



Agency Recommendation Summary

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$22,716,000 in the 2023-25 biennial budget to support frequent and regular family visitation when children are placed out of home. Research has shown that frequent and regular family visits result in stronger attachment, lower levels of depression and higher a likelihood that the child will be reunified with parents. Without additional funding to cover certain costs, families will experience disruptions in their visit plans and DCYF may face potential non-compliance with court-ordered visitation. In addition, DCYF will expand the Network Administrator model statewide for Family Time contracts.

Program Recommendation Summary

010 - Children and Families Services

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Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$9,888	\$9,888	\$19,776	\$9,888	\$9,888	\$19,776
Fund 001 - A	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940
Total Expenditures	\$11,358	\$11,358	\$22,716	\$11,358	\$11,358	\$22,716
Revenue						
001 - 0393	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940
Total Revenue	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940	\$1,470	\$1,470	\$2,940

Decision Package Description

When a child is placed in out of home care Family Time, (visitation) is critical to maintain the parent-child relationship and support reunification. Research has shown that frequent and regular family visits result in stronger attachment, lower levels of depression and higher a likelihood that the child will be reunified with parents. DCYF requires \$16,332,000 (\$13,392,000 GF-S) ensure that Family Time visits occur in accordance with court orders and the best interests of the child.

Family Time is a service provided under contract with community-based providers. Family Time contracts ensure a when a child is placed out of home, a family visit will occur within 72 hours of removal at the appropriate level of supervision or monitoring. Regular visits are also conducted by order of the juvenile court according to a visitation plan.

Covering separate billables:

In the 2022, DCYF conducted a rate study to determine the necessary level of compensation to support these contracted services. In response, the state funded a rate increase for Family Time providers in order to stabilize the service line in the 2022 supplemental budget.

However, “separate billables” were not funded. Separate billables are individual pay points connected to discrete events within the Family Time services. These include visit reports, unusual incident reports and reports for missed visits. DCYF caseworkers and the juvenile courts must receive reports on these visits in order to do ongoing case planning and to support reunification.

They also include missed visit fees. Because families involved in the child welfare system face multiple life challenges and high levels of instability in work, housing and transportation, 25% of visits are missed with less than 24-hour notice. When visits are missed contractors still incur costs. The missed visit fees reimburse contractors when visits are suddenly canceled, rescheduled or one party does not show. Contractors face cost-pressures to “drop” some families who face the greatest barriers to visitation. Missed visit reimbursement allows the contractor continue to provide every opportunity for the parent and child to connect, even when visits are frequently rescheduled or missed.

If separate billables are funded, case workers and courts will not receive visit reports, children and parents will experience disruptions in the implementation of their visit plan and contractors will lose money jeopardizing their ability to operate.

Expanding the Network Administrator model statewide:

In 2018 the legislature passed SB 6407 requiring DCYF to conduct one or more procurement processes and issue requests for proposals for an expanded Network Administrator model. DCYF was required to establish a network administrator on the east side of the state, and subsequently expand the model to the rest of the state. In 2019 DCYF executed a two-year contract with the Family Impact Network, with an option of two one-year extensions.

DCYF is required by law to expand the Network Administrator model to western Washington. DCYF requests \$3,192,000 in FY24 and ongoing each fiscal year thereafter to execute contracts in Regions 3,4, 5 & 6 (western Washington) by October 1, 2023 for Family Time only.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion, Reduction, Elimination or Alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal represents the stabilization of a current service.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Separate Billables:

DCYF is requesting an ongoing contracted rate of \$ 37.19 per hour for all the billable activities including the separate billables added last November 2021.

Total anticipated annual cost would be \$8,166,000 (\$6,696,000 GF-S) beginning July 1, 2023 and each year thereafter.

Network Administrator:

DCYF is requesting \$3,192,000 GF-S in FY24 and annually to execute contracts effective October 1, 2023 to expand the Network Administrator contracts statewide to include Regions 3,4,5& 6.

Workforce Assumptions:

No additional FTEs are included in this request.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

Child permanency will be improved through high quality and stable FT and CIH services.

Parent engagement will be improved through timely FT and CIH services

Performance Outcomes:

DCYF has outlined Performance Based Contracting as one of the most effective and efficient approaches DCYF has for provider accountability.

Outcome measures:

- 100% referral acceptance rate for each NA (including 72 hour visits)
- 100% timeliness of first visit (72 hours, including weekend and holidays)
- Increase parent child engagement resulting in increased reunification
- Encourage providers to improve practice
- Increased satisfaction from the families participating in family time
- Reduce the numbers of no shows or cancelled visits

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

Family Time providers have advocated for reimbursement for separate billables. DCYF is conducting a stakeholder process regarding statewide implementation of the Network Administrator model, which includes providers, Child Placing Agencies, etc.

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Black, Indigenous and Children of color are overrepresented in the child welfare system. Ensuring that Family Time visits are regular and frequent will support parents and children to reunify and mitigate the trauma and harm of separation.

Target Populations or Communities:

Children in foster care and parents involved in the child welfare system.

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

Not Applicable

State Workforce Impacts:

Not Applicable

Intergovernmental:

Not Applicable

Stakeholder Response:

DCYF anticipates visitation contracted providers will support this proposal.

State Facilities Impacts:

Not Applicable

Changes from Current Law:

Not Applicable

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

Not Applicable

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No

Objects of Expenditure

Objects of Expenditure <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Obj. C	\$3,192	\$3,192	\$6,384	\$3,192	\$3,192	\$6,384
Obj. N	\$8,166	\$8,166	\$16,332	\$8,166	\$8,166	\$16,332

Agency Contact Information

Crystal Lester
(360) 628-3960
crystal.lester@dcyf.wa.gov