For children receiving in-home services, reviewers should apply those items to all the children in the family who are residing with, and included in services to, the family.

Quality Assurance Checklist

Once reviewers have completed an Onsite Review Instrument, they must apply the quality assurance review process (see the Quality Assurance Review Checklist) before turning in the instrument to the Lead Reviewer. The Lead Reviewer will provide feedback to the reviewers. If the Lead Reviewer provides feedback requiring reviewers to make revisions or additions to the instrument, the reviewers will then apply the quality assurance review process to the revised instrument. The Lead Reviewer must then re-review the Onsite Review Instrument to ensure that the requested changes have been made.

Face Sheet

In Section B of the Face Sheet, "Case name," reviewers should document the case name used by the agency, for example, the mother's name.

In Section I of the Face Sheet, "Type of case reviewed," reviewers should document the type of case being reviewed. Reviewers should check "Foster care" if the child was in care during any portion of the period under review, including placement with relatives in unlicensed homes. If the case was opened for in-home services for at least 60 days during the period under review, reviewers should check "Child protective services" (even if the child was in foster care before the period under review).

The "Period under review" begins with the first day of the sampling period used to select the cases for the onsite review, and continues through the date of the actual review. The Team Leader will clarify for the review team the "Period under review."

In Section J of the Face Sheet, "Is/was the child whose case is under review a child in need of supervision or a delinquent," reviewers should check yes if the case being reviewed is/was a child in need of supervision (CHINS), person in need of supervision (PINS), family with service needs (FWSN), family in need of supervision (FINS), or delinquent case. Reviewers should check no if the case being reviewed is/was an abuse/neglect case.

In Section L of the Face Sheet, "Date of most recent removal from home (foster care cases only)," reviewers should use the date of the current foster care placement episode. They should not use the date of the original placement. For example, if a child was placed in care in March 1997, returned home (custody returned) in March 1999, and then returned to care in October 1999, the current placement date is October 1999. If the child had never returned home, the current placement date would be March 1997.

In Section N of the Face Sheet, "Date case closed," reviewers should document the date the case was actually closed, not the date a child returned home.

Rating the Case

Reviewers must answer the Core Questions for each item.

Reviewers should use the Exploratory Questions listed under each item to determine the responses to the Core Questions and then mark responses in the non-shaded boxes next to each. Reviewers can use the Exploratory Questions in examining the case record and in conducting case-related interviews.

In addition to answering the Core Questions, reviewers should document relevant and supporting information under the Core Questions, where applicable, and in the large white box that appears below the Instructions for each item. It is critical that reviewers document in this space the information gathered from the case record and interviews that supports the responses to the Core Questions and indicate the source of the information (for example, during the interview with the birth mother she stated that she visits with the child weekly). All documentation should be written legibly and provide specific information related to the Core Questions. While the instrument provides directions on where to find information, reviewers should use their professional judgment to determine how best to gather all the relevant information.

Using the information gathered through the case record review and interviews, reviewers then rate each item as either a strength, an area needing improvement, or not applicable. Reviewers will need to consider all the information gathered for each case to make these determinations and weigh the following factors: (1) the result or outcome of services or interventions for the child(ren) or family; (2) the extent to which the child(ren)'s or family's critical needs were met; (3) the appropriateness of the agency's actions relative to the child(ren)'s or family's needs and to applicable agency policies (reviewers should give primary consideration to the needs of the child(ren) or family in the event that existing agency policies do not appear responsive to those needs); (4) recent practice, primarily considering the period under review unless otherwise directed in the instructions. Reviewers should address only the focus of the item being rated.

In a number of items, the expression "is/was" is used to frame a question. This is done to account for cases that are closed for services at the time of the review, but were open during the period under review. If the case is open for services at the time of the review, the term "is" refers to the current situation, unless the instructions indicate otherwise. If the case is closed at the time of the review, the term "was" refers to the last or most recent situation occurring before case closure, unless the instructions indicate otherwise.

Once reviewers have completed the items related to each outcome, they then complete the Discussion of Outcome portion of the instrument. Reviewers must determine whether each outcome has been substantially achieved, partially achieved, or not achieved. The criteria for determining the level of achievement appear in the Level of Outcome Achievement section within each Discussion of Outcome portion. Reviewers should check the level of outcome achievement and document the rationale for this rating in the space provided.

At the end of the Onsite Review Instrument is a Case Rating Summary sheet. Reviewers use this sheet to summarize the ratings for each outcome and item. They should use this sheet to prepare to present information on cases during daily onsite debriefings with their team.

Further direction for answering the Core Questions and rating each item and outcome is provided on the page for each item/outcome.

Reviewers must turn in to their Lead Reviewer a completed Onsite Review Instrument for each case record reviewed.

**Child and Family Services Reviews
Checklist for Completing the
Quality Assurance Review of
Completed Onsite Review Instruments**

Name of child/family:		<hr/>
Reviewers:		State: <hr/> County: <hr/>
Lead Reviewer:		<hr/>
Reviewers	Lead Reviewer	Quality Assurance Activity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all the sections of the Face Sheet been completed (for example, has the case been correctly identified as a foster care or inhome case and have the names of the children been filled in, with an asterisk by the name of the child whose foster care case is under review)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all the core questions under each item been answered (including questions requiring answers for both the period under review and the life of the case)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In the safety section, were answers and information for all the children in the family provided (not just the child whose case is under review)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has each item been rated as one of the following: “strength,” “area needing improvement,” or “not applicable”?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has appropriate justification been provided for any items rated “not applicable”?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do the notes reflect information obtained from all the sources available, including the case record and case-related interviews?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do the notes under each item support the rating assigned to that item?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were the correct criteria used to rate each of the seven outcomes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do the notes under each outcome discussion support the rating of the outcome?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the documentation on the Onsite Review Instrument cite the source of the information and is the documentation legible?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are names and other identifying information included only on the Face Sheet and not elsewhere in the Onsite Review Instrument?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the Case Rating Summary at the end of the instrument been completed?

After applying the Quality Assurance Checklist to the completed Onsite Review Instrument, review pairs should place their initials in the appropriate box below. Following the application of the checklist by review pairs, the Quality Assurance Reviewer (for example, the Lead Reviewer) also will apply the checklist to the instrument and place his or her initials in the box below. Review pairs and Quality Assurance Reviewers should apply and sign off on the checklist after each round of changes.

Quality Assurance Review 1:	Review Pair (Please initial): _____ Lead Reviewer (Please initial): _____
Quality Assurance Review 2:	Review Pair (Please initial): _____ Lead Reviewer (Please initial): _____
Quality Assurance Review 3:	Review Pair (Please initial): _____ Lead Reviewer (Please initial): _____
Quality Assurance Review 4:	Review Pair (Please initial): _____ Lead Reviewer (Please initial): _____
Quality Assurance Review 5:	Review Pair (Please initial): _____ Lead Reviewer (Please initial): _____