

Addendum to the Lassen County Comprehensive Prevention Plan

March 4, 2025

Background and Purpose

Lassen County has actively participated in the Family First Prevention Services (FFPS) program to enhance child welfare services through prevention efforts. With the recent re-appropriation of the State Block Grant (SBG) funds and the increased flexibility granted to small counties under Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 16588(c)(3)(C), Lassen County is submitting this addendum to update its Comprehensive Prevention Plan (CPP).

This update reflects the county's decision to utilize SBG funds without the immediate implementation of a federally eligible Title IV-E Evidence-Based Program (EBP), in alignment with new statutory provisions. Despite this, Lassen County remains committed to advancing the goals of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) by implementing evidence-based practices that strengthen families and prevent unnecessary foster care placements.

Challenges in Implementing Title IV-E Eligible EBPs

Lassen County has encountered multiple barriers to implementing a Title IV-E eligible EBP, including but not limited to:

1. **Limited Provider Availability** – The county has a shortage of service providers trained and certified in Title IV-E eligible EBPs, making implementation difficult.
2. **Workforce Capacity Constraints** – Staffing limitations in both county agencies and community-based organizations pose significant challenges to launching new programs with fidelity.
3. **Infrastructure Gaps** – While Lassen County has the capacity to collect and report general prevention data, the county lacks the infrastructure to support data collection, reporting, and fidelity monitoring required for Title IV-E reimbursement.
4. **Rural Demographics and Geographic Challenges** – The dispersed population and geographic isolation make it difficult to implement standardized interventions that require regular in-person engagement.

Additionally, Lassen County has worked to integrate **Motivational Interviewing (MI)** as a key strategy to enhance engagement and improve outcomes for families receiving prevention services. However, full implementation of MI has been challenging due to workforce capacity constraints. While our team is dedicated to utilizing MI, limitations in staffing, training, and ongoing coaching have hindered our ability to fully integrate the practice with fidelity.

Furthermore, while Lassen County possesses the necessary infrastructure to collect and report general data related to prevention cases, the successful implementation of MI requires a more

robust support system, including sustained training, supervision, and data tracking specific to MI fidelity and effectiveness. Without additional resources to provide coaching and monitor fidelity, our ability to utilize MI as an effective prevention tool remains limited.

Mitigation Efforts

Despite these challenges, Lassen County has taken proactive steps to implement a Title IV-E eligible EBP, including:

- Engaging with regional and state partners to explore collaborative implementation models.
- Providing training to local service providers to increase capacity for delivering EBPs.
- Assessing alternative delivery models, including virtual and hybrid approaches, to enhance accessibility.
- Exploring partnerships with external agencies to expand service availability.

To further enhance the effectiveness of MI within Lassen County's prevention services, we are seeking additional resources and support to:

- **Expand workforce capacity** to ensure staff can consistently utilize MI in prevention cases.
- **Provide ongoing training and coaching** to improve fidelity and skill development.
- **Implement a structured fidelity monitoring system** to evaluate effectiveness and improve practice.

These efforts have not yet resulted in a feasible pathway to full EBP implementation, necessitating the use of the small county exemption under WIC Section 16588(c)(3)(C).

Future Plans for Title IV-E EBP Implementation

While Lassen County is opting to use SBG funds without immediate implementation of a Title IV-E eligible EBP, the county remains committed to evidence-based prevention practices and will:

- Continue identifying and assessing well-supported EBPs from the **Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse** for future phases.
- Develop strategic partnerships with regional service providers to enhance service delivery capacity.
- Explore opportunities for phased implementation of a Title IV-E EBP as additional infrastructure and resources become available.
- Strengthen the use of **Motivational Interviewing** through workforce expansion, ongoing training, and fidelity monitoring.

Impact on Theory of Change, Logic Model, and Spending Plan

- **Theory of Change:** Lassen County remains committed to preventing child maltreatment through a continuum of comprehensive prevention services. The absence of an immediate Title IV-E EBP will not alter this commitment but will allow for alternative approaches tailored to local needs.
- **Logic Model:** The county's logic model will be adjusted to reflect the reliance on alternative, culturally responsive programs while maintaining alignment with overarching prevention goals.
- **Spending Plan:** SBG funds will be allocated to expand primary and secondary prevention efforts, including community-based family support programs, mental health services, substance use prevention initiatives, and workforce capacity-building for Motivational Interviewing.

Governance Structure Confirmation

The decision to remove the Title IV-E EBP requirement and update the CPP was made through Lassen County's established governance structure. The county's FFPS leadership team, in collaboration with community stakeholders, reviewed available data and determined that this exemption is in the best interest of local families.

Conclusion

This addendum to the Lassen County Comprehensive Prevention Plan formally documents the county's decision to utilize SBG funds without the immediate implementation of a Title IV-E eligible EBP, as permitted under WIC Section 16588(c)(3)(C). Lassen County remains committed to implementing high-quality prevention services and will continue working toward the integration of well-supported EBPs in future phases.



Jayson Vial
Community Social Services Director



Jennifer Branning
Chief Probation Officer

