



Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System/SSIS Modernization:

July 1, 2025 – March 15, 2026

Report to the Legislature

March 15, 2026

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I. Legislative Charge

Minnesota Laws 2025, 1st Special Session Chapter 3, article 11, section 6, requires the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) to, by March 15th, 2026 provide the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child welfare and state and local government with a plan and estimated timeline for modernization of the child welfare information system in compliance with state law and federal Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System requirements.

In 2024 the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$9,657,000 to design, develop and implement a data-driven, federally compliant Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System. Minnesota Laws 2024 Session, Chapter 115, Article 12, Section. 32 states,

DIRECTION TO COMMISSIONER OF HUMAN SERVICES; CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS.

When designing, developing, and implementing a data-driven, federally compliant Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System, the commissioner of human services must ensure that the system can, at a minimum, do the following:

- (1) allow counties to track various financial information, including benefits received by counties on behalf of children in the child welfare system, and fees received by counties from parents with children in out-of-home placements;
- (2) provide the ombudspersons under Minnesota Statutes, section 257.0755, the ombudsperson for American Indian families under Minnesota Statutes, section 3.9215, and the ombudsperson for foster youth under Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.80, with case-by-case access to nonprivileged information necessary for the discharge of the ombudsperson's duties, including specific child protection case information, while protecting Tribal data sovereignty;
- (3) provide comprehensive statewide data reports; and
- (4) track demographic information about children in the child welfare system, including race, cultural and ethnic identity, disability status, and economic status.

Article 22, Section 2, Subd. 2(a) states,

- (a) Social Services Information System (SSIS). \$9,657,000 in fiscal year 2025 is for information technology improvements to the SSIS. The appropriation must be used to develop and implement a modernization plan for SSIS that addresses priorities established through collaborative planning with counties and Tribal Nations that use SSIS. Priorities must take into consideration available funding and have a direct impact on child welfare casework. The appropriation must not be used for changes to SSIS that are not part of the modernization plan or for other Department of Human Services information technology systems. This is a onetime appropriation.

In 2025 the Minnesota Legislature appropriated an additional \$35 million to acquire, implement, and configure a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System that complies with federal and state laws and regulations. Minnesota Laws 2025, 1st Special Session Chapter 3, article 11, section 6 states,

CHILD WELFARE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Subdivision 1. Direction to commissioner. The commissioner of children, youth, and families must acquire, implement, and configure a data-driven comprehensive child welfare information system that complies with federal and state laws and regulations.

Subd. 2. System requirements. The commissioner of children, youth, and families, when procuring and implementing the comprehensive child welfare information system, must ensure that, to the extent funding is available, the system:

- (1) meets all federal requirements for a comprehensive child welfare information system under Code of Federal Regulations, title 45, section 1355;
- (2) meets all state requirements, including those established in Laws 2024, chapter 115, article 12, section 32, and Laws 2024, chapter 115, article 22, section 2, subdivision 2, paragraph (a);
- (3) provides comprehensive statewide data reports, including data on law enforcement involvement in the child protection system;
- (4) incorporates responsive design capabilities that provide seamless access to the system application from a variety of electronic devices, including but not limited to mobile devices, while ensuring data security and compliance with all federal and state data privacy requirements;
- (5) gathers information necessary to implement and ensure compliance with all state and federal laws, including but not limited to the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act under Minnesota Statutes, sections 260.751 to 260.836, and the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act under Minnesota Statutes, sections 260.61 to 260.693;
- (6) allows for integration of Tribal child welfare information systems to support sharing of data when necessary while respecting Tribal data sovereignty; and
- (7) addresses other critical system needs identified by the commissioner, which may include needs identified by local social services agencies.

Subd. 3. Procurement. The commissioner of children, youth, and families, in collaboration with the commissioner of information technology services, must utilize all paths available to state agencies to ensure expedient procurement of a child welfare information system that meets the requirements under this section, while incorporating compliance needs and functionality, to ensure a modern user experience for stakeholders who provide child welfare services. The commissioners must award the contract based on best value, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 16C.02, subdivision 4.

Subd. 4. Vendor requirements. In any request for proposal for the comprehensive child welfare information system under this section, the commissioner of children, youth, and families, in collaboration with the commissioner of information technology services, must require an eligible vendor to:

- (1) have successfully implemented a child welfare system modernization project in another state, and to provide contacts for references for successful implementation; and
- (2) have at least five years of implementation expertise and experience in child welfare system modernization.

Subd. 5. Stakeholder consultation. (a) The commissioner of children, youth, and families must consult and collaborate with stakeholders, including frontline child protection workers, during the process of acquiring, implementing, and configuring the comprehensive child welfare system, and ensure that local social services agencies are permitted to participate in system testing before final implementation of any systems or applications.

- (b) The commissioner of children, youth, and families must engage in formal consultation with Minnesota Tribal governments under Minnesota Statutes, section 10.65.

Subd. 6. Reporting. (a) By March 15, 2026, the commissioner of children, youth, and families must provide the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child welfare and state and local government with a plan and estimated timeline for modernization of the child welfare information system in compliance with state law and federal Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System requirements.

- (b) By August 15, 2026, and by each January 15 and July 15 thereafter, the commissioner must provide an update on the child welfare information system modernization efforts and progress toward federal compliance required under this section to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child welfare and state and local government. This paragraph expires upon the commissioner's report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child welfare and state and local government that the modernization required under this section has been substantially completed.

II. Status Update

This March 2026 report is the first in a series of biannual reports on the progress towards acquiring and implementing a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System. As such, the reporting period is July 1, 2025 to March 15th, 2026. Future reports will reflect the subsequent six-month periods.

Planning Activities to Date

When embarking on a large-scale technology replacement project, the Administration of Children and Families (ACF), the federal agency which reviews and approves project materials for enhanced federal funding match, strongly encourages a thorough planning phase to increase the success of the overall implementation of a new system. The following is a summary of the activities and work that has been completed since July 1, 2025.

- DCYF and MNIT completed Minnesota’s CCWIS Planning Advanced Planning Document (PAPD), submitted it to the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and received approval on November 18, 2025. This supports the 50% federal match for planning activities for the CCWIS, including DCYF and MNIT personnel and vendor contract(s).
- In parallel, DCYF and MNIT solicited and selected a CCWIS planning vendor with national experience in CCWIS projects in other states to support agency efforts in the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP), RFP system requirements, and the Implementation Advanced Planning Document (IAPD), that when complete will be submitted to ACF for approval. This approval must be granted prior to posting the solicitation for the state to receive enhanced CCWIS federal funding match. The Planning and Readiness Kick-Off with the selected Planning Vendor (CSG Government Solutions) occurred October 14, 2025. CSG’s deliverables include:
 - CCWIS Implementation RFP, including all RFP-ready system requirements
 - Implementation Advanced Planning Document (IAPD), including all sub-documents required by ACF
 - Data Quality Plan and Data Conversion/Migration Plan

DCYF and MNIT plan to solicit for a CCWIS implementation vendor, in accordance with state and federal requirements, who will implement an accelerator platform or commercial off the shelf (COTS) solution. This approach will allow the state to leverage a platform with some components already pre-built, while still allowing for configuration to meet requirements unique to Minnesota due to state statute. This is a departure from current SSIS, which is a 100% custom solution.

To move to the implementation phase of the project, Minnesota must submit materials to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for approval. Those materials include the RFP, the IAPD (required to receive federal match during this phase of the project), and data quality and conversion plans.

RFP Development

- Between November 3rd 2025 and January 15th 2026, DCYF and MNIT, in collaboration with the planning vendor, facilitated 38 focus group sessions with more than 300 participants across the state, including counties and tribes that currently use SSIS.

- More than 1,000 pain points were identified by the focus groups. These pain points were used to inform the development of functional and non-functional system requirements that will be included in the RFP for the CCWIS Implementation vendor.
- The functional and non-functional requirement sections developed for the RFP are currently under review by more than 65 individuals from state and local agencies to gather feedback and determine if adjustments are needed.
- Additional solicitations to support the CCWIS Implementation (independent verification and validation, change management, project management) are currently in progress. These solicitations are estimated to be complete and ready for federal submission in May of 2026.
- In close collaboration with MNIT procurement, RFP narrative sections and attachments are in progress or completed, and the RFP will utilize the Invitation to Negotiate format. All RFP materials are estimated to be complete, reviewed by all necessary state parties, and ready for federal submission in May of 2026.

IAPD Development

- DCYF and MNIT, in collaboration with the planning vendor, have developed first drafts for many of the components of the IAPD and facilitated inter-agency planning discussions necessary for completion of this planning documentation (Personnel Plan, Cost Benefit Analysis, Project Management Plan, etc.)
- IAPD sections are estimated to be complete and ready for federal submission in May of 2026.

Data Quality and Conversion Plans

- DCYF and MNIT, in collaboration with the planning vendor, have developed the Data Quality Plan, a required component of Advanced Planning Documents. This plan is currently under final review.
- The Data Conversion/Migration roadmap, a structured plan that details the technical conversion of data from legacy to new systems, is estimated to be complete by May 2026.
- MNIT and DCYF have begun work to prepare staff and architecture necessary for successful data conversion.

Engagement, Staffing, and Governance

- DCYF has created a CCWIS Steering Committee that includes counties, tribes, financial operations, and representatives from DCYF, DHS, and MNIT to work on project governance and planning.
- A dedicated CCWIS team, in the Strategy and Technology Office of DCYF, has been established including a Digital Transformation Manager (over CCWIS and SSIS teams), a CCWIS Supervisor, product owners for fiscal and data, and a budget and engagement coordinator. This team works collaboratively with dedicated SSIS staff within DCYF and MNIT and engages regularly with all interested parties. This team has created the future personnel plan for the product line and will continue to staff positions thoughtfully as DCYF and MNIT move through the procurement.
- Beyond the focus group and steering committee, the CCWIS team engages at least monthly with: DCYF's Child Safety and Permanency Administration's policy leadership, MACSSA leadership, the American Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council, and executive leadership across DCYF, MNIT and DHS.

Next Steps and Timeline

Immediate Next Step:

DCYF, MNIT, and the planning vendor will complete the Implementation Advanced Planning Document (IAPD) and RFP solicitations that will be submitted for federal approval to ACF in May 2026. Based upon the experience of other states and federal approval regulations, federal approval will take at least two months. During the review period, DCYF will be prepared to answer any questions from ACF quickly.

Procurement and Contracting:

After approval of the IAPD and RFP by ACF, procurement and contracting for CCWIS will begin. This process, which includes mandated federal review periods, takes an average of 18 months based on data from 13 states who have executed CCWIS contracts in the last several years. DCYF and MNIT are lining up resources across the agencies and communicating with federal partners to reduce this time as much as possible.

The Child Welfare System Modernization solicitation will use an Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) process. ITN allows the State to engage in structured negotiations with the highest scoring responders to determine which finalist offers the best overall value. Through these focused discussions, the agencies can gain a deeper understanding of each proposal and increase confidence the selected solution is well-positioned for successful implementation. The agreed upon contract must also be approved by ACF, who may have feedback to incorporate before it can be finalized. Contract execution with the CCWIS Implementation Vendor to design, develop and implement CCWIS is expected to begin in 2027.

Ahead In 2026:

While working through the procurement and contracting phase, parallel work will occur for various readiness activities to ensure the project avoids common roadblocks and delays experienced in other jurisdictions, including:

- Data clean-up and conversion planning to prepare data and architecture for migration during the project
- Organizational readiness and impacted parties assessments to prepare local and state agencies for change and participation in the project
- Business process redesign to ensure processes are streamlined prior to design sessions with a future CCWIS implementation vendor
- Continued planning for fiscal functionality currently supported by SSIS, which may include process redesign to streamline fiscal processes and reduce risk
- Continued planning for DHS program functionality currently supported by SSIS, in close collaboration with DHS and local agencies
- Ongoing evaluation of engagement efforts to date

Estimated Timeline:

The estimated timeline is dependent on federal review periods and contract negotiations with the future CCWIS Implementation vendor. It is important that MNIT and DCYF enter into a strong contract from which the state can defend from future change orders and ensure strong controls. Timelines to full implementation of CCWIS, commonly referred to as “go live,” will be dependent on the proposals received from vendors. Based on experiences of other states, it is anticipated that work to design, configure, and implement the future system will take 2.5-3 years. DCYF and MNIT will conduct readiness activities listed in a prior section, in parallel with procurement activities, to ensure the project avoids common delays and barriers experienced in other states.

