



Agency Recommendation Summary

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$3,770,000 (\$1,885,000 General Fund-State) and 14 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) in the 2023-25 Biennial Budget to implement the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), which is a case management information system in support of the child welfare program. The system will meet Washington’s child welfare business needs supporting child safety, improves outcomes for children and families, improves data quality, increases interoperability with other systems, and aligns with current technology. This project will likely run between three and five years, depending on the approach determined by the planning phase.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	Fiscal Years		Biennial	Fiscal Years		Biennial
	2024	2025	2023-25	2026	2027	2025-27
Staffing						
FTEs	14.0	0.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$1,885	\$0	\$1,885	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fund 001 - A	\$1,885	\$0	\$1,885	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenditures	\$3,770	\$0	\$3,770	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenue						
001 - 0393	\$1,885	\$0	\$1,885	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$1,885	\$0	\$1,885	\$0	\$0	\$0

Decision Package Description

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) currently uses a child welfare case management system, FamLink, which is Washington State’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). The system code base for FamLink was originally developed circa 2000 and transferred from the State of Wisconsin to Washington in 2007. In February 2009, it was implemented as Washington’s child welfare information system and renamed FamLink, replacing the legacy mainframe system. FamLink is used by 2,700 DCYF staff (including intake, CPS and child welfare social service specialists, foster care licensors and fiduciaries) in addition to 400 external users (including tribal partners, Office of Children and Families Ombudsman independent living providers, and others) and supports 233,000 clients.

The current FamLink application does not adequately meet the business needs of the child welfare program. The system complexity causes several problems that make it hard for department staff and partners to serve Washington families, including:

- Timely system modifications resulting from federal rule changes are not possible.
- No way to streamline system functionality to support day to day case management work.
- Difficult to incorporate new technology to support evolving child welfare practices.
- Interoperability with other state systems is time consuming and expensive.
- The existing system has poor data quality to measure outcomes and support effective decision-making.

DCYF staff continue to correct system malfunctions, modify the system as necessary for changing state and federal legislative mandates and changing business practices, as well as maintain application software and hardware dependencies. These efforts require a significant time investment to avoid unexpected impacts to other data sets in the system. This lack of flexibility can cause a significant amount of work for child welfare workers to meet the needs of the children and families. The FamLink database lacks enforced referential integrity, scalability, and is overtaxed with data redundancy and inconsistencies, requiring regular data clean-up efforts and data fixes to ensure the information in the system is accurate.

The federal Administration of Children and Families (ACF), would not allow DCYF to claim Title IV-E at the enhanced rate of 75% Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for costs associated with making new developments in FamLink because FamLink has never met federal SACWIS compliance, resulting in Washington continuing to work under a formal federal improvement plan.

The ACF implemented new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) regulations to allow states greater flexibility in developing case management information systems focused on data quality and allows for the use of modern technology that will enable data sharing between multiple systems. Non-compliance with these new regulations will affect future FFP rates for maintenance and operations

services and increase the General Fund-State (GF-S) obligation from 50 to 85 percent of the total cost required to maintain and operate the current system.

This new modular information system will be a gradual but complete replacement and enhancement of the legacy child welfare information system, enabling DCYF to more effectively serve families and protect children. Under this phased-in approach of implementation, the first CCWIS module developed will be in support of combined-in home services. Once this module is developed, it will allow DCYF to claim Title IV-E for in home services as approved both in DCYF's Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) plan and by the Prevention Services Clearing House.

Under the new federal rules, all states are required to provide a Declaration or submit a Notice of Intent to ACF of the state's plan to comply with the new rules in order to maintain any future FFP funding for maintenance and new development. Washington has declared the current FamLink system as a "transitional" system with the intent to develop a new CCWIS system.

DCYF received funding to implement CCWIS in the 2021-23 biennial budget but did not spend all of the funding received. At the time this funding was received, the federal government had begun encouraging states to move toward a modular solution (CCWIS), as it will be less costly to update, maintain, and ultimately replace specific modules as opposed to a case management system in its entirety. The direction provided by the federal government, coupled with recent state law changes, moving to a CCWIS became urgent and necessary. However, it later came to DCYF's attention that many states nationwide were not successful in implementing their CCWIS, resulting in a loss of state and federal tax payer dollars. As good stewards of tax payer dollars, DCYF decided to try and mitigate this situation experienced by early implementer's of CCWIS and slowed the process to learn what went wrong in other states so as to not repeat the same mistakes in Washington state. As of today, there is no complete CCWIS system fully developed in the nation.

DCYF spoke to other state child welfare agencies, consulted with and received technical assistance from ACF, observed vendor demonstrations of existing development within the realm of CCWIS, and attended industry conferences to more fully understand how a new child welfare information system could assist in meeting the challenges faced by DCYF. During the demonstrations, the project team discussed with vendor representatives the challenges it is facing and asked to see the features that addressed those issues in the vendor's solution.

After performing additional research, DCYF decided the best path forward was a user-oriented developed solution built by a vendor who has agile development and child welfare experience, in conjunction with DCYF technical staff. The ability of the vendor to bring pre-built CCWIS accelerators to develop the solution will also be viewed favorably as it will reduce risk and accelerate development and implementation.

Upon additional planning, DCYF implemented a feasibility study in the summer of 2022, with the completion of the study expected in the summer of 2023. The feasibility study will provide DCYF with the considerations necessary to implement a successful CCWIS. Until the feasibility study is complete, future project procurement and implementation costs are unknown. DCYF will better know the funding needed in the out years in the fall of 2023 and will submit a request for funding based upon the information contained within the fe

Assumptions and Calculations

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

2019-21 Biennium: \$6,200,948
2021-23 Biennium: \$6,756,016

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Please see attached workbook for detailed budget calculations.

Workforce Assumptions:

Please see attached workbook for detailed budget calculations.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

The new CCWIS rules require three additional interfaces within practicability:

- Educational
- Medical
- Legal/court

The addition of these interfaces in the CCWIS system will directly support the Results Washington Goals specifically for Washington children within the state's foster care system. It will allow workers and caregivers who are responsible for the youth's day-to-day care and planning better access to timely and complete information necessary to help improve outcomes for these children in education, health/medical well-being and permanency.

DCYF believes that successful implementation of the CCWIS will have the following general positive benefits of enhanced Services, decreased costs, increased efficiency, decreased risk, and increased data accuracy.

Performance Outcomes:

DCYF expects the new child welfare information system to achieve improvements including:

- The use of technology to improve data quality by creating more timely data entry, data processing, data retention and data exchange standards. In addition, it will have features to support continuous monitoring of data quality and implement user facing responsive tools to address issues with data quality.
- Resource Utilization: Through elimination of redundant data entry, it will increase availability of information and documentation, and result in timely business practice execution.
- System Access: Improved child welfare worker, service provider and service organization access to system information through portal and mobile technologies.
- Information Exchange Interfaces: Improved access, accuracy and completeness of data located in external department and business partner repositories, including CCWIS required new data exchanges with education agencies, the courts, and Medicaid claims processing systems.
- Business Collaboration: Improved communication/collaboration and information management between child welfare workers, community organizations, service providers and multi-disciplinary teams.
- Outcome-Driven Planning, Management and Assessment: Improved case management outcome/process planning, management, and assessment/reporting.

CCWIS adherence: To ensure retention of FFP at current or improved

Equity Impacts

Community outreach and engagement:

N/A

Disproportional Impact Considerations:

Black and Indigenous children are over represented in the child welfare system in Washington. DCYF needs to make practice improvements to support these children and families better. Necessary changes are often stymied by a lack of adequate back-end infrastructure. This proposal supports DCYF to meet its racial equity goals by ensuring that the staff have a functioning and nimble case management system, one that will allow the agency to better measure outcomes and adapt to evolving child welfare policies.

Target Populations or Communities:

Staff, clients, and providers

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

Not Applicable

State Workforce Impacts:

CCWIS Implementation could change the job description/duties of the staff that support the system.

Intergovernmental:

Potential impacts include:

- Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCA) under the CCWIS rules are defined as a public or private entity that, by contract or agreement with the title IV-E agency, provides child abuse and neglect investigations, placements or child welfare case management (or any combination of these) to children and families.

Under CCWIS rules, all current and historical CCWIS data must be stored and maintained in the CCWIS system. This includes data collected by the IV-E agency and any CWCAs. While the CCWIS rules explicitly exempt county or city governments, tribal entities may fall under the CWCA definition. The State agency would be required to interface or provide for usage of the CCWIS by CWCAs.

Stakeholder Response:

See above for CWCA information that could affect stakeholders.

State Facilities Impacts:

Not Applicable

Changes from Current Law:

Not Applicable

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

This request is in response to new CCWIS federal rules.

Reference Documents

[CCWIS_Appendix5ITaddendum v1.0.docx](#)

IT Addendum

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

Yes

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. A	\$1,426	\$0	\$1,426	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. B	\$447	\$0	\$447	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. C	\$1,392	\$0	\$1,392	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. E	\$25	\$0	\$25	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. G	\$34	\$0	\$34	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. J	\$101	\$0	\$101	\$0	\$0	\$0
Obj. T	\$345	\$0	\$345	\$0	\$0	\$0

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