The CARES Compass

An executive summary for navigating to the future of CWS-CARES together.

Welcome to our first issue of the CARES Compass!

This 2-page summary, published every two months, provides you with a concise overview of upcoming CWS-CARES communications, the latest developments, and highlights.

By staying informed through this bi-monthly update, you will gain valuable insights into how CWS-CARES is continuously evolving to meet the needs of its users by automating processes, tasks, and streamlining workflows.

We encourage you to explore the contents of this summary and we welcome any feedback you may have. Together, we can ensure CWS-CARES is a powerful tool for achieving success.

Why am I getting this?

You are receiving this summary because you have a vital role in shaping your organization's communication landscape. Your expertise, decision-making power, and direct access to various channels makes you an influential figure in informing, educating, and engaging with staff to prepare for CWS-CARES.

How should I use this?

You may share this summary with key staff in your organization so that they are aware of the latest information and can prepare to disseminate communications in a timely manner. Delivering updates promptly keeps people informed and allows them to adapt to changes effectively.

Why should I read this? Go-Live is 2 years away.

Many counties and tribes have been actively involved in the design and testing of CWS-CARES since June 2022 and even earlier. CWS-CARES brings **significant** changes to staff, adapting to new processes, technologies, and approaches. Understanding the impacts and preparing for the big changes ensures a smooth transition, maximizes its benefits, and addresses potential challenges.

Resource Links

CWDS Main Page
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
CWDS Bulletins
CWS-CARES Service Areas

About CWS-CARES

Child Welfare Services-California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES) is the new system being developed for California to comply with Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) requirements.

CWS-CARES will replace the current **CWS/CMS** and **CARES-Live** features currently in use: Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), Facility Search, and Snapshot.

A small number of counties will participate as early adopters in the Pilot before the full production launch. Then, everyone will start using CWS-CARES with a statewide, simultaneous rollout.

CWS-CARES **Version 1** launches in **October 2026.**

Click here to give us your feedback on the CARES Compass
We'd love to hear from you!

Subscribe to future CARES Compass issues **here**

Project Timeline

CWS-CARES **Version 1** launches in **October 2026** and **Version 2** launches in **April 2028**.

Our communication approach supports the CWS-CARES project lifecycle and timeline. Proactive communication helps prepare users for the new system and manage potential resistance to change, ensuring a smoother transition and adoption.
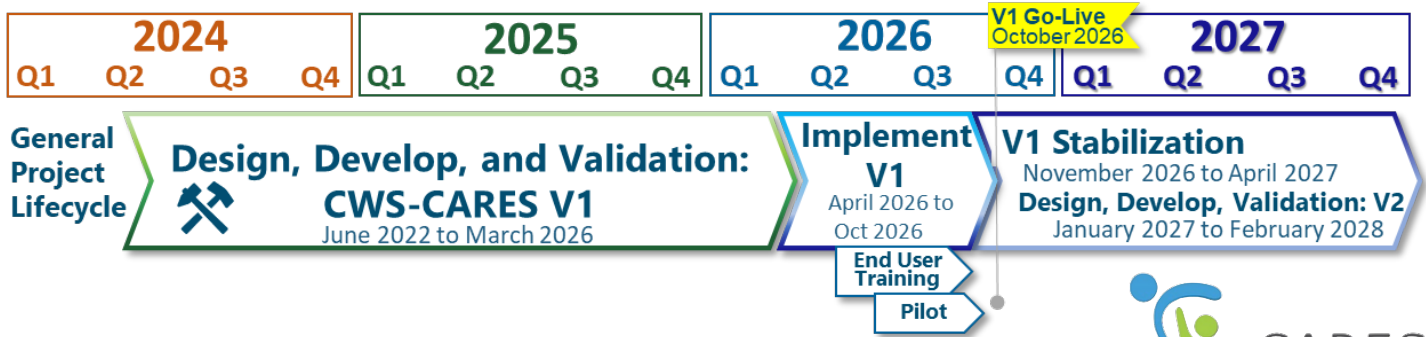
Upcoming CWS-CARES V1 Communications

Month	Communication Item	Description	Audience
March	Communication Baseline Survey	Gathers baseline information about CWS-CARES project communications and opportunities for improvement	Executives and Influential Stakeholders
	CARES Video: Why CARES? A Case for Change	Educates end users on the benefits and importance of modernization of the child welfare system.	All End Users
	*OCM Training Series Begins	Begin to educate audiences on tools and information to support end user adoption in their new roles for CWS-CARES	County Implementation and OCM Coordinators
	CWS-CARES Project Newsletter	Keep audiences informed on a regular basis, build awareness of system progress, share successes, and highlight related topics and staff	All End Users and External Stakeholders
April	CWDS Roadmap Enhancements	Updates to the existing CWDS Roadmap on the website, and different levels of detail (High, Medium, Low) for various audiences	CWDS website visitors
May	The CARES Compass	A 2-page summary for executives to build awareness of upcoming communications, reinforce delivery and messaging with staff	Executives and Influential Stakeholders
	CARES Video: CWS-CARES 101	Educates end users on high impact functionality and efficiencies	All End Users
	OCM Training Series Concludes	The series to educate audiences on tools and information to support end user adoption in their new roles for CARES ends in this month	County Implementation and OCM Coordinators

*OCM stands for Organizational Change Management