



CWS-CARES

Child Welfare Services - California Automated Response and Engagement System

CWS-CARES replaces the existing Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) with a Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) compliant system.

Version 1 Go-Live: Oct. 2026

CWS-CARES aims to increase child safety with expanded functionality in:

RFA (Resource Family Approval):

Enables a standard application and approval process for the safe placement of children in resource family homes.

FFPSA (Family First Prevention Services Act):

Standardizing prevention data collection, prevention services planning and services referrals.

Interfaces for Eligibility: Information sharing between different systems helps to ensure that children and families receive consistent and coordinated services.

AFCARS Compliance (Adoption and Foster Care Accountability and Reporting System):

Improving data tracking and reporting of AFCARS data to maintain federal funding.

Today: CWS/CMS

Addresses are not validated in CWS/CMS

Tribal affiliation data is stored in contact notes, which makes it challenging to access and use

Workers have to navigate back to the screening narrative to update it

The Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment are in different systems

The CANS assessment is developed outside of the system

Child & Family Team (CFT) meeting notes are captured in the Associated Services tab

The Future: CWS-CARES

Smarty Streets validates addresses as they are entered

Prompts about Tribal affiliation and heritage are now included and required

The screener narrative will be available for easy access throughout Intake

Single Sign On with the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tool, plus integration of the data

The CANS assessment is integrated and reflected in the Case Plan

More structured data supports tracking CFTs and outcomes

CWS-CARES Version 1 includes:

Intake

- Screening
- Investigations: Engagement and Determination

Resource Management

- Provider Directory
- Services (Array)

Eligibility

- Request Determination and Redetermine Eligibility
- Eligibility Programs (NRLG, AAP, EFC, etc.)

Courts

- Warrants
- Court Hearing Framework
- Jurisdiction, Disposition, and Other Hearings
- Status Reviews
- Petitions and Court Results

Financial Management

- Track Administrative and Assistance Costs
- Track Service Delivery (including FFPSA)

Case Management

- Engagement and Services
- Case Plan
- Prevention Services
- Placement
- Case Closure
- Aftercare and Re-entry
- Adoption

Resource Family Approval

- RFA Application Submission (RFA Greenfield enhancements)
- Recruitment
- Complaints and Legal Action

Reporting and Analytics

- Federal Extracts and Indicators
- State Metrics
- Operational Reports
- Ad-hoc reporting, Data Extract & Visualization



Who's Involved in CWS-CARES



- 700+** Project Staff
- 124** Organizations
- 58** Counties
- 2** Tribes with Title IV-E Agreements with CDSS
- 8** Interfaces with different systems in Version 1

- Technology Platform**
- Salesforce with Cloud Based Platform as a Service (PaaS) solution
 - APIs for data
 - CARES Data Infrastructure (CDI)

Keep in Touch with CWS-CARES!



There are many opportunities to stay informed.

We encourage you to channel your feedback through your organization's designated **CARES Single Point of Contact (SPOC)**. They are your primary point of contact and can guide you through the established process to ensure your input reaches the right team and can be acted upon

Learn more about the **CWS-CARES Service Areas** and corresponding contact info: https://cwds.ca.gov/cws_cares_service_areas

Visit the CWDS Website

<https://cwds.ca.gov/>

Learn more with these resources:

[CWS-CARES User Resources Page](#) Explore resources to learn about CWS-CARES.

[CWS-CARES Public Library](#): A searchable repository of project information.

[CARES Compass and CARES Explorer](#): Bimonthly 2-page summary of CWS-CARES highlights and quarterly newsletter to keep audiences informed about project topics and product features.

[CWDS Meetings & Events Calendar](#): Captures recurring meetings hosted by the Project

[CWS-CARES Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#): Updated regularly with new questions and responses from the Project



CWS-CARES Stakeholder Briefings

[Live forum](#) with CWS-CARES system demonstrations, live Q&A, and project updates.

Next Session: **Wednesday, October 22, 2025**

CARES Video Series

Short videos that demonstrate parts of the CWS-CARES system, [introduce new system functionality](#), and show simplifications, automations, and timesavers.

