



Division of Safety and Permanence

DSP Informational Memo Series 2025-04i

February 10, 2025

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
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: John Elliott
Administrator

Re: **April 2024 Updates made to the Ongoing Services Standards re: QRTP**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to communicate updates that were made to the [Ongoing Services Standards](#) on April 19, 2024 and replaces the DCF Informational Memo Series 2024-18i, date 11/25/2024.

INFORMATION SUMMARY

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 Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs). These requirements went into effect on October 1, 2021. Starting October 1, 2021, residential care centers, group homes, and shelter care facilities could apply to become certified as QRTPs.

The Ongoing Services Standards were updated in April 2024 to clarify the timelines of the QRTP documentation requirements when a child or youth is placed in a QRTP facility, including the QRTP Addendum, which provides information about the child's need for a QRTP. Specifically, the QRTP section of the Ongoing Services Standards found on pages 281 and 282 was updated based on Wisconsin statute.

When a child is placed in a QRTP, the following actions are required of the agency with placement and care responsibility under Chapters 48 and 938 to comply with the legal requirements.

- Complete a Child Adolescent Needs & Strengths (CANS) assessment in Wisconsin's electronic child welfare information system (eWISACWIS) within 30 days from the date

of a child's placement in a QRTP. The initial determination of a child's level of need shall be made no more than 30 days prior to placement in a group home or residential care center. **For an Indian child, the child welfare professional shall make this determination in partnership with the tribal worker and take into consideration the availability of culturally appropriate services.*

- Complete a Permanency Plan and QRTP Addendum in eWISACWIS within 30 days of placement in a QRTP.
- Submit the CANS assessment, and QRTP Addendum to the court.

Within 60 days of a child's placement in a QRTP, the court must consider the CANS assessment, determine whether the needs of the child can be met in a family home, and if not, whether the QRTP provides the most effective and appropriate level of care in the least restrictive environment, and whether the placement in a QRTP is consistent with the goals for the child as specified in the permanency plan. The request for the court's review and findings must follow the procedures and notice requirements set forth in statutes, Chs. 48 and 938, Stats.

Specific Ongoing Services Standards updates include:

Page 281: Documentation: was amended to read:

"The child's Permanency Plan Addendum for Placement in a Setting Certified as a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) must be submitted to the court with the results of the child or youth's CANS assessment, no later than 30 days after the date on which the placement is made (or earlier if required by court/statutory timelines)."

Page 282: Court Review Documentation: was amended to read:

"The agency with placement and care responsibility shall provide the following information to the court for their review no later than 30 days after the date on which the placement is made (or earlier if required by court/statutory timelines)."

This language update reflects the current QRTP documentation requirements when a child or youth is placed in a QRTP facility. Prior to updating the Ongoing Services Standards on April 19, 2024, the timeframe for submission of QRTP documentation to the court could be found in circuit court forms regarding children in out-of-home care, and in Wisconsin statutes. There are no additional practice changes needed by the child welfare agencies with this update. No action is needed by child welfare agencies.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

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