



Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System/SSIS Modernization: March 16, 2026 – August 15, 2026

Report to the Legislature

August 15, 2026

For more information contact:

Department of Children, Youth, and Families
Strategy and Technology Office
444 Lafayette Rd
St. Paul, MN 55155-3802
(Phone) 612-431-3830
laura.haffield@state.mn.us
dcyf.mn.gov

As required by Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$300 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.



For accessible formats of this information or assistance with additional equal access to human services, email us at language.access.dcyf@state.mn.us, call **651-539-8158** or use your preferred relay service. ADA1 (3-24)

Contents

I. Legislative Charge1

II. Status Update4

 Planning Activities to Date – Status Update.....4

 Engagement and Governance5

 Next Steps and Timeline5

 Immediate Next Step:.....5

 Additional Readiness and Planning Activities:.....6

 Estimated Timeline:.....6

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 August 15th, 2026, provide the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child welfare and state and local government with an update on 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 August 2026 report is the second in a series of biannual reports on the progress towards acquiring and implementing a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). As such, the reporting period is March 15th, 2026, to August 15th, 2026. The next report will cover August 2026 to January 2027, and future reports will reflect the subsequent six-month periods.

Planning Activities to Date – Status Update

Planning activities and background were covered in detail in the previous [March 2026 report](#). To recap, over the past 12 months, the CCWIS team has carried out comprehensive readiness activities to support a successful and compliant modernization effort. With support from vendor partner CSG Government Solutions (CSG), the team developed the Implementation Advanced Planning Document (IAPD) and, in coordination with MNIT Procurement, a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) that fully incorporates all federal CCWIS requirements and all state requirements established in Laws 2024, chapter 115. Counties and Tribal Nations were engaged throughout the development process, detailed further in a dedicated section below. To meet these expectations, the project team has developed over 1,800 detailed system requirements reflecting federal and state mandates, user experience needs, and the statutory expectations identified in Minnesota law. These include:

- statewide reporting capabilities;
- secure and responsive system design;
- data collection sufficient to ensure compliance with federal and state Indian Child Welfare laws and the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act;
- integration capacity with Tribal child welfare information systems in a manner that respects Tribal data sovereignty;
- Other critical system needs identified by the commissioner and local agencies.

The RFP also incorporates emerging federal guidance on the responsible and appropriate use of artificial intelligence within child welfare systems, enabling AI supported data quality improvements, analytics, and decision support tools while maintaining strict adherence to state and federal privacy, security, and ethical standards.

The CCWIS team in DCYF has partnered closely with MNIT Procurement Director and staff to ensure that all paths available to state agencies are utilized to ensure expedient procurement of a child welfare information system that meets the requirements under *Subd. 3: Procurement*, while incorporating federal compliance needs and functionality for all users, to ensure a modern user experience for stakeholders who provide child welfare services. The requirements to award the contract based on best value, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 16C.02, subdivision 4, are reflected within our draft contracts. As we move into the procurement phase, the legislative requirements are reflected within CCWIS processes for evaluating and ultimately securing a vendor contract.

Both the IAPD and RFP, along with supporting materials, including RFOs for Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) services, Organizational Change Management (OCM) support, and Project Management Office support (PMO) services, were submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on May 21 for required federal review. DCYF received official on-time approval from ACF on July 20, 2026. We are now entering the procurement activities phase.

Engagement and Governance

Over the past year, DCYF and MNIT conducted extensive CCWIS engagement, with support from CSG, including forming a monthly CCWIS Steering Committee with representatives from the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators (MACSSA), one American Indian Tribal Nation, DCYF, DHS, and MNIT's Human and Social Digital Services division (MNIT@HSDS). More than 40 focus groups and review sessions with over 300 participants produced the requirements and materials needed for the IAPD review, including proposed CCWIS RFP, and RFOs for IV&V, OCM, and PMO. The CCWIS core team meets with MACSSA leaders monthly to ensure proposed next steps continue to receive regular feedback. Engagement artifacts and updates are posted twice monthly on the public CCWIS engagement website. Evaluation of our engagement approach shows that this model effectively gathers diverse perspectives and supports cocreation, while DCYF retains responsibility for final CCWIS decisions and statewide compliance. This model, at the request of MACSSA partners, is now being utilized in other DCYF-led modernization projects as well. Counties and Tribal nations, as well as partners in other state agencies impacted by this work, will continue to be engaged throughout the next steps.

Next Steps and Timeline

Immediate Next Step:

With the recent federal approval of the CCWIS IAPD and associated RFP and system requirements, MNIT and DCYF may now proceed with posting the RFP for vendor responses. The CCWIS RFP was posted publicly for vendor response on July 27th, with proposals currently due near the end of September. The CCWIS RFP Evaluation team which will review and score all proposals includes representation from across business and technical subject matter experts (SMEs) in DCYF and MNIT, as well as 12 participants from MACSSA and an evaluator seat for each of the three American Indian Child Welfare Initiative Tribes (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, White Earth Nation, and Red Lake Nation). Proposal evaluation steps are expected to proceed through the rest of the year.

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 that 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.

Additional Readiness and Planning Activities:

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. DCYF is currently engaged with counties and American Indian Child Welfare Initiative Tribal Nations through virtual and in-person business process redesign efforts from July through January. This engagement will involve nine distinct mapping efforts across core child welfare processes, with an estimated 12-25 participants across the Minnesota regions participating. At the time of this report, the first two areas (Intake & Screening, Assessment & Investigations) have gone through this process, again supported by vendor partner CSG.

Additionally, DCYF continues to engage in a multi-pronged data readiness initiative. This includes data clean-up activities in partnership with local agencies and preparing the data architecture necessary for a smoother migration. The local agency response to the data clean-up activities has been impressive, with nearly a 50% improvement across the state in the first two data clean-up focus areas. To support the effort to prepare the data architecture, DCYF and MNIT are in the process of soliciting for three additional staff augmented data architecture and engineering resources to support this work.

Lastly DCYF continues to make progress on:

- Planning for fiscal functionality currently supported by SSIS
 - A formal project to map and assess these processes across DCYF, DHS and local agencies has been requested
- Planning for DHS program functionality currently supported by SSIS
- A DHS specific workgroup has been established to efficiently engage with all programs across DHS impacted by future modernization
- Ongoing change management readiness and evaluation of engagement
- Planning for staffing (both transitions for current staff and new positions) necessary to support the implementation and product line long-term

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.

With the first approval granted and the RFP posted July 27th, the project is on track with the estimated timeline provided in the March 2026 legislative report.

