



**ERICSA 62ND ANNUAL
TRAINING CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION**

MAY 18-22, 2025

NORFOLK

VIRGINIA

Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, & Recovery

Disasters can strike at any time, and child support programs must be prepared to adapt quickly. This session will begin with an in-depth review of the **Final Rule on Modifications to Performance Standards** during national disasters and other emergencies. Our expert panel will then discuss the **technology, operational, and staffing challenges** faced during disaster recovery while emphasizing **planning, collaboration, and communication** within our close-knit community.

Monday, May 19, 2025 | 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM



WELCOME

Tammy Pearson (Moderator – YoungWilliams)

Robbie Endris (Retired LA & Conduent)

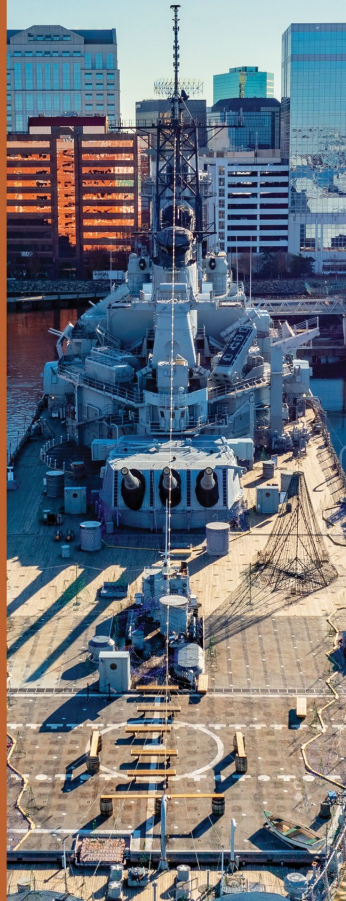
Verna Donnelly (NC)

Sandy Cloer (NTCSA)

Lesley Bell (CA)

Patterson Poulson (FL)

Janice McDaniel (OCSS)



Timeline of Major Natural Disasters (2005–2024)

This timeline highlights some of the most significant disasters affecting California, North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, showcasing the ongoing impact of hurricanes, wildfires, and extreme weather events.

2005

- **Florida** – *Hurricanes Dennis* (Category 4)
- **Louisiana** – *Hurricane Katrina* (Category 5) devastates New Orleans and surrounding areas, causing over 1,800 deaths and extensive flooding.
- **Texas/Louisiana** – *Hurricane Rita* (Category 5) caused 3.7 million people to flee Texas coast, many Katrina refugees.
- **Florida** – *Hurricane Wilma* (Category 5)

2008

- **Louisiana (& Texas)** – *Hurricanes Gustav* and *Ike* cause widespread damage and power outages.

2010

- **North Carolina** – *Hurricane Earl* skirts the coast, causing high winds and flooding.

2012

- **Florida & North Carolina** – *Hurricane Sandy* brings storm surge and heavy rainfall along the coasts.



Timeline of Major Natural Disasters (2005–2024)



2016

- **North Carolina and Florida** – *Hurricane Matthew* causes severe flooding and damage in eastern NC.
- **California** – *Blue Cut Fire* burns over 36,000 acres in San Bernardino County.

2017

- **Florida** – *Hurricane Irma* (Category 5) strikes, causing extensive damage across the state.
- **California** – *Tubbs Fire* destroys thousands of structures in Napa and Sonoma counties.

2018

- **California** – *Camp Fire* becomes the deadliest wildfire in state history, destroying the town of Paradise.
- **Florida** – *Hurricane Michael* (Category 5) devastates the Florida Panhandle.



Timeline of Major Natural Disasters (2005–2024)

2020

- **California** – *August Complex Fire* becomes the largest wildfire in state history.
- **Louisiana** – *Hurricane Laura* (Category 4) causes severe damage and power outages.

2022

- **Florida** – *Hurricane Ian* (Category 4) causes catastrophic flooding and wind damage.

2023

- **California** – *Winter storms* cause record-breaking rainfall and flooding across the state.
- **Florida** – *Hurricane Idalia* (Category 3) makes landfall in the Big Bend region.



Timeline of Major Natural Disasters (2005–2024)

2024

- **California** – *Park Fire* burns over 429,000 acres in Butte and Tehama counties, becoming one of the largest wildfires in state history.
- **Florida and North Carolina** – *Hurricane Helene* (Category 4) made landfall in the Big Bend area of Florida and caused catastrophic inland flooding in North Carolina, resulting in over 200 deaths and approximately \$120 billion in damages.
- **Florida** – *Hurricane Milton* (Category 3) makes landfall in Siesta Key, causing significant storm surge, flooding, and power outages affecting over 1.5 million residents.
- **Louisiana** – *Hurricane Francine* (Category 2) makes landfall near Morgan City, causing flooding and wind damage in coastal areas.

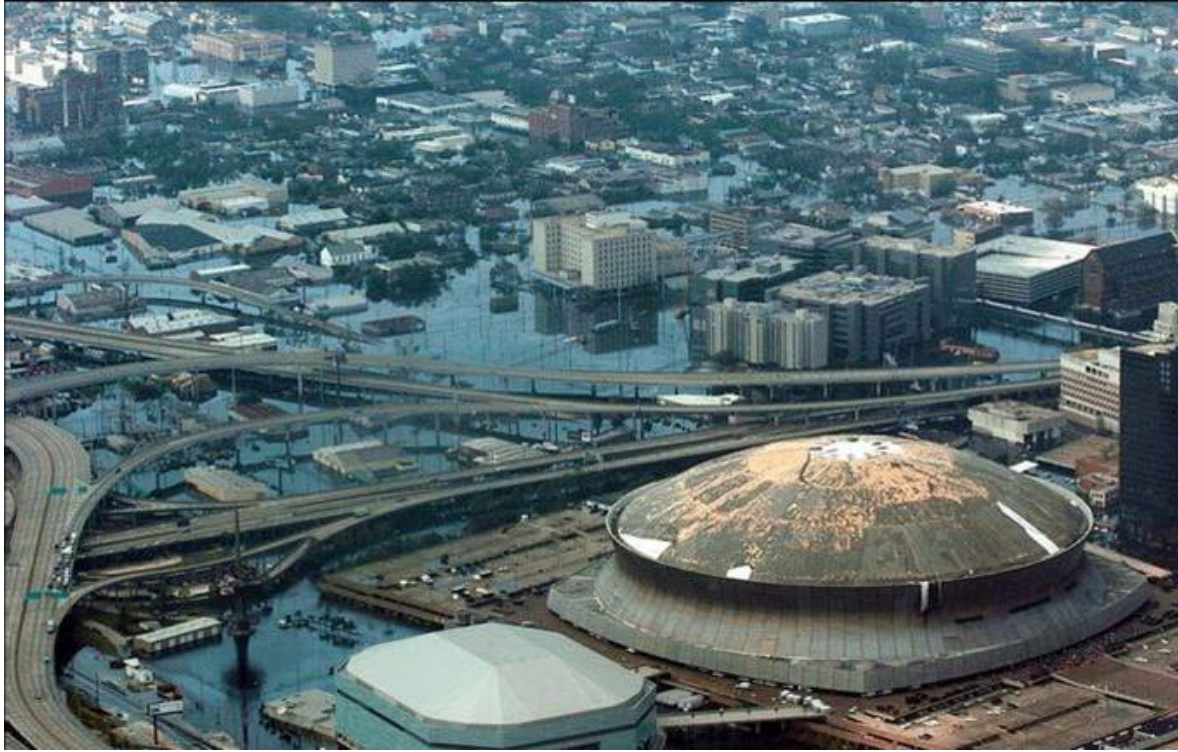


Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Robbie Endris

Retired - Louisiana IV-D Director and Conduent





NO Superdome



Broken Levees

Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina



Walking in the water



A flooded neighborhood with houses

Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Verna Donnelly

North Carolina IV-D Director



Coordinated Hurricane Response

Central Office Actions:

- Maintained constant communication with Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Specialist
 - Relayed constant updates to central office
- Developed office assessment template
- Identified neighboring counties for operational support



Operational Continuity & Support Services

Support for Affected Counties:

- Rerouted Printers
- Identified zip codes
- Pulled checks and debit cards
 - (coordinated with vendor)
- Coordinated information from other state system
- Text alerts to custodial and noncustodial parents
- News alerts on Parents Portal
- Updated to Worker Portal
- State staff assistance to counties



Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Sandy Cloer

Division Director Tribal Child Support Services & TANF

NTCSA President





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OUR RESILIENT SPIRIT SOARS

In the wake of Hurricane Helene, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian's Tribal Council and Executive Office made the difficult decision to move forward with the annual fair. After consulting with FEMA, the Tribal Leadership believed that quickly returning our community to normalcy would be the best path to healing.

The event was a resounding success, providing a celebratory respite for the EBCI as we all worked to recover from the storm's impacts.

\$13M in supplies, made possible by the hurricane Helene distribution center

192 pallets of water distribution, which equates to over 48,000 gallons of water

375,000 Pounds of food distributed throughout the surrounding communities



Ten full-size tractor trailers equating to over 400,000 pounds of product, including the local distribution of water, food, paper products, diapers, baby formula, and medications

Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Lesley J. Bell

Deputy Director, Operations Division California Child Support Services



Carr Fire 2018

229,651 Acres
1614 Structures
Destroyed
\$1.6 Billion Loss
8 Deaths

Sonoma Complex Fires: Pocket, Tubbs, Nuns 2017

110,720 Acres
6,957 Structures
Destroyed
486 Structures Damaged
\$3 Billion Loss
Estimated Over 100,000
Displaced
25 Deaths

Thomas Fire 2017

281,893 Acres
1,063 Structures
destroyed
\$2.2 Billion Loss
2 Deaths

North Complex Fires 2020

318,935 Acres
2,352 Structures Destroyed
\$10 Billion Loss
15 Deaths

Camp Fire 2018

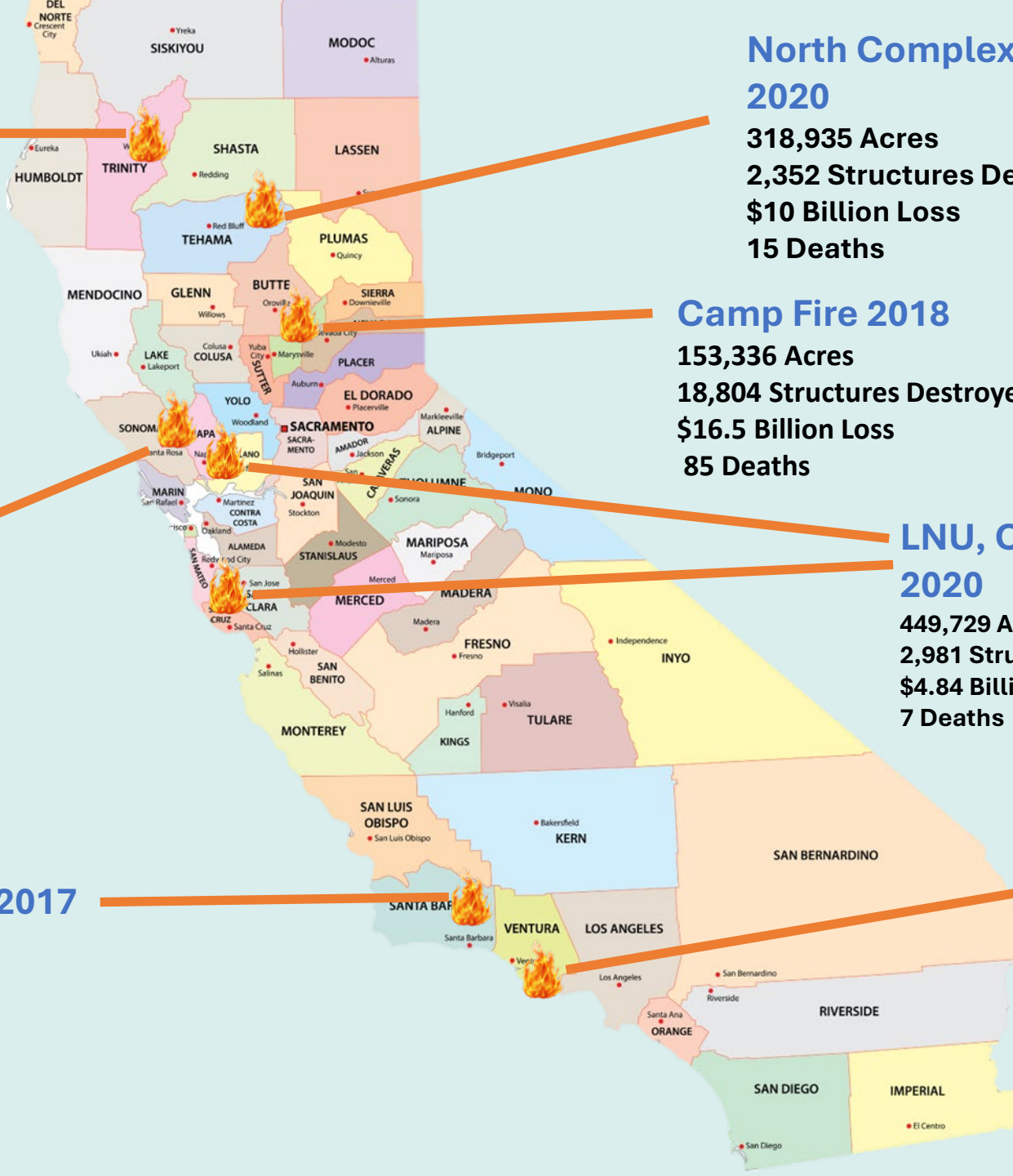
153,336 Acres
18,804 Structures Destroyed
\$16.5 Billion Loss
85 Deaths

LNU, CZU Lightning Fires 2020

449,729 Acres
2,981 Structures Destroyed
\$4.84 Billion Loss
7 Deaths

Woolsey Fire 2018

6,949 Acres
1643 Structures Destroyed
\$6 Billion Loss
3 Deaths



Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Patterson Poulson

Florida Department of Revenue



Reduce Unintended Consequences

- Avoid taking adverse actions on individuals within an impacted area:
- Identify the impacted area by county, zip code, other identifying characteristics you can map to your cases
- Be sensitive to the impact on mail services and pending timeframes
- Think about mail processing
- Take action to reduce automated actions in those cases
 - Overrides
 - Data lists
 - Actions only certain people can take



Consider Team Member Impact

Business Impact

- Identify impacted area by county, closed offices
- Impacted area monitored as situation changes during the aftermath
- Identify work to be redirected from closed offices to other offices as needed
- Identify alternatives to centralized actions
 - Who can release bank levy or suspended driver license



Consider Team Member Impact

Personal

- Identify any personal needs of team members
- Utilize phone trees, text chains within unit
- Mobilize automated mass notification process that solicits responses from team members regarding personal status
- Communicate office status to customers via webpage



Customer Impact (instate or out-of-state)

- Define impacted area by zip code
- Identify customers in the area by active address zip code
- Identify those customer's cases and any pending actions
- Place overrides on impacted cases – enforcement or establishment
- Adjust timeframes for response from parents
- Stop midstream actions to avoid adverse impact



Customer Impact (instate or out-of-state)

- Stop automatic printing and mailing of notices
- Identify customers who receive checks
 - Disbursement locks, avoid issue and reissue
 - Monitor for contact for alternative address
- Monitor USPS mail services and make adjustments
- Follow the lead of the impacted state IVD program
- Communicate status and needs to other states
- Communicate workflow changes to team members (internal webpages, regular emails)



Strengthening Child Support Programs Through Disaster Planning, Response, and Recovery

Janice McDaniel

Senior Program Specialist, Division of Policy and Training Office of Child Support Services

ACF/DHHS



Final Rule: Modification to Performance Standards

- OCSS published the rule in the wake of the COVID-19 public health emergency when states experienced:
 - Workload burdens
 - Service backlogs
- ACF/OCSS wanted to find a way to provide timely relief to states for future emergencies.
 - This rule allows OCSS to provide prompt relief to state programs without having to engage in a rulemaking process.



Final Rule: Modification to Performance Standards... (cont.)

Final rule :

- Authorizes the Secretary to:

Provide targeted and time-limited relief by waiving penalties for failing to achieve certain program performance standards.

Adjust certain performance standards and set aside adverse data reliability audit findings that may result in a financial penalty.

- The performance standards impacted:
 - PEP performance standard of 90% under 45 CFR 305.40(a)(1)
 - Support order establishment of 40% under 45 CFR 305.40(a)(2)
 - Current collections of 35% under 45 CFR 305.40(a)(3)



Final Rule: Modification to Performance Standards... (cont.)

Final rule provides:

- The process by which states may request and OCSS may adjust performance standards to a lower level to avoid imposing financial penalties on states and modify requirements to avoid penalties due to adverse data reliability audit findings.



Final Rule: Modification to Performance Standards... (cont.)

Final Rule **does not**:

- Change the process for other performance measures, data collection, or incentives
- Alter reporting – States should continue to report data on the OCSS-396, OCSS-34, and OCSS-157 forms as required
- Alter the audit process – OCSS will conduct audits as usual and will calculate and provide incentive payments based on the data



When to Request Flexibility

- When a state experiences a natural disaster or other calamity, including:
 - Declared state of emergency
 - Designated events by the President under the “Stafford Act”
 - Declared public health emergencies under section 19 of the Public Health Service Act
- Then a state can submit a request to:
 - Modify one or more performance requirements specified under section 452(g) of the Act and (45 CFR 305.40(a)(1),(2), or (3)
 - Set aside adverse data reliability audit findings for the same period for which a modification of performance requirements is sought
 - Request relief from adverse data reliability audit findings without a request to modify performance requirements



Requirements to Request Flexibility

A request for modification must include the following:

- Narrative statement describing the circumstances with justification for the request to modify the performance requirement:
- Information substantiating the impact of the natural disaster or other calamity on the state's ability to comply with the standards, including:
 - A description of the specific conditions caused by the natural disaster or calamity that has or may have significant impact on the state's ability to comply
 - The preliminary data required under 45 CFR 305.32(f) showing the reduced performance
- Information on the expected duration of the conditions making compliance impracticable:
- Any other documentation that the Secretary may require to make this determination



Requirements to Request Flexibility (cont.)

- The state must be able to demonstrate that it:
 - Has not or may not meet one or more existing performance requirement such that a performance penalty would apply
 - Has provided preliminary data supporting this impact
 - Has provided all the information required
- The regulation does not impose a timeframe after the event occurs to submit a request.



Decisions on Requests to Modify Performance Standards

- OCSS will provide written communication either approving or denying the request to modify the performance standard with 30 calendar days from receipt of a written request.
- If approved, the temporary modification expires on the last day of the federal fiscal year for which it was approved.
- If approved, adverse findings of a data reliability audit for the applicable time period will not result in a financial penalty.
- If a written approval of a temporary modification is not provided, then the performance requirements remain as set out in regulation.
- There is no administrative appeal rights to a denial for performance requirement modification.



PANEL DISCUSSION

Led by Tammy Pearson

Panelists will address questions related to the following topics:

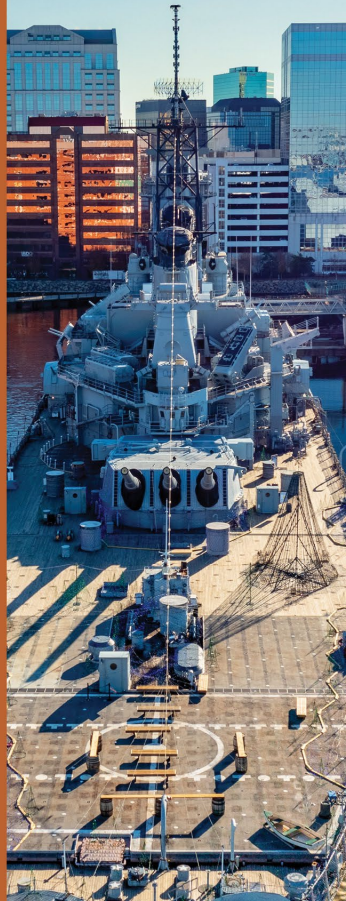
- Policy & Legislation
- Human Resources, Staffing & Training
- Technology, Systems & Data
- Outreach & Communications
- Interstate Collaboration (e.g., establishing a centralized outreach point for cross-state assistance)



AUDIENCE Q&A

We want to hear from you.

Please raise your hand – we'll bring you the microphone!



Session Recap

- **Preparedness Matters** – Disasters can strike at any time; proactive planning at the agency, state, and federal levels is essential.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making** – Leveraging technology and real-time data (e.g., zip code impact analysis) enables efficient response and resource allocation.
- **Collaboration is Key** – Successful disaster response relies on coordination across agencies, states, and tribes, as well as partnerships with local communities.
- **Communication is Critical** – Establishing centralized communication channels can streamline assistance efforts and improve outreach to affected families.
- **Policy & Training Gaps Need Addressing** – Reviewing existing policies, identifying gaps, and training staff in disaster response can help agencies act swiftly and effectively.
- **OCSS Resources** – Federal agencies offer tools and guidance to help child support programs navigate disaster preparedness and response.



THANK YOU! CONTACT US!



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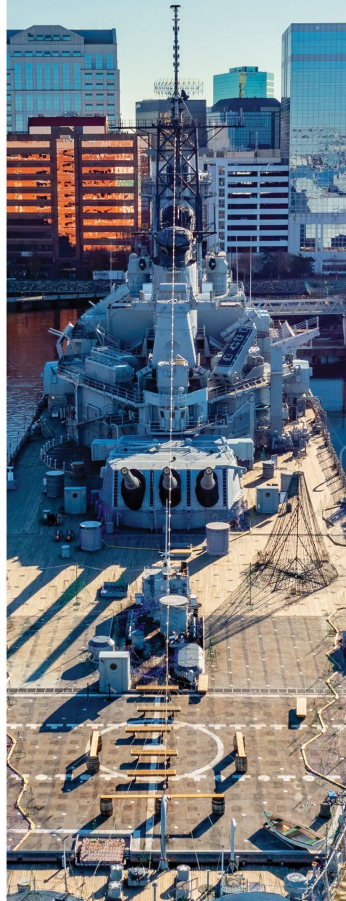
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