



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

Treatment Foster Care SCOPE OF SERVICES 2027

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Program Overview

The primary purpose of Treatment Foster Care (TFC) placements is to provide for the treatment needs and physical placement to children receiving case management services through one of the Contracted Case Management Agencies (CMA) of the Division of Milwaukee Child Welfare (DMCW). These services are provided to children subject to jurisdiction of [Wis. Stat. ch. 48](#) who are placed in an out-of-home care (OHC) placement when the child cannot be safely maintained in the home of their family of origin. The Contractor will be licensed according to [Ch. DCF 54](#), Adm Code as a Child Placing Agency (CPA). Placements in foster care are expected to be short-term to address specific needs of the child. All placements must be authorized by the child's DMCW Case Manager (CM) and approved through the child's Court Order. **Please note, entering into a contract with DMCW does not guarantee the placement of youth.**

Child Well-Being

Physical Environment

The Contractor will ensure that all licensed homes are licensed in accordance with Ch. DCF 56, Adm Code.

Education

The contractor will ensure the educational needs of the child(ren) in placement are met. The contractor will work collaboratively with Case Management, previous caregivers, biological parents, and the Education Liaison to ensure children are attending school, receiving special educational services (when applicable), engaging in school related activities, and remaining in their schools of origin.

Health Care

The contractor will ensure all mental and physical health needs are met. The contractor or foster parent will maintain basic health history and is responsible for scheduling all required appointments. It is the responsibility of the contractor to transport children in their care to all appointments. It is recommended the foster parent attend all health care appointments. When necessary, the contractor can coordinate with the Case Management team for assistance in transporting and attending health care appointments. All health care related concerns, appointments and follow-up care must be shared with the Case Management team.

Promoting Normalcy

To create normalcy and maintain relationships for children, the Contractor is required to plan and execute additional opportunities for the child to connect with their family, friends, and communities. During a child's placement in foster care and in conjunction with the child's assigned Case Manager, the Contractor and the foster parent will arrange for, encourage, support, and cooperate in assisting the child in maintaining contact with their biological or adoptive family and siblings through regular visitation. Any visitation plans provided by the child's Case Management team must be implemented by the Contractor, within reason. The plan will be maintained in the child's case file with documentation related to visits.

The Contractor shall use the [Reasonable and Prudent Parenting \(RPP\) Standard](#) in decision making as it relates to an activity of a child in their care. These RPP decisions often relate to the safety, extracurricular, social, and age-appropriate developmental activities that are in the best interest of the child. The RPP Standard also must consider decisions related to the child/family's cultural, religious, and tribal values. The Contractor will use RPP to make decisions about a child's day or overnight passes and shall discuss with the Contracted Case Management team when appropriate.

Programmatic Elements

Available Programming

The Contractor shall accept children and youth with treatment needs that match programming available in their licensed homes. All programming should be provided in accordance with the [Wisconsin Child Welfare Model for Practice](#).

The Contractor shall offer appropriate programming, including, but not limited to:

- Mental and behavioral health intervention with focus on past trauma, if appropriate
- Independent living skill development
- Support for child to encourage healthy peer relationships
- Connection to community resources for recreational activities, health care and other services for children

Programming that focuses on the needs of children in various stages of social physical, healthy growth, and development, addressing age-appropriate factors such as social development, academic achievement, positive recreational activities, essential life skills, choosing healthy relationships, job training and employment skills deemed appropriate. Providing appropriate support and services, on an as-needed basis, should other presenting problems and/or issues be identified.

Parent skill-based programs and services that meet the cultural and lifestyle needs of the children placed by DMCW from Milwaukee County.

Note: The Contractor does not need to provide all services directly to the child in placement. The child's treatment and case plan may address the services and be provided outside the placement.

Treatment Planning

The Contractor is responsible for recognizing all individual needs of children placed in a home licensed by their agency. The Contractor is responsible for establishing and implementing a treatment care plan consistent with Chapter 56 requirements for children placed in level 3 and 4 homes. The Contractor will monitor the effectiveness of the plan and adjust when necessary. Case Management and other supports to the child and foster parent shall be included when establishing and reviewing the treatment care plan. All treatment care plans will be provided timely to the parent/guardian and the assigned Case Manager.

Coordination with Case Management, Courts, and Service Providers

The Contractor must address the changing needs of a child. The Contractor shall communicate any concerns or changes concerning children placed in homes licensed by the Contractor with the Case Management team. This includes but is not limited to physical and mental health, education, services, and general well-being.

The Contractor shall participate in all requested meetings regarding children placed in their licensed foster homes including family team meetings, plan of care meetings, court and other meetings as requested.

The Contractor will not interfere with case planning and permanency determined by the child's case management team. The Contractor will not act in ways that are contrary to what has been determined necessary or appropriate by the contracted case management agencies.

Transportation

The Contractor shall ensure children placed in their licensed foster homes have transportation to all health care, educational programming (including school), and any other community related activities. It is preferred that foster parents transport the children in their care however if they are unable for various reasons, the Contractor will ensure transportation needs are fulfilled. If the foster parent has experienced changes in their work or job schedule and those changes have an impact on the ability of the provider to care for the children in their care, the Contractor must reassess the providers' ability to care for the child, and if appropriate, provide them with additional support.

Placement of Level 1-2 Children Siblings and Children of Minor Parents

Whenever possible, it is the goal to keep siblings together and keep children of minor parents with their minor parents together while in care. In those circumstances when this cannot occur in a Level 1-2 foster home, DMCW may request that a Level 1-2 sibling or a Level 1-2 child of a Level 3-4 minor parent be placed in one of the Contractor's licensed homes under exceptional circumstances and only when the best interests of all the children warrant such an arrangement.

Except for siblings and children of minor parents, placements in treatment level foster homes should have higher needs which require treatment level services. The Contractor will match children with a Level of Need as 3-4 with foster parents licensed for Level 3-4.

Rate/Payment

If the placement is a Level 1-2 foster care placement for a child or a sibling of a Level 3-4 child, DMCW will make a foster care payment, the amount to be determined accordance with the [Wisconsin Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting Policy](#). DMCW will make an additional Administrative Fee payment to the Agency for the Level 1-2 foster child in the amount as required per WI policy and guidelines effective on the date of placement. The Contractor must maintain documentation to support any agreements regarding acceptance of placements and agreed upon rate of payments.

If the child of the teen parent is a Level 3-4 placement, DMCW will treat the placement as a separate placement and will pay the full Level 3-4 rate which includes the administrative rate as set forth on the Uniform Foster Care Rate Schedule. In contrast, if the child of the minor parent is not on a Milwaukee County Child in Need of Protection or Services (CHIPS) order, DMCW will not pay an additional administrative fee for the minor child. DMCW will, however, increase the minor parent's foster care rate (exceptional rate) by the basic foster care rate of the child.

Agency Requirements

Placement Referrals

Referrals for placements will be sent by the Case Management Agencies based on the needs of the child. The Contractor must be able to take placement referrals during regular business hours (8am – 5pm, Monday through Friday, excluding state holidays). The Contractor must respond to the referring agency for all placement referrals within 3 business days with an acceptance or denial and shall detail reasons for the denial. The Contractor is required to track all denials for placement referrals with a focus on reasoning of denial.

Placement Activity and Availability

The Contractor will provide monthly data regarding placement activity and availability among their licensed foster parents. This data will be accessible to DMCW, Case Management Agencies and the Placement Referral Unit (PRU). DMCW may place agencies “on hold” for new placement referrals for reasons including but not limited to:

1. New allegations of maltreatment in foster homes
2. Concerns with the quality of care provided to children by foster homes in the agency
3. Financial stability of entity
4. Non-adherence to that outlined in Scope of Services

****Note: Entering a Contract with DMCW does not guarantee placement of children.***

Placement Disruptions

The Contractor shall provide a written 30-day notice for any children for whom they are asking removal to allow for appropriate planning and transition for the child. It is required for each 30-day request that there has been clear and consistent communication with the assigned Child Welfare Case Manager to attempt to plan for any potential disruption. Immediate and 15-day removal requests must be staffed with the assigned Program Manager of the Contracted Case Management Agency. The DMCW Contract Manager may be requested to participate in the staffing if needed.

The Contractor will be responsible for documenting the following related to all children once they are discharged due to a placement disruption.

1. The length of stay in the provider home from placement to discharge
2. Where the child is discharged to, e.g., birth home, foster home, treatment foster home, congregate care setting, or that the child is missing from care, etc.

3. Specific rational detailing discharge reason(s)
4. If applicable, name of the Case Management Program Manager or DMCW designee who took part in the placement disruption staffing along with the date of the staffing

Documentation regarding immediate and 15-day removal requests must be sent to the DMCW Contract Manager quarterly.

Child Safety While in Placement

The Division of Milwaukee Child Welfare supports a child protection system that is comprehensive, child-centered, family-focused, and community-based; incorporates all appropriate measures to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of child abuse and neglect; and promotes physical and psychological recovery and social re-integration in an environment that fosters the health, safety, self-respect, and dignity of the child. While placed in out-of-home care, children will be protected from potential threats to their safety, whether in or out of the home.

The following shall apply:

1. There shall be no maltreatment by foster parents, foster care agency staff, other children in the home, or others.
2. The use of physical restraints and corporal punishment is prohibited.
3. All foster parents will sign an agreement to not use corporal punishment on children.
4. Training on discipline, which excludes the use of physical discipline, shall be provided to all foster parents and staff.
5. There shall be appropriate adult supervision and nurturing and effective engagement of children consistent with Wisconsin Administrative Code Ch. 56, including without limitation Section 56.09(2)(d) and (e).

Independent Investigations (Initial Assessments)

When there is an allegation of maltreatment that is screened in with one of the Contractor's providers, a third party conducts the Independent Investigation (Initial Assessment). Currently, Community Impact Partners (CIP) is contracted with the DMCW to complete Independent Investigations. The Contractor is expected to cooperate with any investigating body/agency during the investigation which includes participating in interviews and sharing records. The Contractor is required to follow up and complete any recommendations from the investigation. If there are recommendations not followed, the Contractor must obtain approval by the DMCW Contract Manager DMCW approval and document in the Contractor's internal records reason for not completing the recommendations.

During the period the provider is undergoing an Independent Investigation, the Contractor may not allow for any new placements in the provider's home. Upon the completion of any Independent Investigation, the Contractor may request the completed Assessment through DMCW.

The Contractor may receive email notification of a screened-in report. The Contractor may communicate with the foster parent regarding the report of maltreatment **after** Initial Assessment and CIP have made first contact with both the children placed in the home and the foster parent(s). **The Contractor will not share the Access Report with the provider.** Not following this guidance can jeopardize the assessment and possibly create unsafe conditions for the child.

Agency Support to Licensed Providers

The Contractor's workforce should be culturally competent and able to support the providers and children in their diverse cultural and lifestyle backgrounds. The contractor shall actively recruit new foster parents to meet the diverse background and needs of the population served. Providers licensed by the Contractor shall be culturally competent and show cultural humility to support the unique needs of the child. Ongoing training must be provided on trauma, attachment, grief and loss, cultural diversity, discipline and parenting of foster children and independent living skills.

The Contractor will increase the professional support and contact with a foster parent to develop, operate, expand, and enhance community-based and prevention-focused programs and activities designed to strengthen and support families to prevent child abuse and neglect (through networks where appropriate) that are accessible, effective, culturally appropriate, and build on existing strengths that:

1. Offer support and assistance to families
2. Provide early, comprehensive support for parents
3. Provide a connection process for parents and foster parents when communication the needs of the child; Provide additional supports for foster parent that are licensed less than one year; Assess and support the changing needs of foster parents
4. Promote the development of parenting skills, especially in young parents and parents with very young children
5. Increase family stability
6. Improve family access to other formal and informal resources and provide opportunities for assistance available within communities
7. Support the additional needs of families with children with disabilities through respite care and other services

The Contractor will assist providers with developing a crisis response plan, procedure and/or process for providers to prevent and support children in crisis and/or when extra one to one support is needed for behavior issues and with at-risk behaviors.

Conflicts of Interest

Without express permission from the DMCW Contract Manager, the Contractor will not allow for the placement of DMCW children in any licensed home where the licensee is employed by one of the contracted Case Management Agencies, DMCW, or other community agency who has the power to influence placement.

Standards of Work

The Contractor agrees to perform all the services required under this Contract in a professional manner and adhere to national/state-wide practice standards (if available) and as specified in the Contract by the Department in written Policies and Procedures. The Contractor shall be responsible for the management, accuracy, integrity, and validity of child(ren) documentation.

Performance Standards and Accountability

The Contractor shall perform all services consistent with the documents constituting this Contract. The Department may develop performance standards regarding permanence, safety and child well-being that will include program outcomes, activity, and qualitative indicators for which the Contractor will be expected to meet or achieve reasonable progress toward meeting. Outcome performance standards may be monitored monthly and reported every six months by the Department. Quality performance standards may be evaluated and reported by the Department through periodic reviews. The Contractor's performance as measured against expectations on the performance monitoring plan will be a factor in determining if the contract will be renewed.

At a minimum, DMCW may discuss at quarterly required meetings, or as otherwise necessary, the status of outcomes and issues related to the administration or delivery of services under this Contract. It is expected that all Contractors will be actively engaged in this process and will work collaboratively to identify areas in need of improvement and to propose solutions. Corrective action, or any other remedies available to the State under this Contract, may be needed for failure to comply with the provisions of this Contract, including failure to follow DMCW policies and procedures.

If DCF/DMCW determines a corrective action plan is necessary, the Contractor will develop a plan and obtain DMCW's approval of the plan. DMCW will monitor the Contractor's compliance with the plan, according to the plan's timeframes for correction. If the DMCW determines that the Contractor is in non-compliance with the plan, DMCW may withhold payments and/or may consider such failure to constitute a material breach and terminate the Contract.

Compliance with DMCW Required Meetings

Contractors are required to attend all program and contract meetings convened by DMCW. If attendance is not possible, the Contractor must notify the assigned DMCW staff prior to the meeting of the agency's inability to attend.

Overpayments

The Contractor shall refund any payments made that the Department determines, after notice to the Contractor and opportunity to respond, exceeded allowable costs or were otherwise not payable under this Contract. To complete repayment, the Contractor shall work with DMCW's case management agencies. The Contractor shall be responsible for repayment to the Department overpayments related to the administrative payments. The Contractor shall refund the overpayments to the case management agency within 30 days of notice, or the Department may, at its sole discretion, withhold money otherwise due the Contractor under this Contract

including, but not limited to, deduction of the overpayment amount from any subsequent monthly reimbursements. The Department may also recover the excess funds by any other legal means including, but not limited to, enforcement of the liquidated damages provision as articulated in the Contract General Terms and Conditions.

Department of Youth and Families (DCF)

Structure/Organization

DCF directly administers child welfare services in Milwaukee through the Division of Milwaukee Child Welfare (DMCW) and runs the Statewide Public Adoption Program. DCF also provides licensing of facilities that provide out-of-home care for children. In addition, DCF oversees child welfare at the local level. Local child welfare agencies administer programs to assist children and families that include assistance for children in need of protection or services, foster care services, child abuse and neglect investigations, and community-based juvenile justice services. DCF also administers a variety of other family-centered state programs such as early youthhood education services and W-2 programs. The [Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board](#) is administratively attached to DCF.

The department's vision is that all Wisconsin children and youth are safe and loved members of thriving families and communities. To reach this goal, we are focused on reducing racial and ethnic disparities in programs and services, focusing on five key priorities:

1. Systematically increasing access to quality early care and education programs that support the needs of children and families statewide;
2. Putting families in the center of successful child support and good-paying jobs programs;
3. Safely transforming the child welfare and youth justice system to dramatically increase the promotion of children supported in their homes and communities;
4. Dedicating additional resources to support vulnerable and historically underserved youth, specifically teenage girls, kids with complex care needs, and youth transitioning out of the foster care system;
5. Fostering a workplace where agency staff feel engaged, valued and connected to our vision.

Milwaukee Child Welfare Structure – the Division of Milwaukee Child Welfare (DMCW)

DMCW works with families to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth. Our vision is safe children and healthy families in Milwaukee County. Our mission is to achieve our vision, we will respond to concerns of child safety and through partnership with families and community, focus on keeping children safely at home. Our values include:

- Promote family-centered services to help families enhance their skills to safely parent their children
- Build collaborative partnerships with families and stakeholders

- Focus on safety and timely permanence for children
- Recruit and train staff who practice in an ethical and culturally responsive manner
- Support staff, celebrate their work, and resolve differences with respect, assuming positive intent
- Believe in the ability of people to change

With its many community partners, DMCW provides services to families in crisis that help keep children safely in the home. When it is necessary, DMCW looks to out-of-home care placements to provide appropriate temporary and permanent homes for children who cannot live with their families of origin. DMCW contracts with service providers to provide placement, case management, in home services, and other supportive services to families in the Milwaukee community.

DMCW is responsible for administering child protective services in Milwaukee County and works to assure the safety, well-being, and permanence of youth. DMCW provides oversight over the Case Management Services contract, as well as other contracted services serving youth and families in need of youth welfare services. The vision of DMCW is to have safe children and youth and healthy families in Milwaukee County and to execute DCF's mission that all Wisconsin children and youth will be safe and loved members of thriving families and communities.

DMCW Child Welfare Program and Policy Section

The Child Welfare Program and Policy Section (CWPPS) is responsible for managing the programming, policy, and coordination of contract agencies providing ongoing services for the Milwaukee youth protective services system. This includes direct involvement in the negotiation, monitoring and performance evaluation of contracts with agencies that provide Contracted Case Management services, in-home services, out-of-home care placement providers, independent living providers, and other providers who fall in the scope of the CWPPS.

One of the Section's key objectives is to ensure youth are receiving high-quality care from the Contractors providing Group Home services for DMCW youth. The CWPPS may conduct site visits (announced and unannounced) to meet this key purpose, and the DMCW Contract Administrator will perform these visits and may be accompanied by an additional state employee.

Bureau of Research, Analytics & Programs (BRAP)

The DMCW Bureau of Research, Analytics & Programs (BRAP) holds primary responsibility for supporting all Division administrative operations and quality improvement initiatives. The BRAP oversees the Division's financial operations to support state operations, private contractor administrative costs and direct client services. The BRAP is responsible for the management of division funding as well as the coordination of fiscal operations with DCF financial management staff. The BRAP ensures that proper accounting and audit measures are in place.

Appendix 1: Required Policies

Below is the minimum list of policies that the potential Contractor **is required to submit to DMCW with its Registration materials**. It is acceptable that some areas below may be covered within the same policy/agreement. The Contractor may create (or have) additional policies in line with the program design.

1. Foster Parent Handbook
2. Written Agency Policies for Foster Parents

A Registration will not be considered complete for review until all policies have been submitted. Registrations without the Required Policies will be returned which can delay the contract being processed.