



## **Section B: Program Information**

### **(5) Monthly Caseworker Visits and State Plan Requirements**

**Children's Administration  
Department of Social and Health Services**



## Annual Progress and Services Report FY 2008 - FY 2009 Monthly Caseworker Visits and State Plan Requirements

This section contains Washington State Children's Administration's plan to achieve 90% monthly caseworker visits by 2011 (*includes runaways in the total count/visitation requirements*)

This information addresses Region X's request that Children's Administration (CA) clarify the data tables and methodology used in the APSR report and provide targets or penalty thresholds for monthly visits for Federal Fiscal years (FFY) 2008-2011.

### FFY 2007 Social Worker Visits With Children in care for at least one full calendar month

Table 1 displays data demonstrating Washington State's performance on social work visits with children in care for at least one calendar month during FFY 2007. The data shows a breakdown by region and the statewide total.

**Table 1**

Compliance with Federal Standard	Data	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Statewide Total
<b>Meets Federal Goal</b>	# of Children	299	188	281	152	155	279	1,354
	% of Children	11.22%	10.76%	9.53%	5.29%	6.60%	9.31%	8.69%
<b>Does not Meet Federal Goal</b>	# of Children	2,365	1,560	2,667	2,723	2,192	2,717	14,224
	% of Children	88.78%	89.24%	90.47%	94.71%	93.40%	90.69%	91.31%
<b>Total # of Children</b>		2,664	1,748	2,948	2,875	2,347	2,996	15,578
<b>Total % of Children</b>		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

#### *Methodology*

Table 1 reflects a regional breakout of unduplicated children age 17 and under, served in out-of-home care (open out of home episodes) for at least one full calendar month during the FFY. Children are considered compliant if they received a visit from their social worker during every full month they were in care.

### FFY 2007 Social Worker Visits With Children in their residence

Table 2 represents data for FFY 2007 and whether the majority of the visits occurred in the child's residence. The table shows the number of children in care, the total months of care, the number of months children were seen every month, and of those seen every month the number of visits that occurred in their own residence. The data shows a breakdown by region and the statewide total.

	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Statewide Total
Number of Children in Care <sup>1</sup>	2,664	1,748	2,948	2,875	2,347	2,996	15,578
Total Number of Months Children Were in Care	21,959	14,655	27,007	26,115	20,397	25,620	135,753
Total Number of Months Child Received a SW Visit <sup>2</sup>	11,147	7,197	14,469	10,276	8,354	11,848	63,291
Total Number of Months Child Received a SW Visit in Child's Residence <sup>3</sup>	4,977	2,725	5,776	4,210	3,455	6,680	27,823

*Methodology*

<sup>1</sup> Children with more than one episode in out-of-home care during the fiscal year are counted as one child. See methodology for Table 1.

<sup>2</sup> The following describes the calculation of visit months using an example: If 5 children were visited each and every calendar month they were in foster care during the period and 1 child was in foster care 12 calendar months, 2 children were in foster care 11 calendar months, and 2 children were in foster care 9 calendar months, the total visit months is calculated as: (1 child\*12 months) + (2 children\*11 months) + (2 children\*9 months) = 52 visit months. The months, not individual visits are totaled; therefore, if a child has more than one visit in a calendar month, that is considered one visit month.

<sup>3</sup> Reflects the number of total months children received a visit in the child's residence. If a child had more than one visit in one month, the visit month is counted in this total if at least one of the visits occurred in the child's residence.

**FFY 2008 Monthly Caseworkers Visits**

This table shows the number of children in care, the total months of care, the number of months children were seen every month and of those seen every month the number of visits that occurred in their own residence. The data shows a breakdown by Regions and statewide totals.

	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Statewide Total
Number of Children in Care	2,858	1,714	3,087	2,760	2,490	2,872	15,781
Total Number of Months of Care	23,699	14,839	28,149	25,440	21,092	25,148	138,367
Total Number of Months Child was Compliant with SW Visit	13,353	8,707	18,360	12,630	10,917	13,673	77,640
Total Number of visits in Childs Residence	5,734	2,954	7,723	5,187	4,334	6,767	32,699

*Source:*

CAMIS files November 2008. Numbers reported are actual visits documented in CAMIS.

**Washington State's Monthly Visit Targets for 2008-2011**

As part of the IV-B planning process, states are asked to set targets for the percentage of total children in out-of-home care who will receive a visit from their social worker every calendar month for 12 consecutive months. By FFY 2011, the Federal Standard to be achieved is 90 percent. For the interim years, states are asked to show how they will improve on this measure.

Federal targets establish a penalty threshold, unlike Washington State Braam Benchmarks, which are targets to which the state is striving. If a state's performance falls below the target it sets, federal funding penalties will be imposed. Clearly, states do not want to incur penalties and are therefore encouraged to set low penalty thresholds (targets) prior to FFY 2011.

Below are CA's annual penalty thresholds (targets) for FFY 2008-2011 for the *percent of children in care at least one full month who receive monthly visits every month they are in care*.

<i>Year</i>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b><i>Penalty Threshold (Target)</i></b>	8.7%	10%	50%	90%

### Strategies for Meeting the Monthly Visit Targets

CA's approach to achieving monthly visits includes three overarching strategies:

- Reduce caseload size;
- Reduce workload; and
- Monitor performance and provide feedback to local offices.

CA has been actively working on a number of these strategies over the past several years. In addition to efforts to reduce caseload and workload, Children's Administration has focused on improving outcomes for families by implementing new evidence-based treatment programs, such as Parent Child Interaction Therapy, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, and the Incredible Years Program; and by utilizing components of the Family-to-Family Initiative to increase family engagement in case planning and services. CA will continue efforts to build upon progress already made.

#### Reducing Caseload Size

CA has consistently sought additional resources to reduce caseloads and implement monthly visits between social workers and children. With the support of the Governor and Legislature, CA received funding for an additional 399 social workers and 66 support staff, for a total of 465 new staff, above the 2003-05 budget appropriation. Highlights of this funding include:

- Funding in the 2005-07 budget for **110 new staff** to implement child protective services and child welfare services reform;
- Funding in the 2005-07 budget for **71 new staff** to implement provisions of Child Neglect legislation;
- Funding in the 2006 Supplemental and the 2007-09 budget to phase-in an additional **284 new staff** by the end of December 2008 for monthly visits of children; and,
- Funding in the 2008 Supplemental to accelerate the hiring of monthly visit staff so that all staff are hired by May 2008 rather than December 2008.

#### Reducing Workload

CA is implementing six major strategies to reduce the workload of case-carrying social workers so monthly visit performance can improve and reach annual targets.

In consultation with stakeholders, initial strategies were identified and implemented by regional management teams beginning in January 2008. Implementation of the plans is monitored and strategies are continuously evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the anticipated workload reduction. These plans are regularly updated by the regions as the strategies are implemented.

Six workload reduction strategies include:

- Identify alternatives to social workers transporting clients
- Identify alternatives to social workers conducting parent-child visits
- Decrease the time social workers spend waiting for court
- Decrease social worker caseload by working to achieve permanency for children waiting for permanency
- Increase family engagement in the decision making process
- Increase the availability of specialized disclosure and discovery units

Monitor performance and provide feedback to local offices

CA will regularly monitor the impact of the strategies for reducing caseload and workload and will make decisions about adjusting strategies based upon performance data, as well as the overall impact of the strategies. Each region will review monthly visit data at the office level. Monthly monitoring will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and to determine where additional or alternative strategies need to be employed.

CA anticipates the targeted strategies outlined above will allow us to reduce workload and caseloads. However, we also anticipate the need to initiate additional strategies to achieve greater performance toward the benchmarks, which will be initiated as needed. CA also anticipates a need for additional resources. As CA evaluates the strategies over the next few months, CA will work with state fiscal staff to refine resource requests for inclusion in the 09-11 biennial budget.