



Dept of Children, Youth, & Families
2021-23 First Supplemental Budget Session
Policy Level - FT - Family Time Rates

Agency Recommendation Summary

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$28,682,000 (\$23,519,000 General Fund -State) in the 2022 Supplemental Budget to implement critical fixes to hourly rates, mileage reimbursement, and quality service delivery enhancements for the Family Time service.

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
	2022	2023	2021-23	2024	2025	2023-25
Staffing						
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001 - 1	\$4,704	\$18,815	\$23,519	\$18,815	\$18,815	\$37,630
Fund 001 - 2	\$1,033	\$4,130	\$5,163	\$4,130	\$4,130	\$8,260
Total Expenditures	\$5,737	\$22,945	\$28,682	\$22,945	\$22,945	\$45,890
Revenue						
001 - 0393	\$1,033	\$4,130	\$5,163	\$4,130	\$4,130	\$8,260
Total Revenue	\$1,033	\$4,130	\$5,163	\$4,130	\$4,130	\$8,260

Decision Package Description

DCFY is court ordered to deliver visitation services for each child to support timely permanency, and research has demonstrated that the service is pivotal to timely permanency. As of August 12, 2021, 5,672 children are receiving court-ordered visitation services through contractors.

DCYF has identified the following are needed to enhance and improve Family Time. By funding the recommendations in this decision package, it will create positive impacts for our children and families that participate in Family Time services. DCYF has identified 3 significant barriers to a fully functioning Family Time service:

1. Hourly Reimbursement Rate
2. Mileage Reimbursement for miles 0 to 60
3. Quality Service Delivery Enhancement

1. Hourly Reimbursement Rate - The Family Time service providers have never received an increase. This is an integral service for parent child reunification, yet rates have only been reduced over the years; both the hourly rate and the range of allowable mileage reimbursement:

- 2008 – \$21.11 hourly established as statewide rate
- 2009 – \$20.62 hourly after \$0.49 reduction
- 2010 August – \$26.13 hourly after \$5.31 increase – however this was an overall reduction to the service delivery as it removed contractors’ ability to bill for the first sixty miles of travel reimbursement.
- 2010 December – \$24.49 hourly after \$ 1.64 reduction

On top of the ever-reducing rate, a steady stream of increased service requirements was implemented. The requirements were both actions required of the service provider (e.g. reporting requirements) and administrative requirements (e.g. staff supervision). So, providers were required to spend more time meeting these requirements, as rates were being reduced.

Finally, this contract started as a simple transportation service and has grown to include transportation and visit supervision, requiring a whole new level of staff qualifications, such as training and supervision. It has been added to over the years to become a completely different service, putting DCYF in the challenging position as the service has outgrown the current rate structure.

Using a simplified framework for tax, fringe, and operation costs, DCYF estimates the current rates allow for an hourly salary of \$11.75. Using job comparable rates of Home Health Aide Specialists and Childcare workers as well as factoring in incentives for high risk service setting, DCYF has identified an hourly rate of \$20 is necessary to bring the rate up to market salary.

DCYF anticipates the increased rate will result in:

- Increased contractor capacity to hire and retain staff and directly improve timely, regular, and frequent visitation between the parent(s) and child(ren).
- Reduced disruptions to on-going visit services.
- Ability to attract and retain higher qualified service workers and meet training requirements. Increase in the number of unsupervised visits provided by contractors.

1. Mileage Reimbursement – DCYF seeks to restore the contractor’s ability to be reimbursed for all mileage. Currently, contractors are not able to bill for mileage reimbursement for mileage incurred up to 60 miles (0 to 60). Contractors are currently only able to bill for mileage incurred above 60 miles.

Based on transportation miles from April through June 2021, providers were reimbursed for 4,643,332.45 miles out of 6,529,128.47 miles. Annually, this is a difference of approximately 5.7 million miles ineligible for reimbursement ((6.5 million – 4.6 million) x 3), which is over \$3 million of mileage incurred but not reimbursed.

By removing the mileage restriction allowing providers to be reimbursed for all mileage the contracted provider can ensure:

- More frequent and consistent visitation.
- Greater ability to facilitate unsupervised visitation.
- Families living in rural areas are provided visit services.
- Contractors will be willing to provide transportation for short distance transports or to transport siblings in different placements.

1. Quality Service Delivery Enhancement – This contract started as a simple transportation service with a statewide annual budget of under \$2 million. As the service requirements have become increasingly complex over the years the risk of negative outcomes has also increased. Due to lack of available funding, DCYF has not increased the necessary oversight and quality management requirements for a service of this size and complexity.

DCYF seeks to implement contract standards to ensure services delivered meet standards set for families involved with DCYF. This will position DCYF to establish management requirements that include service monitoring, quality improvement activities, and increased alignment with Performance Based Contracting expectations.

Without the ability to enact these changes, DCYF does not see an opportunity to achieve critical improvements needed to impact timely permanency through court ordered Family Time visits. To accomplish this, DCYF is requesting a quality service delivery enhancement fee in this

request.

Indian Child Welfare Act - DCYF must provide culturally appropriate services to the child and family when we have reason to know that a child may be an Indian child. However, there are “service deserts” in some rural areas of the state where there are high caseloads in which the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applies. Additionally, DCYF has a need to train and provide resources to service providers to provide services that are culturally appropriate in cases where ICWA applies. DCYF assumes \$931,000 in order to equip Family Time providers to provide services that are culturally appropriate in these cases.

Time Study – DCYF has agreed to work with Family Time providers beginning in September 2021 to conduct a time study. The time study will inform DCYF of the cost for Family Time contracted providers to do business. This will determine the hourly rate at which providers should be reimbursed for the full cost of services rendered. It will also be beneficial in quantifying a sufficient quality service delivery enhancement fee.

Assumptions and Calculations

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

This request includes an hourly rate increase, mileage reimbursement for all mileage incurred, and a quality service delivery enhancement fee.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations:

Both current rates, \$24.49 and \$26.50, are too low to provide incentive for contractors to hire and retain qualified staff. After completing an internal analysis, DCYF is requesting a contracted rate of \$32.72 per hour to bring the rate up to market rate.

Incremental cost increase due to change in hourly contractor rate

- Incremental hourly rate from \$24.49 to \$32.72 per hour totals \$8.23 per hour.
- At 237,456.7 hours of current time reimbursed, the incremental cost increase would total \$7,817,07.
- Incremental hourly rate from \$26.50 to \$32.72 per hour totals \$6.22 per hour.
- At 69,197.9 hours of current reimbursed time, the incremental cost increase would total \$1,721,644.

Total anticipated annual cost would be \$9,538,717, beginning in SFY23 and thereafter.

Assuming an April 1, 2022 start date, the SFY22 cost would be \$2,384,679.

Incremental cost increase due to reimbursing all mileage

- In SFY21, there were 5,657,388.06 miles ineligible for reimbursement.
- The mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.56.

Total anticipated annual cost would be \$3,168,137, beginning in SFY23 and thereafter.

Assuming an April 1, 2022 start date, the SFY22 cost would be \$792,034.

Incremental cost increase due to fund Quality Service Delivery Enhancement

Total anticipated annual increase would be \$10,239,000, beginning in SFY23 and thereafter.

Assuming an April 1, 2022 start date, the SFY22 cost would be \$2,559,629.

Workforce Assumptions:

No additional FTEs are included in this request.

How is your proposal impacting equity in the state?

With the current rate structure and payment methods, families throughout the state will continue to struggle to have visitation with their children. This becomes an additional pressure on the caseworker, who is ultimately responsible to provide visits. Children of color are overrepresented in the child welfare system and children participating in regular visitation are more likely to return home.

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic Framework:

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

Parent engagement will be improved through timely visitation services. DCYF's overarching goal is to increase contracted service acceptance with visit completion in the 80th percentile.

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 (72 hour contracts); 85% referral acceptance rate
- 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

Other Collateral Connections

Puget Sound Recovery:

Not Applicable

State Workforce Impacts:

Not Applicable

Intergovernmental:

Not Applicable

Legal or Administrative Mandates:

Not Applicable

Stakeholder Response:

DCYF anticipates visitation contracted providers will support this proposal.

Changes from Current Law:

Not Applicable

State Facilities Impacts:

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
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Obj. N	\$5,737	\$22,945	\$28,682	\$22,945	\$22,945	\$45,890

Agency Contact Information

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