



# Six tips for developing your diligent recruitment plan

## 1. Build the right team

Developing your diligent recruitment plan should be a team effort. Consider creating a workgroup that includes a variety of perspectives. Members of the workgroup could potentially include:

- Leaders in your organization who are responsible for one or more of the required elements in the plan.
- Data experts who can offer insight into what quantitative and qualitative information should be collected, where you can find it, and how to interpret it.
- Community partners whose experience and services can provide valuable perspectives.
- Individuals with lived experience who can speak most effectively regarding what actually benefits those the plan aims to help. This could include current or previous foster and adoptive families, birth families, child welfare professionals, and youth in care.
- Diverse voices who can help implement strategies for mitigating individual and systemic biases.

Together, your team should review the elements of an effective diligent recruitment plan, assign individuals to sections aligning with their strengths and areas of expertise, identify measurable goals, and craft a timeline for developing and implementing the plan.

## 2. Build on what you have

You don't need to start from scratch.

Look for ways to expand upon existing information, knowledge, and momentum. Does your agency already have a format for plans that can be used as a template or

starting point that can be adapted to fit your needs? If not, visit the National Center for Diligent Recruitment's website to see the ideas listed in our toolkit for developing recruitment plans.

- Draw inspiration from your agency's mission, core values, and practices for children and families. Your organization might already have a practice model that can be used as a foundation for your diligent recruitment plan.
- Identify relevant agency-wide efforts that intersect with your diligent recruitment goals and efforts. Examples could include existing practice models or special initiatives.
- Revisit prior successes and lessons learned, as potential insights can be found in previous grants or child and family service reviews (CFSRs).
- Explore current requirements related to recruitment, development, or support of families. You might find inspiration in such places as tribal-state agreements or contracts, consent decrees or settlement agreements, CFSR program improvement plans, or border agreements with neighboring states.

### 3. Dive into the data

The better you understand your data, the better you understand what families and youth actually need.

- Take a fresh look at the data existing for the children in foster care with the goal of gaining a clearer picture of all their needs. For example, what are their medical, emotional, or behavioral needs? By identifying what youth actually need, you can begin to offer meaningful solutions.
- Do the same thing for your existing foster, adoptive, and kinship families.
- Integrate these two data sets and compare and contrast the findings for both children in care and the families. Understanding both group's needs and how they relate will help you identify diligent recruitment objectives.
- Let the data lead the way. Use the information gleaned to tailor your plan.
- Seek guidance regarding your data and its analysis. While data is crucial for effective planning, it can also be intimidating, especially if your existing systems don't provide all of the information you need in a clear way. You can contact us ([diligentrecruitment.org/contact](https://diligentrecruitment.org/contact)), or visit our resources page on our website to learn ways to best use your data.

## 4. Learn from others

You don't have to reinvent the wheel, and you don't have to go it alone.

- Look at recruitment plans from other child welfare systems for examples of developing, writing, and structuring a recruitment plan. You can see state diligent recruitment plans by searching the Children's Bureau's website for state reports, including CFSPs and APSRs, and searching within each CFSP or APSR for the section on diligent recruitment.
- Join our diligent recruitment peer group ([diligentrecruitment.org/peer-services](https://diligentrecruitment.org/peer-services)) to connect with peers around the country who are working on diligent recruitment.
- Ask us! The National Center for Diligent Recruitment is here to help. Our resources include helpful webinars, articles, and tools such as the diligent recruitment navigator. Additionally, we have data experts and technical assistance providers to answer questions. Contact us for support in building and implementing your diligent recruitment plan.

## 5. Remember your reason

Let your "why" fuel momentum. While the previous tips offered guidance regarding how you can build your plan, what matters most is *why* you're doing so. At each step, remember that all of your diligent recruitment efforts should ensure that your foster, adoptive, and kinship families are prepared and supported to meet the needs of children in foster care.

## 6. Maintain your momentum

Getting the plan developed, written, and approved is an exciting accomplishment. Maintaining that momentum is the heart of the work. Develop benchmarks to monitor your progress, and consider establishing a monthly or quarterly workgroup to review data, discuss current processes and goals, and address arising barriers.

## We're here to help!



Contact us at:  
[consultation@diligentrecruitment.org](mailto:consultation@diligentrecruitment.org)

Visit our knowledge hub of information and resources: [diligentrecruitment.org](https://diligentrecruitment.org)