


To: 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  
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors  
Private Child Placing Agencies  
Residential Care Center Providers  
Shelter Care Providers  
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Fredi-Ellen Bove   
Administrator

Re: Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting

## PURPOSE

As part of the Levels of Care Evaluation Plan and in response to recent reviews from the Legislative Audit Bureau and the Administration for Children and Families Region 5, the Division has reviewed practices related to the Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting Policy issued in 2011 and made some modifications. This memo supersedes Memo Series 2011-03.

## BACKGROUND

The Levels of Care initiative was implemented in the spring of 2011 to improve stability, safety, matching and permanence of children by matching their assessed needs with the skills, abilities, and capacities of caregivers. The Department of Children and Families provided numerous opportunities for input into the rate setting process before the finalized process was created. In the past year training sessions have been held across the state for placing, licensing and supervising agencies. Despite these efforts it has come to our attention through the Levels of Care Evaluation Plan that the rate setting process continues to be a challenge: some county agencies are not involving foster parents in the process, and private child placing agencies are continuing to request a set rate, even with justifications, for all placements with their agencies. This is contrary to state law and policy which requires foster care rates to be set based on the level of care of the provider and the assessed needs of the child. There have also been questions related to allowable costs and establishing the exceptional portion of the rate. The Division of Safety and Permanence has worked with the Out-of-Home Care Committee to make the necessary revisions to the policy to address the concerns raised during the Levels of Care Evaluation.

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE REQUIREMENTS

The policy attached to this memo incorporates changes to rate setting made under the permanent rule promulgation of Ch. DCF 56 Admin. Code and those resulting from the Levels of Care Evaluation.

- *Permanent Rule Promulgation of Ch. DCF 56 Admin. Code*
  - Involving team members and licensing agency involvement in the rate setting process.
  - The rate setters' responsibilities.
- *Levels of Care Evaluation*

- o Clarification for allowable costs and uses of the Exceptional Portion of the foster care rate.
- o Creation of a process to manage complaints and monitoring of the rate setting process.
- o Modification to the Level of Need algorithm for both the 0-5 and 5-17 versions when a child is considered to have a Level of Need 5 or 6. Previously the second column of figuring out a Level of Need 5 or 6 indicated “a rating of three or more ‘2’ among the following needs”; this is an error as it should have stated “a rating of three or more ‘3’ or ‘2.’”
- o Implements an increase of the multiplier of the Supplemental Point Value to \$8.00.

All of the changes set forth in this policy are effective immediately for any new placements and for current placements upon their next six month rate review, unless one is requested sooner. A child who was previously erroneously determined a Level 3 or 4 when they will now be determined a Level 5 or 6 will see the change the next time a CANS is completed for the child. The change in the multiplier of the Supplemental Point value is effective November 5, 2012 during the scheduled eWiSACWIS release.

### **eWiSACWIS DOCUMENTATION**

eWiSACWIS modifications to the Level of Need algorithm were made in the June 2012 release and the changes to the Supplemental Point value will occur in the November 2012 release.

### **ACTION SUMMARY**

All of the changes set forth in this policy are effective immediately for any new placements and for current placements upon their next six month rate review, unless one is requested sooner. The change in the multiplier of the Supplemental Point value is effective November 5, 2012 during the scheduled eWiSACWIS release.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Out of Home Care Section Chief  
 Division of Safety and Permanence  
 Bureau of Permanence and Out of Home Care  
 608-422-6930

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

#### Attachments

Uniform Foster Care Rate Setting Policy  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/ufcr-settingpolicy.pdf>

CANS Manual Birth - 5  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/cans/cans-b-5.pdf>

CANS Manual Ages 5-21  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/cans/cans5-21.pdf>

CANS Glossary of Items  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/cans/glossary.pdf>

Supplemental Point Calculations  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/cans/supp5-21-alg.pdf>

Child/Youth Assessed Level of Need Birth - 5  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/lon/lon-b-5-alg.pdf>

Child/Youth Assessed Level of Need Ages 5-21  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/fc/pdf/lon/lon5-21-alg.pdf>