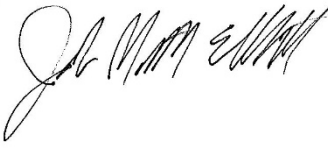




Division of Safety and Permanence Child Welfare Licensing Memo Series 2026-19L
Supersedes DCF Child Welfare Licensing Memo Series 2019-34L and 2017-26L

June 1, 2026

To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
 DCF Area Administrators
 Child Placing Agency Directors
 Child Welfare Agency Directors
 County Departments of Community Programs Directors
 County Departments of Human Services Directors
 County Departments of Social Services Directors
 Group Home Providers
 Child Placing Agencies
 Residential Care Center Providers
 Shelter Care Providers
 Tribal Chairpersons

From: John Elliott 
 Administrator

Re: Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standards and Training

PURPOSE

This memo notifies licensees of changes pursuant to [Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#) related to reasonable and prudent parent standard (RPPS) for group homes and combines information on the standards with the training requirements previously issued separately in Child Welfare Licensing Memo Series 2019-34L and 2017-26L. Revisions pursuant to [Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#) are effective June 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

The department promulgated rules related to the RPPS that took effect on August 1, 2017. Rules pertaining to communication logs and documentation of RPPS questions and decisions remain pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 52, ch. 57, and ch. 59. There have been no changes for residential care centers or shelter care providers regarding RPPS.



INFORMATION SUMMARY

Group Home Providers:

Changes were made pursuant to [Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#) pertaining to RPPS. Previously located under and pursuant to Wis. Admin Code s. [52.41\(1m\)](#), new RPPS documentation requirements are now located in and pursuant to Wis. Admin Code s. [DCF 57.20](#):

1. Pursuant to Wis. Admin Code. s. [57.20 Communication log](#). (1) A licensee shall require staff members and RPPS decision-makers to use a communication log to document and communicate with each other about each resident. The communication log shall include all of the following for each shift:
 - (a) The chosen name of the resident being referenced in the communication log.
 - (b) The resident's location including details of where the resident was if not on premises.
 - (c) A summary of the resident's behavior and any intervention used, if applicable.
 - (d) A summary of the residents' participation in on-site and off-site programming, treatment, and other activities.
 - (e) Any serious incidents under and pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. [DCF 57.09 \(1\)](#) involving a resident.
 - (f) Any reasonable and prudent parent requests and decisions made for a resident under and pursuant to Wis. Admin Code s. [DCF 57.28](#) for activities that do not take place in the group home and are not supervised by a staff member.**
 - (g) A search conducted under and pursuant to Wis. Admin Code s. [DCF 57.25 \(2\)](#).
 - (h) A transport of a resident.

[Wisconsin. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#) previously required the RPPS decision maker to be on-site when making a decision, which is no longer required. [Wisconsin. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#) was updated to state:

Wisconsin Admin. Code s. [DCF 57.28\(3\)\(a\)](#) A staff member shall **have access at all times** to at least one RPPS decision-maker who is employed at the group home.

Requirements were added to the RPPS standard now located in and pursuant to Wisconsin Admin. Code s. DCF [57.28\(4\)\(e\)](#) related to decision making about a resident's hair:

Wisconsin Admin. Code s. [DCF 57.28\(4\)\(e\)](#) *Resident's hair*.

1. If a resident is under 12 years of age, the following provisions apply regarding the resident's hair:
 - a. The RPPS decision-maker may not provide hair care or authorize any hair care services that would significantly change the style, cut, or color of the resident's hair without permission from the resident's parent, guardian, legal custodian, or Indian custodian.
 - b. The RPPS decision-maker may provide hair care or authorize hair care services needed to maintain the style, cut, and color of the resident's hair.
2. A resident who is 12 years of age or older may make their own hair care decisions without authorization from the RPPS decision-maker or the resident's parent, guardian, legal custodian, or Indian custodian.

Residential Care Centers:

Residential care centers for children and youth requirements have not changed.

Wisconsin. Admin. Code s. [DCF 52.41 \(1m\)](#) Communication Log. (a) A residential care center shall require each shift of resident care workers and RPPS decision makers to use a communication log to document and communicate with other resident care workers and RPPS decision makers about residents whom they supervise in common. The communication log shall include all of the following for each shift:

1. Each resident's location, behavior, and program participation.
2. Significant incidents involving a resident as provided in sub. (1) (a) 10. and the center's corresponding policy.
3. Reasonable and prudent parenting requests and decisions made for residents under and pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. [DCF 52.415](#) for activities that do not take place in the residential care center and are not supervised by a staff person.

Wisconsin. Admin. Code s. [52.415\(2\)\(a\)](#) A residential care center shall **ensure the presence on-site of at least one RPPS decision maker at all times** to make decisions regarding the participation of a resident in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

Shelter Care Facilities:

Shelter care requirements have not changed.

Wisconsin. Admin. Code s. [DCF 59.057 Communication log](#). (1) A shelter care facility shall require each shift of shelter care workers and RPPS decision makers to use a communication log to document and communicate with other shelter care workers and RPPS decision makers about children whom they supervise in common. The communication log shall include all of the following for each shift:

- (a) Each child's location and behavior.
- (b) Significant incidents involving a child.
- (c) Reasonable and prudent parenting requests and decisions made for children under and pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. [DCF 59.055](#) for activities that do not take place in the shelter care facility and are not supervised by a shelter care worker, relief help, volunteer, or unit supervisor.
- (d) Staff arrival and departure times.

Wisconsin. Admin. Code s. [DCF 59.055\(a\)](#) RPPS DECISION MAKER. (a) A shelter care facility shall **ensure the presence on-site of at least one RPPS decision maker at all times** to make decisions regarding the participation of a child placed in the shelter care facility in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.

All out-of-home care providers, including the licensee, authorized representative, or designee of a group home, residential care center for children and youth, or shelter care facility, must be trained in the RPPS before they implement the standard. There are separate trainings for foster parents, agency case managers, foster care coordinators, and supervisors.

RPPS training for RPPS Decision Makers who work at a residential care center for children and youth, group home, and/or shelter care facility can be found at the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS) website <https://wcpds.wisc.edu/web-based-courses/reasonable-and-prudent-parenting-for-congregatecare-staff/>.

RPPS training for supervising agency caseworkers for child placing agencies can be found at the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS) website at <https://wcpds.wisc.edu/web-based-courses/the-reasonable-and-prudent-parent-standard-for-supervising-agency-staff/>.

Once the RPPS training has been successfully completed, the RPPS Decision Maker will print out the training certificate which is made available at the completion of the training. The training certificate will be proof that the staff member has completed the training, and the certificate should be put into the employee's personnel file.

If a reasonable and prudent parent decision requires written permission from the facility in lieu of a parent or guardian signature, the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Decision Record, form [DCF-F-5124-E](#), must be completed and kept in the resident's file. This form is not required for foster parents.

The Department has also created the form Reasonable and Prudent Standard Review, [DCF-F-5123-E](#), to ensure that agency policies and procedures comply with the RPPS as required and pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. DCF [52.41\(1\)\(d\)4.](#), s. [DCF 57.28\(4\)\(g\)](#), and s. [DCF 59.055\(6\)\(d\)](#).

For more information or questions, please contact the following:

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Licensing Section
 Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care
 Division of Safety and Permanence
 DCFCWLR@wisconsin.gov

MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>

Attachments [Wis. Admin. Code ch. DCF 57](#)
 [Reasonable and Prudent Parent Record DCF-F-5123-E](#)
 [Reasonable and Prudent Parent Record DCF-F-5124-E](#)