#### KENTUCKY

#### I. <u>Introduction to the State</u>

#### A. Highlights

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has positioned itself to take advantage of emerging communication technologies with the introduction of the Kentucky Information Highway (KIH) in 1995-96. The KIH is a statewide, digital network that provides high speed and high capacity delivery of voice, data, video, image, and radio transmissions. The most prominent user of this technology is the state government. State government departments that provide education, public assistance, health care, economic development, public safety, and environmental protection are all fully networked into the KIH, allowing linkages of data across almost all state management information systems.

The specific information systems used to monitor efforts toward welfare reform, including the large KAMES (TANF), KASES (child support enforcement), and TWIST (child abuse and foster care) systems (all described in detail below), all have the capacity to link databases. The KIH will give state agencies, universities, school districts, libraries, and local governments the ability to directly link to state information resources. The KIH makes very complex technologies, such as large file transfers, image transmission, interactive video conferencing, and electronic data interchange, more economically feasible and less administratively difficult.

Public assistance programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky are administered by the Cabinet for Health Services and the Cabinet for Families and Children through four functioning units: the departments for Community Based Services, Medical Services, Public Health, and Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services. The mandatory and optional state supplements to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI/S) Program are also administered by the Cabinet for Families and Children.

#### B. Demographics and Caseload Description

In 1997, the population of Kentucky was 3.9 million, ranking the state twenty-fourth overall. In 1996, residents age 18 years and under made up 24.9% of the total population, and 12.6% of residents were age 65 years and over. Since 1990, Kentucky has had a sharp decrease in the percentage of its population living below the poverty level; in 1990 this figure was 17.3%, and in 1995 this number had dropped to 14.7%, causing the state ranking to fall from seventh place to sixteenth. The overall percentage of individuals receiving public assistance was 9.3 in 1994 (the latest figure available from the U.S. census). The state has seen as slight decrease in the number of infant deaths, from 8.5% in 1990 to 7.8% in 1994. In 1996, 17% of births were to teenage mothers, ranking the state seventh overall.

#### C. Interview Sources

Interviews for this report occurred during the summer and fall of 1998. Information was obtained from key personnel in the Office of Information Systems, the department that has responsibility for statewide networking projects, and the Cabinet for Families and Children.

# II. <u>Data Systems for Social Programs</u>

# A. Names of Data Systems

AFDC/TANF	Kentucky Automated Management Eligibility System
	(KAMES)
Food Stamps	KAMES
Medicaid Eligibility	KAMES
JOBS	System Tracking for Employability Program (STEP)
Medicaid Claims	Kentucky MMIS
Child Protective Services	The Workers Information System (TWIST)
Foster Care	TWIST
Child Support	Kentucky Automated Support and Enforcement System
	(KASES)
Unemployment Insurance	Commonwealth of Kentucky Unemployment Wage
Earnings Records	Record System

# B. Description of Data Systems

#### Kentucky Automated Management Eligibility System (KAMES)

The Kentucky Automated Management Eligibility System (KAMES) is operated by the Department of Community Based Services, of the Cabinet for Families and Children. The state has been using this system for the past nine years. KAMES provides the Commonwealth of Kentucky with an integrated system that supports casework and reporting functions for the Food Stamps, AFDC, Medicaid, and State Supplementation programs. KAMES is a user-friendly, menu-driven system that provides for the online collections, update and inquiry of public assistance information. The system supports an interactive client interview schedule through the use of an online application with built-in system security edits to prevent duplicate participation records.

KAMES operates on the Commonwealth's IBM mainframe under under CICS:MVS/ESA. The system has 58 databases, 1,500 programs, 119 sub-routines, and approximately 35,000,000 lines of COBOL source code and uses Telon technology. KAMES handles an average of 100,000 transactions per day with an average response time of less than one second (.67 seconds). This average response time includes processing for online eligibility determination and benefit calculation screens.

KAMES has a system support team (staffed by a Food Stamps section coordinator and an Income Maintenance section coordinator) that facilitates the flow of information between the KAMES programmers and users. Nonroutine reports required by users or researchers can be requested through the support team. In addition, when assistance is required with hardware, security, or policy questions, the support team will direct the user to the appropriate area for further assistance.

KAMES uses a hierarchical architecture, rather than a relational structure. Although this has been presented as less desirable by programming staff, when the older Food Stamp information system was combined with the Income Maintenance system, the former system used this hierarchical structure. It was believed by personnel that, given the magnitude of statewide information system changes, it would be more feasible to maintain the older structure. There is some discussion about how to develop a relational structure, but no changes to the existing configuration are anticipated in the near future.

Currently, KAMES uses the Social Security number as the primary identifier for individuals. However, the system generates a unique system identification number that may eventually be used as the primary identifying number. Cases are identified by the Social Security number of the head of household. In addition to the Social Security number, the system routinely collects full names, address, date of birth, race/ethnicity, and county code. Records are organized at the individual level.

To date, archiving takes place monthly for cases that have been inactive for three months. All data elements are maintained indefinitely. Information will be maintained for at least five years in the MMIS and KASES systems, and it is anticipated that KAMES will also share these protocols. Only erroneous information is ever overwritten in this system. Nightly back-ups of all data are performed by the Department of Information Systems.

KAMES interfaces with KASES (Division of Child Support Enforcement) both online and in batch. The online interface allows caseworkers to enter child support/medical enforcement referrals. In batch, KAMES passes information regarding the referrals, approvals, discontinuances, and changes to K-TAP (the public assistance program) and Medical Assistance. KAMES provides information to MMIS (Department of Medicaid Services) on recipient eligibility through a bath interface. This information is primarily used for billing in Medicaid claims.

KAMES also interfaces with the two systems that support the employment and training program for Foods Stamps and the STEP program for K-TAP. KAMES passes referral data to these systems and accepts data back from them to alert caseworkers of actions needed based on compliance and non-compliance of clients. This information is processed in batch.

KAMES maintains records from BENDIX/BEERS, SDX, State Wage Records, and Unemployment Insurance. A computer matches files and alerts the caseworker if any member of the applicant's household has information from one of the sources.

KAMES produces several different reports used to determine system use, to reduce fraud, and to aid in state and federal reporting. Most of these reports are produced monthly. Some of the major reports produced by KAMES are application activity, caseload activity, time standard for interviewing, supervisory sample of cases for review, and unauthorized attempts. KAMES also has the ability to create other reports as needed.

Discussions are underway to determine if KAMES should be fully interfaced with the Child Protective Services information system, TWIST (also described below); however, no decision has been made. For information concerning the sharing of data from this system, please see the section below entitled "Sharing of Administrative Data."

### System Tracking for Employability Programs (STEP)

The Office of Training and Reemployment of the Kentucky Workforce Development Cabinet operates the System Tracking for Employability Program (STEP) management information system. This system is used to track clients in the Kentucky Works program and has been in place since 1990. Modifications were made to the system to support changes in new JOBS legislation. This system tracks the progress of all participants in the state's work programs, makes supportive service payments, and provides reports and resource identification.

The system is accessible to caseworkers through the use of dummy terminals that are connected to a statewide mainframe. Some terminals will be converted to desktop PCs during 1999. The system is networked to provide real-time data access.

The primary client identifier is the Social Security number, and a case identification number is assigned that is usually the Social Security number with an additional alpha identifier. They system collects the usual demographic information on program participants. Through its interface with KAMES, all identifying data from that system is batched to STEP nightly.

In addition to KAMES, STEP obtains data for the management information systems used by the Department of Employment Services and county-operated programs that have contracts to provide services to public assistance clients.

No data are routinely deleted or overwritten in STEP; however, data are purged semi-annually when a case has been inactive for one year. At least one year of historical data is available online and other data are maintained on tape for an additional five years.

The University of Louisville is conducting the evaluation of the K-TAP program. Monthly downloads of data sets are provided to university researchers. In addition, files for the Legislative Research Commission are routinely provided to state representatives. Permission is granted to outside researchers on a case-by-case basis, and a signed confidentiality agreement must be executed. Inquiries should be directed to the Workforce Development Cabinet.

# Kentucky Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS)

The state of Kentucky currently uses the services of a contractor, Unisys Corporation, to operate and maintain the state's Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS). The contractor also owns the equipment for the Local Area Network (LAN), which is installed at the Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) offices, Cabinet for Families and Children. The Kentucky MMIS now supports both fee-for-service Medicaid claims processing functions and the information and processing needs of the statewide Managed Care Project, a prepaid managed health care delivery system. The current system has been in place since 1983.

The primary purpose of the Kentucky MMIS is to accept and maintain an accurate, current, and historical source of eligibility and demographic information on individuals eligible for Kentucky medical assistance. The maintenance of data is required to support claims processing, the reporting functions, the eligibility verification system, and providing managed care organizations with enrollee information. The current major source of eligibility data for the MMIS is KAMES. In addition, a file of accretion, deletions, or other changes to information is passed monthly to the MMIS.

In addition, for providers, MMIS receives, processes, adjudicates, and suspends all payments to claimants who have provided services to Medicaid-eligible recipients. The system has online inquiry to all MMIS files with 60 months of historical information required to support ad hoc reporting. Inquiry screens do not allow data to be updated (except key and function fields) on the screen. The use of identical screens to those that are used for update is permitted, providing that all data fields are protected from update.

Inquiry and update access to MMIS files is through dial-up or other telecommunications links to DMS-approved third parties, including commonwealth contractors and other departments or agencies. Online access provides the ability to inquiry by Medicaid identification number, Social Security number, full name, date of birth, and gender. The primary identifier for this system is the Medicaid assistance identification number, which is usually the Social Security number, but sometime a pseudo-identification number is used for children in foster care. A case identification number is also used, and this number may be the same as the Social Security number with a three-digit suffix attached.

All workstation equipment, both hardware and software, support access to not only the MMIS, but the DMS local area network, Kentucky Information Highway, and the Internet. The total networking solution used by the DMS is Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) topology, which is not strictly limited to data and video. The system has the capability for online real-time updates to all MMIS files. All online updates have built-in edits to ensure data integrity is maintained throughout the MMIS. Any screen that has multiple edits can edit the entire screen and identify all fields in error.

This system routinely collects the following provider-specific information: provider name, phonetically similar name, partial name characters, provider number, provider's Federal Employer's Identification Number, enrollee's Social Security number, address, date of birth, zip codes, and county code.

In the future, MMIS will be able to provide a Geographic Information System to identify recipient populations, service use, and corresponding provider coverage to support provider recruitment, enrollment, and participation in the Medicaid program.

The MMIS also tracks information about third party liability claims. Information for this component requires input from several other systems: the quarterly tape file of recipients on worker's compensation from the Department of Workers' Claims in the Commonwealth Labor Cabinet; enrollment and coverage information from private insurers/health plans; quarterly tape

file of Commonwealth employees with insurance from the Department of Personnel; annual tape files of all absent parents, related children, and Social Security numbers from the Division of Child Support Enforcement in the Department of Social Insurance; and annual tape files of all absent parents with CHAMPUS data from the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System.

## The Workers' Information System (TWIST)

The Cabinet for Families and Children's TWIST automates all of the case management functions of the Division of Social Services' (DSS) Family Services Workers, with the exception of adult services, child care, and case waiting. TWIST also has interfaces to the Cabinet for Families and Children's KAMES system, which is the automated eligibility determination, certification, and benefits distribution system for Kentucky's Public Assistance, TANF, Medicaid eligibility and Food Stamps programs. TWIST is the first enterprise-wide client/server application within Kentucky, and had a start-up date of 1997.

TWIST is a client/server application that has helped provide social workers with the appropriate tools to provide good service and support management reporting requirements without duplication of efforts. The local area network consists of Pentium desktop workstations, with local servers connected to the Commonwealth Integrated Network System. It is supported by the Kentucky Information Highway, Kentucky's statewide communications infrastructure. All laptop and desktop computers in the systems are loaded with Windows NT and Microsoft Office Suite tools, with a custom application written in SQL Windows. The Commonwealth of Kentucky chose MS-Word to manage most of the text processing activities and Rumba terminal emulation software to interface with other Cabinet mainframe systems. The Sybase data servers use a UNIX operating system, and the six query servers use a Windows NT SQL windows development tool.

TWIST is in the early stages of a phased implementation. Currently, eight of the DSS's 17 district offices (actually 16 districts plus the central office) are in production. The other district offices will be phased into production by the end of October 1998. TWIST will be run from the approximately 1,500 Family Services Workers desktop PCs, accessing the TWIST centralized database at the Department of Information Systems facility in Frankfort. The TWIST centralized database consists of a cluster of eight database servers, two to be used for updates, with the remaining six to be used as query servers. When totally implemented, it is estimated that TWIST will have 2,300 total users (with up to 700 concurrent users), accessing a database 35-36 gigabytes in size.

Unisys came in late in the development effort of TWIST and assisted in completing the design specifications, system development, and testing of the system. They also provided implementation services and supported the system's roll-out to 129 offices, statewide. TWIST has cost the Commonwealth \$11 million thus far, but they now have over 2,000 computer work stations helping the agency to serve its 3.7 million individual client base.

TWIST has freed caseworkers from only accessing information while at their desks; the systems allows for access while caseworkers are on the road, contacting children. A single entry populates into a variety of forms and areas onto the system, allowing for pertinent information and statistics for each child to only be entered once. When a new form must be filed, the basic

information is already filled in on the new screen. The systems can pull information about parents, including their work records, medical use, etc.

Early reports on the success of TWIST have been positive. DSS staff are extremely pleased with the system and excited about the benefits it provides to both the Family Services Workers as well as the DSS administrative staff. As funds become available, the adult services, child care, and case waiting functions will be added to the system. While successful, TWIST has not been implemented without problems. As originally developed, the TWIST security module has made it difficult for DSS staff to temporarily switch roles. For instance, if there is a need for a district manager to work a case assigned to a supervisor, there is no mechanism within the security module to allow temporary reassignment of this responsibility. Also, there are some minor problems with the system's screen navigation. DSS staff would eventually like to completely interface TWIST with other Cabinet for Families and Children programs, but the issue of sharing confidential client data must be resolved first.

TWIST records are organized at the case level; and the primary identifier is the Social Security number of the child. Since TWIST is a very new system, no data have been purged at the time of the interview, and archiving protocols will be developed over the next year. No data are ever overwritten in this system. This system collects all personal demographic data, such as Social Security number, name, address, date of birth, ethnicity, county, and zip code.

For information concerning the sharing of data from this system, please see the section below entitled "Sharing of Administrative Data."

# Kentucky Automated Support and Enforcement System (KASES)

KASES is the statewide system that supports administrative and reporting functions for the Child Support Enforcement Division of the Department of Social Insurance, Cabinet for Families and Children. KASES provides system support for casework functions, such as the establishment of paternity, securing and enforcing support obligations, providing parent locator services, and collecting and distributing child support money. The system provides comprehensive financial and operational reports. The pilot implementation of this system was accomplished in November 1990 and was statewide by 1997. KASES supports over 3300 online users.

KASES interfaces with the Kentucky Automated Management and Eligibility System (KAMES) for automated case referrals and case updates on TANF cases. KASES also interfaces with Unemployment Insurance wage records for intercepting payments on delinquent child support cases. An interface with the TWIST system will be developed during the fall of 1998.

KASES uses the Social Security number as the primary identifier for individuals. Cases are identified by a system-generated unique identification number, and a secondary generated number for use internally to the Child Support Enforcement Division. This system routinely collects the Social Security number, full name, address, date of birth, race, and county code.

Inactive cases are removed from the system after three years and archived on tape indefinitely. Because of Kentucky's program to collect child support payment at all costs, a case record may

be re-opened until the child receiving no support has reached that age of 33 years. Nightly backups of this system are performed, and information in historical records cannot be overwritten; however, new or changed information may be entered on the record. Archived data are easily retrieved by a batch program.

## Unemployment Insurance Wage Record System

Employment wages reported for administration of the Unemployment Insurance program in Kentucky are maintained by the Management Information Systems branch in the Department of Workforce Development. The current wage record system has been in place since the 1970s. The system resides on an IBM 3090 mainframe and is accessible by desktop PCs/terminals.

The primary individual identifier in the system is Social Security number. First and last names of the wage earner, address of wage earner, employer's identification number, and employer's address are also maintained. The system does not collect any case numbers or data from other state information systems.

Wage record data are kept in the online system for 16 quarters (four years). After that time, the data are archived and then purged from the primary database system. This archiving and purging process takes place quarterly. The archived data are stored online in a separate database and are easily accessible by the Management Information Systems branch staff. Once removed to the achieved database, data are maintained for five years.

The Management Information Systems Branch has a number of data-sharing agreements with other state agencies. Wage-record data are shared with the Department of Social Insurance for the purpose of verifying eligibility for Food Stamps, TANF, and Medicaid. Caseworkers using the large KAMES systems have online access to wage records information. Wage-record data are also shared with the Child Support Enforcement division, which uses the data to find non-custodial parents who are noncompliant with court-ordered child support and also to garnish the wages or Unemployment Insurance benefits of these noncompliant parents. Wage-records information are provided by batch process to KASES (the child support management information system).

Access to wage-record data for outside researchers is prohibited, unless a state agency has contracted with the department to carry out research that falls into the scope of access for state agencies

#### C. Sharing of Administrative Data

Public employees administering assistance and child support programs have full access to all data management systems, with the exception of the limited access to TWIST provided to some state workers. In addition, other agencies that have access to data are (1) all law enforcement agencies in cases involving the discovery and prosecution of fraud; (2) duly elected members of the Kentucky General Assembly and the U.S. Congress in reference to their individual constituents; (3) the interested party in hearings before the Secretary of the Cabinet for Families and Children; and (4) banks or other financial institutions to confirm information submitted by the recipients for

assistance determination. Written consent to disclose financial data will be given by applicants for K-TAP.

Information may also be available to entities supplying or securing services for recipients, where a confidentiality agreement exists with the cabinet. For example, an authorized representative of any other state or local government agency may have access to data if there is a direct or legitimate interest in the participant or his family, not withstanding any state statute or regulation to the contrary; private or quasi-private agencies have access when there is an agreement with the state in place to assure the confidentiality of all shared information; and universities and private researchers may have access when shared information is used for research interests of the state. Requests for data may be made to the Office of Information Systems, and the Department of Social Services.

Some routine anonymized data will eventually be available to those bodies with access to the Kentucky Information Highway.

# III. <u>Linked Databases</u>

#### A. <u>Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP) Evaluation</u>

Even before the passage of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children was considering the impact that new time limits and work requirements would have on the commonwealth's welfare population. The state wanted to be sure that its new program, the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP), would have adequate resources to prepare clients to enter the workforce before their five-year lifetime eligibility was exhausted. Kentucky operates its welfare reform program without a federal waiver. The cabinet contracted with the University of Louisville's Urban Studies Institute (USI) to conduct a two-phase, longitudinal, outcome evaluation of the effects of its welfare reform program. Specifically, the evaluation would include the development of a database to track and summarize current trends in the lives of individuals receiving public assistance, as well as specific clients in K-TAP. The evaluation focuses on factors such as employment, earnings, health care coverage, child support payments, types of employment, pay raises, frequency of job changes, and incidence of protective services involvement. Agreements have been executed to allow USI to obtain data from the following systems: KAMES, KASES, TWIST, MMIS, UI, and DMV. Information from these agencies is being compiled in a data warehouse that will be used to create the K-TAP evaluation database.

The evaluation also includes a panel study of 500 current and former clients to measure their quality of life for up to five years, with additional cohorts added each consecutive year, for a total of 2,500 clients over five years. Clients for the panel study are randomly selected from eight bellwether counties (Hopkins, Breckinridge, Jefferson, Fayette, Campbell, Johnson, Knott, and McCreary) with the number of clients from each county based on the K-TAP population in the region from which the bellwether was drawn. Issues of confidentiality between the cabinet and the Urban Studies Institute (USI) are currently being addressed.

To measure quality-of-life factors of current and former clients, USI and Cabinet for Families and Children staff worked to develop a standardized survey form over a period of several months.

The final instrument contains up to 800 possible questions. A one-hour interview is given to each client, who is given a \$50 incentive payment for her/his time. The clients are sent letters explaining the evaluation's purpose and asking them to call USI toll free to set up an appointment for an interview. They may then choose between a face-to-face interview in their homes and a telephone interview. After they complete the interview, USI mails them a U.S. Postal Service money order.

After hours of pre-testing, staff training, and conducting actual field interviews in a non-bellwether county, interviews began in Jefferson County in June 1998. The 500 interviews will be completed by the end of August and the responses entered into the evaluation database and summarized. Results of this first panel study will serve as the benchmark for future studies, attempting to answer the question, "Are clients improving their standard of living or is it getting worse?" An analysis of the evaluation database will be integrated with the panel study to form an executive summary to be released in December 1998.

The results from these surveys will be used by the cabinet to make changes to K-TAP by shaping policy forecasts of what may happen when the five-year lifetime welfare clock stops ticking, and help the cabinet design innovative ways to help people become self-sufficient. As the cabinet warehouses data, builds evaluation databases, conducts longitudinal panel studies, and analyzes that data, the cabinet will use the information to develop new and creative programs to empower clients to reach self-sufficiency.

USI has already conducted two rounds of a telephone survey of clients who have been discontinued from welfare. The first survey was fielded in December 1997, and it included 560 randomly selected clients. In August 1998 a similar survey was conducted of randomly selected clients discontinued between December 1997 and June 1998. These surveys focused on the clients' employment, wages, job retention, child care arrangements, changes in standard of living, and self-esteem. Clients received a \$15 incentive payment; clients without telephones were encouraged to call a toll-free number. While not totally representative of all regions of the Commonwealth, the results paralleled those of similar exit studies nationwide. Kentucky's recipients were faring about the same as recipients from other states.

# B. <u>Cabinet for Families and Children Pilot to Boost Outcomes for Children at Private Residential Facilities</u>

Pilot is aimed at children being served by private residential facilities that have contracts with the cabinet. The focus of the pilot is to increase safety and stability for children in private residential facilities. Historically, the cabinet has not had the data to determine whether children treated by private child care facilities are well served. The study seeks to improve outcomes by collecting data via the "Quality Care Initiative," which will be expanded statewide by July 2000; and secondly, a review of each facility.

The Quality Care Initiative is scheduled for pilot in September 1998, and for the first time information from databases which monitor private residential facilities will be extracted and compared with data from child welfare placement systems (these are county-operated systems) to determine any trends in child recidivism and facility violations. The initiative is the first step

toward overhauling a system that has grown exponentially in cost in recent years but has not necessarily resulted in healthier clients. The Quality Care Initiative fits the cabinet's philosophy of reducing its reliance on institutional settings for troubled children, instead allowing them to receive services at or close to their homes.

Goals of the initiative include better client outcomes, shorter lengths of stay in a center, more youth returning home to their families or other permanent placements, and a reduced per-child treatment cost. The cabinet contracts with 45 facilities - known as private child care facilities, or PCC's - across Kentucky. Youth are in these facilities because of emotional or behavioral problems; many have been abused or neglected by their parents or other caretakers. Most have been in foster care.

The number of children served by PCC's has more than doubled over the past decade, from 1,462 children in fiscal year 1988 to 3,504 children in fiscal year 1997. Expenditures for this care have skyrocketed during the same period, from \$5.3 million in fiscal year 1988 to almost 10 times that, or \$51.8 million, in fiscal year 1997. The average payment per child has risen from \$3,633 to \$14,783. Despite the rising expenditures, the cabinet historically has not had the data to prove whether children treated by PCC's are truly healing. This study will rectify this problem.

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