


To: Area Administrators/Assistant Area Administrators
Bureau Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities
Services Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Licensing Chiefs/Section Chiefs
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators/Indian Child Welfare Directors

From: Reggie Bicha 
Administrator

Introduction: This memo provides direction regarding several fiscal issues pertaining to the eWiSACWIS system. The eWiSACWIS fiscal issues include:

1. Counties can currently receive Federal Title IV-E reimbursement for local costs associated with operation of eWiSACWIS, including staff and equipment. This memo describes time-keeping requirements for staff included in the eWiSACWIS IV-E reimbursement and the contract and reporting process DCFS will use for reimbursement in calendar year (CY) 2008.
2. Counties are required to report payments for children in out-of-home care (OHC) placements in eWiSACWIS. At the time of system implementation, counties were encouraged to develop local financial interfaces for payment reporting. To meet federal SACWIS system requirements, financial interfaces will be required for all counties. This memo describes the process for counties and DCFS to use in developing or enhancing their interfaces and the availability of funding to cover county costs for interfaces.
3. Child welfare staff can use eWiSACWIS via the internet with wireless laptops or can do work on tablets that is subsequently loaded into eWiSACWIS. The use of mobile equipment by child welfare staff while in the field can improve case documentation. This memo provides notification related to the availability of funding for laptops and tablets to facilitate case documentation in eWiSACWIS related to visits with children in OHC placements.
4. Per state statute, counties are charged a user fee for a portion of the operating costs of eWiSACWIS. This memo describes how the fee will be collected and the fee rate.

IV-E Reimbursement for County eWiSACWIS Costs

Federal IV-E reimbursement is available for county costs to operate eWiSACWIS, including child welfare staff involved in system coordination or training, IT technical support staff for system support and local interfaces, and computers or other equipment needed to use the system. Counties participate in the IV-E reimbursement by submitting planned budgets to establish the limit on IV-E reimbursement, reporting expenses through CARS for reimbursement, and submitting quarterly reports to indicate the specific categories of cost. DCFS uses the planned budgets and expenditures to seek budget approval from the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for the county costs and report actual expenses in the annual SACWIS system plan submitted to ACF.

Document Summary

This memo addresses reimbursement for county expenses related to eWiSACWIS, reporting of out-of-home care payment costs, the availability of funding for equipment, and charges to counties for use of eWiSACWIS.

For county staff costs included in the eWiSACWIS IV-E reimbursement, counties must use mechanisms to track 100% of the time for the affected staff, make adjustments to the staff costs reported to DCFS used to claim IV-E administrative revenue at the state level, and make adjustments to the calculation of county agency management support and overhead (AMSO) costs for reimbursement claimed for any IT technical support or other administrative staff included in the county AMSO.

The following changes are being made to the eWiSACWIS IV-E reimbursement program:

- All staff included in the reimbursement claim must do the 100% time reporting using a standard time sheet format developed in consultation with the Federal Division of Cost Allocation (DCA). The standard format is intended to ensure consistency across counties in how the 100% time reporting is done. Counties must begin using the standard time sheet format immediately to document the staff time. Counties must also maintain the 100% time reporting documentation for three years and the documentation may be periodically reviewed by DCFS to ensure consistency with Federal cost allocation requirements.
- Effective for CY 2008, additional CARS reporting lines will be created for counties to report how expenditures break down by child welfare staff, IT staff and equipment. The current quarterly reports counties submit to provide the expenditure breakdown will be eliminated.
- Effective for CY 2008, DCFS will include an appendix in the State/County Contract that will allow DCFS to issue a contract modification unilaterally to authorize a county to receive IV-E reimbursement or change the reimbursement limit. This will facilitate counties participating in the reimbursement program and making adjustments to their program budgets.
- The program instructions and cost worksheets have been updated consistent with Federal cost allocation directives for cost reporting. Clarification is provided for how IT or administrative staff included in AMSO should be handled. Clarification is also provided for the specific activities that can be counted by counties as eWiSACWIS expenses.
- The program instructions have been updated to clarify that scanner, printers, and other types of peripheral equipment are eligible for IV-E reimbursement. This includes scanners used to image court orders for entry into eWiSACWIS. The cost of equipment used for multiple program purposes must be pro-rated to determine the amount eligible for IV-E reimbursement.

The following aspects of the reimbursement program remain the same:

- County requests to participate in the IV-E reimbursement program for the current CY will be accepted through October 31st with contracts retroactive to January 1st. Any county requests made after October 31st will be processed for the following CY.
- Community Aids, Incentive Funds and County Tax Levy can be used as match.
- Counties will continue to estimate costs over a multi-year period since the county cost information must be reported to ACF in the annual SACWIS system plan. Any projected reimbursement in excess of \$100,000 will require specific federal approval.
- The IV-E reimbursement rate will remain at 32% for CY 2008. The reimbursement rate may change based on federal IV-E policy and IV-E eligibility trends in the OHC caseload.

OHC Payments and Financial Interfaces

The Federal ACF is requiring Wisconsin as part of the action plan to achieve SACWIS compliance to have automated, bi-directional exchanges of financial information in all counties. Currently 18 counties and the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare have bi-directional interfaces and 8 counties have one-way (up only) interfaces. DCFS has requested ACF approval to complete the remaining financial interfaces and upgrades over a four-year period.

To assist counties with the costs of building interfaces, DCFS will make up to \$20,000 available per county for new interfaces and up to \$15,000 available for making one-way interfaces bi-directional. DCFS will include an appendix in the state/county contract that will allow DCFS to issue a contract modification unilaterally to authorize a county to receive these funds. Counties will be asked to schedule the interface work over the four-year period at a time convenient for each county, with the goal of completing interfaces/upgrades for about 12 counties per year.

Some counties have been cited in recent local single audits for not reporting out-of-home care payment costs in a timely manner. Counties that do not report costs in a timely manner may be required by DCFS to submit corrective action plans. Building financial interfaces will facilitate timely reporting.

Laptops and Tablets

Effective October 1, 2007, states must begin reporting to ACF the percentage of children in OHC who received a monthly visit from their case manager (or other staff under the direction of the case manager) and whether the visits occurred in the placement setting. States must submit improvement plans to increase the percentage of SACWIS-documented monthly visits from the 2007 level to 90% by 2011, with the majority of the visits occurring in the placement setting. Failure to meet annual improvement targets will result in the loss of Federal Title IV-B funds.

DCFS received additional Federal IV-B funds to support implementation of the case manager visit requirement and will make one-time only funds available to counties for the purchase of laptop or tablet computers to facilitate eWiSACWIS case note documentation while in the field visiting children. To receive funds, counties will be asked to submit plans explaining how mobile equipment will be used to improve reporting of case manager visits and establish local improvement goals related to documentation in eWiSACWIS. Following the submission of statewide data to ACF, DCFS will provide counties with eWiSACWIS information showing the current status of caseworker visit documentation.

DCFS is currently working on a Numbered Memo that will provide more policy and practice guidance with respect to the case visit documentation. DCFS will include an appendix in the state/county contract that will allow DCFS to issue a contract modification unilaterally to authorize a county to receive these funds. The IV-B funds will be made available in early CY 2008.

County User Fee

Pursuant to Section 46.45(2)(a) Wis Stats., counties are charged a "user fee" for a portion of eWiSACWIS ongoing operating costs. The fee is applied to the statewide portion of the system budget, including the system maintenance contract with CGI, Inc., the application hosting fee, and state IT technical support staff for the system. The remaining portion of these costs are charged directly to the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare. The user fee is currently collected from counties either by billing counties semi-annually or as an offset to their Community Aids allocations. The fee amount was established in 2002 based on the child population in the county.

- Starting in CY 2008, the fee will be collected from all counties as an offset to their Community Aids allocation and the semi-annual billing will be discontinued.
- To date, the county share of statewide operating costs has exceeded the fee revenue, but the user fee fund is expected to break even in CY 2008 as initial development costs for eWiSACWIS become satisfied. The current fee amount will remain in effect through CY 2008 and will be re-estimated for CY 2009.

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MEMO WEB SITE: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/memos/>

Attachments:

- A. [IV-E Reimbursement for County eWiSACWIS Costs](#)¹
 - 1. [Budget Request Form \(Summary Form\)](#)
 - 2. [WISACWIS County Staffing Request Form](#)
 - 3. [WISACWIS On-going Hardware and Software Procurement Worksheet](#)
 - 4. [Daily Activity Log and Summary](#)
- B. [Contract/Implementation Process for County Financial Interfaces](#)

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¹ The sub-attachments to the IV-E Reimbursement for County eWiSACWIS Costs (items 1 through 4) are all fill in Excel spreadsheets and can be found on-line on the [Knowledgeweb](#)