

Childrens Administration

010 - PL - AJ - REIMBURSING CONTRACTORS FOR TRAVEL

Agency Submittal: 11-2017-19-YR Agency Req

Budget Period: 2017-19

SUMMARY

Client service providers are unable to provide evidenced-based programs, family preservation programs, and supervised visitation without incurring a financial loss. Children's Administration (CA) contracts for these critical client services to promote reunification of children with their families, protect children's safety, and comply with court orders. Providers travel to CA clients to provide these services, however, CA only reimburses travel-time at half the contracted service rate. For certain services, CA does not reimburse any travel time for the service provider. CA requests \$7,904,000 GF-State to re-instate mileage reimbursement for supervised visitation providers and fully reimburse travel time for all services provided to families.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

CA is facing significant difficulties in attracting and retaining service providers for In-Home Services that promote reunification of children and families; and supervised visitation.

Client service providers are becoming unwilling or unable to provide evidenced-based programs, family preservation programs, and supervised visitation at a financial loss. Providers must travel to clients to provide these services. In rural and urban communities, the travel distance or time spent commuting to clients, may be significant.

Lack of reimbursement for the time the provider spends traveling to clients has led to providers limiting the geographic area that they are willing to serve, or stopping service altogether.

CA reimburses travel time at fifty percent of the In-Home Service rate, for the following client services:

- Family Preservation Services (FPS);
- SafeCare (an evidenced based practice);
- Triple P (an evidenced based practice);
- Incredible Years In Home (IY, an evidence based practice); and
- Promoting First Relationships (PFR, an evidence based practice).

In addition, CA does not provide any reimbursement for time spent traveling in Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), another evidence based practice.

Parent-child visitation is a critical, court-ordered service that helps children in out-of-home care maintain family connections. Courts, social workers and attorneys recognize the value of requiring children and their parents to visit and maintain a relationship while the family is involved in child welfare.

Prior to 2008, parent-child visitation providers received mileage reimbursement for any distance traveled. In 2008, mileage reimbursement was limited to distances over 60 miles as a cost-saving measure. Since then, rates for this



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People are healthy • People are safe • People are supported • Taxpayer resources are guarded

DSHS MISSION

To transform lives

DSHS VALUES

Honesty and Integrity • Pursuit of Excellence • Open Communication • Diversity and Inclusion • Commitment to Service

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service have stagnated and providers have indicated they are operating at a loss. Visitation providers frequently travel great distances between multiple foster homes, schools and visitation locations. Providers have been unwilling to take certain cases based on the lack of mileage reimbursement.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Effective July 1, 2017, CA proposes reimbursing In-Home Service providers for the time spent traveling to the client at the same hourly rate as the service provision. This will include providers of the following services:

- Family Preservation Services (FPS);
- SafeCare (an evidenced based practice);
- Triple P (an evidenced based practice);
- Incredible Years In Home (IY, an evidence based practice); and
- Promoting First Relationships (PFR, an evidence based practice).

Based on FY 2016 In-Home Service expenditures, CA estimates this will require \$2,430,000 in additional funding, annually. This includes:

- \$2.2 million to increase the travel reimbursement from 50 percent to 100 percent of travel time; and
- \$185,000 to provide 100 percent travel time reimbursement for PCIT providers, who currently do not receive any reimbursement.

Effective July 1, 2017, CA proposes reimbursing parent-child visitation providers for all mileage incurred. In 2016, 2,987 child welfare cases were authorized the use of contracted parent-child visitation services. Providers traveled an estimated 234,822 miles, each month, that were not eligible for reimbursement because the distance traveled was under 60 miles. If these providers received mileage reimbursement at \$0.54 cents per mile, the estimated monthly cost is \$126,804 (234,822 * \$0.54). This is estimated to cost \$1,522,000 annually.

EXPECTED RESULTS

By adequately reimbursing providers for their costs, CA will maintain a robust and diverse pool of service providers, and therefore will:

- ensure that parents who cannot keep their children safely in their home receive needed-services aimed at teaching them critical parenting skills such as, developing a strong bond, basic life skills, age appropriate parenting skills, etc;
- support parents by providing evidence-based and other practices, so that children may be successfully returned home; and
- help parents and children maintain their relationships by providing parent-child visitation.

CA's array of evidenced based and other practices are aimed at supporting parents, so that children may be successfully returned home. Currently, CA is able to safely reunify parents and children in 50 percent of cases. Courts are also likely to order services for parents and CA is under a federal obligation to provide reasonable efforts to prevent placement in foster care and reunify.

CA currently uses parent child visitation providers to provide visitation services for 60 percent of the 9,000 children in foster care. Providers ensure that children get safely from foster homes, child care, or school to visitation locations.

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These visits maintain the bond between parent and child, increase the likelihood of reunification by keeping parents engaged, and help CA comply with court orders. If CA is unable to maintain or potentially increase the number of parent child visitation providers, visitation may not be able to occur or significant waitlists will develop.

If this request is not funded, CA has received notice from several providers that they will either stop providing services or limit the types of families they will serve. This will mean that CA will not be compliant with court orders and miss the opportunity to provide the services and bonding time necessary to safely reunify children and families. The longer children stay in foster care, the poorer their outcomes and costs to the state increase.

CA has already done restructuring of rates to services provided to families and has done as much as possible within existing resources to address rate inadequacies.

By funding this request, CA will maintain an adequate supply of service providers and will ensure that families receive services critical to safe reunification.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

In-home service and supervised visitation providers will be supportive of this request. In addition, courts, public defenders, and parent advocates will also support maintaining access to services.

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Program Contact: Jenny Heddin, (360) 902-0221

OTHER CONNECTIONS

Performance Outcomes/Important Connections

- 1. Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?**
Goal 4: Healthy & Safe Communities - Safe People - Help keep people safe in their homes, on their jobs, and in their communities.

- 2. The decision package meets the following DSHS' strategic objectives:**
 - 1.4: Number of Child Protective Services investigations open more than 90 days will decrease.

 - 2.1: Percentage of children not re-entering placement within 12 months of reunification will increase.

- 3. Identify other important connections or impacts below.** (Indicate 'Yes' or 'No'. If 'Yes' identify the connections or impacts related to the proposal.)
 - a) Regional/County impacts? No.

 - b) Other local government impacts? No.

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- c) Tribal government impacts? Yes, to the degree tribal governments use state contracts for services to tribal children.
- d) Other state agency impacts? No.
- e) Responds to specific task force, report, mandate or executive order? No.
- f) Does request contain a compensation change or require changes to a Collective Bargaining Agreement? No.
- g) Facility/workplace needs or impacts? No.
- h) Capital budget impacts? No.
- i) Is change required to existing statutes, rules or contracts? No, CA uses referenced fee tables in its contracts.
- j) Is the request related to litigation? No.
- k) Is the request related to Puget Sound recovery? No.
- l) Other important connections? None.

4. Please provide a detailed discussion of connections/impacts identified above. N/A

Alternatives/Consequences/Other

5. What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

CA considered maintaining the existing rates, but is very concerned that a loss of service providers will make it difficult to provide services in all parts of the state.

6. How has or can the agency address the issue or need within its current appropriation level?

CA has made a number of adjustments to the rates for services within existing resources. These proposed changes will require additional funding.

7. Does this decision package include funding for any IT-related costs (hardware, software, services, cloud-based services, contracts or IT staff)?

- No**
- Yes (Include an IT Addendum)**

Fiscal Detail**010 - PL - AJ - Reimbursing Contractors for Travel**

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>
001-1 General Fund-State	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000
Total Cost	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000

Staffing	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Performance Measure Detail

		Incremental Changes			
Activity:		<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>
Program: 010					
A220	Child Welfare In-Home Support	0	0	0	0
A230	Foster Care Support	0	0	0	0
No measures submitted for package					

Object Detail

		<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>
N	Grants, Benefits, and Client Services	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000
Total Objects		3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000

DSHS Source Detail**Overall Funding**

Operating Expenditures	<u>FY 2018</u>	<u>FY 2019</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>	<u>FY 2021</u>
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Fund 001-1, General Fund-State**Sources Title**

0011	General Fund State	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000
Total for Fund 001-1		3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000
Total Overall Funding		3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000	3,952,000