


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

From: Wendy Henderson
Division Administrator 

Re: Revised Rate Request for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs

PURPOSE

This memo describes the process by which a certified qualified residential treatment program (QRTP) may request a revised rate within three months of its initial certification. Rate requests for established QRTPs will follow procedures outlined in the regular rate request process that is issued by memo each year in September.

BACKGROUND

Wis. Stat. s. 49.343 requires the department to establish per client daily rates for group homes and residential care centers, as well as the administrative portion of foster care daily rates paid to child placing agencies. The department establishes these rates using cost and service report data gathered from providers and approves daily rates for each provider based on submitted costs. DCF 52.66(3)(b) and DCF 57.62(3)(b) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code permit licensees to request an exception to the maximum daily rate if the licensee provides a specialized service or specialized programming to a specific population of children.

The Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was passed by Congress in 2018. This law restructures how the federal government allocates funds to the child welfare system to improve outcomes for children and families. One way that FFPSA does this is through the creation of QRTPs. 2021 Wisconsin Act 42, which was published on May 22, 2021, provides the department with the authority to promulgate emergency rules for the implementation of QRTPs. A statement of scope for this rule was approved by the governor on June 3, 2021, and the emergency rule was approved by the governor on September 3, 2021. The emergency rule, Wisconsin Admin. Code [DCF 61](#), took effect on September 29, 2021.

A facility that becomes certified as a QRTP may request revised rates utilizing the process outlined within this memo.

INFORMATION SUMMARY

DCF is committed to supporting facilities that anticipate becoming certified as QRTPs in building programs that provide specialized, high quality clinical care designed to meet the needs of children and youth in higher levels of care. These QRTPs may have increased costs that reflect investments in the following areas:

- Trauma informed treatment model
- Robust mental health and behavioral health assessments
- Clinical services for youth
- Clinical supervision of staff
- Increased direct care staff, including availability of one-on-one staffing where appropriate
- Increased training and support to enhance professional status of front-line staff and staff retention
- Family participation

Certified QRTPs may request increased rates to support costs associated with programming outlined above, as permitted by sections DCF 52.66(3)(b) or DCF 57.62(3)(b) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code for specialized services or specialized programming to a specific population of children.

REQUESTING A PROPOSED DAILY RATE

QRTPs are eligible to submit a revised rate request by submitting form DCF-F-2696-E (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/doc/2696.docx>) and emailing it to DCFCWLRateReg@wi.gov within 3 months of initial certification and each subsequent year by utilizing the regularly established rate request process pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code s. DCF 52.66, and 57.62.

The rate request can include requests for rates above the maximum as well as requests for an increased rate under the maximum.

The following process will be utilized:

- 1) The QRTP will notify the department of the intent to request a revised rate by sending an email to DCFCWLRateReg@wi.gov
- 2) The department will provide the cost report to the QRTP that was utilized to set the existing rate in the most current period
- 3) The department will schedule a meeting with the QRTP to discuss the current rate methodology
- 4) The QRTP facility will submit the following materials to the email DCFCWLRateReg@wi.gov:
 - a. Form DCF-F-2696-E (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/doc/2696.docx>)
 - b. A description of costs that are associated with the specific categories outlined above related to robust, quality programming, including services/programming provided, the population being served, and the benefits of the services/programming.

- c. A clear description of how proposed costs are not included in the already established rate for that facility and why the services/programming cannot be provided within the maximum rate (if applicable).
- 5) The department will review rate request materials and provide the approved rate back to the agency, from the rate regulation email box. If the department determines that an agency's proposed rate is not appropriate, the department must negotiate with the agency's licensee to determine an agreed to rate. If a licensee has negotiated with the department and does not agree to the department's approved rate, the licensee may request that the department and the licensee engage in mediation. A licensee shall request mediation within 5 business days of the notification of the approved rate from the department by sending an email to DCFCWLRateReg@wi.gov. If after mediation a rate is not agreed to, the department shall order a rate as provided in administrative rule. A licensee has 30 days to appeal the rate ordered following mediation to the Division of Hearings and Appeals.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Rate Regulation
Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care
DCFCWLRateReg@wi.gov

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