

eWiSACWIS Placement Documentation Manual

(Documentation Principles, Terminology and Requirements)

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OVERVIEW

The primary purpose of this manual is to clarify eWiSACWIS placement documentation requirements for child welfare staff, supervisors and managers. The manual is divided into four main components as follows:

- Core Principles to Placement Documentation
- Key Terms and Definitions for Placement Documentation
- Contact Information for Placement-Related Documentation
- “How Do I” Guides by Placement Setting (Appendix)

For purposes of this manual, the term “**child**” is used to address both children and juveniles served by county child welfare agencies, the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, and the state Special Needs Adoption Program or as part of the state’s juvenile correction aftercare program. The manual is intended for use by child welfare staff and managers to clarify and support placement documentation responsibilities. Additional direction is provided by the Title IV-E Handbook to the Statewide Eligibility Unit related to the unit’s specific responsibilities in using eWiSACWIS and child welfare documentation to determine and re-determine a child’s Title IV-E Eligibility and reimbursability status.

When using the How Do I’s to guide placement documentation practices, the guides serve only as a core set of activities and pages that pertain to placements. These activities are not inclusive of all documentation needed for children who are subject to state and federal reporting requirements. The documentation depicted in these guides is not actual cases and names or genders of case head/reference persons are not necessarily reflective of typical case information.

PLACEMENT DOCUMENTATION PRINCIPLES

The following principles support documentation practices consistent with federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and ensure state and local capacity to measure placement outcomes prescribed by the federal Child and Family Services Review:

Following a child's removal from his family home to the date the child achieves a permanent outcome (e.g. reunification, adoption, guardianship), every day needs to be associated with a specific out-of-home placement setting for the child.

A child's placement documentation reflects the actual location or the status of the child's location for any given day.

Timely and accurate placement documentation supports the following state and local responsibilities:

- Monitoring critical child placement conditions, e.g. missing or runaway children and child death;
- Complying with the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) permanency requirements and timeframes, and;
- Determining Title IV-E Eligibility status and claiming federal Title IV-E and Medicaid Targeted Case Management reimbursement.

KEY PLACEMENT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Placement Documentation Terminology

One key concept to accurate placement documentation is that of a “**placement episode**.” A placement episode starts with a removal from home and ends with a discharge from out of home care. All days within a placement episode are documented using the Out of Home Placement page in eWiSACWIS (see screen shot below).

Child
Child: Altman, Fred (9220012) Case Name: Altman, Simon (9220003) Request Number:

Service **Provider**

Placement Information

County: Milwaukee Service Category: Foster Care
Removed From Home: 04/14/2011 Service Type: Foster Home (12-14 years old)
Placement Begin: 04/14/2011 Placement Setting: Fstr Fam Hm (Non-Rel)
Placement End: 00/00/0000
VPA Effective: 00/00/0000
Child's Level of Need:
Provider's Level of Care: 2
Child Specific Costs: \$0.00 per
Current Basic Costs: \$455.00 per month
Supplemental Costs: \$0.00
Exceptional Costs: \$0.00
Administrative Costs: \$0.00
Costs > Spending Limit: \$0.00
Current Monthly Payment: \$455.00

Removal Reasons

- This is an Adoptive Placement
- This is a CPS Non-Conforming Placement
- This is an Emergency Situation
- After Hours Placement
- Child is an American Indian child as defined by statute.

Options: [] [Go] [Save] [Close]

Child Removal and Removal Date

A placement episode begins with the date of a child’s **removal** where the child is taken into physical custody or where the child is placed under a formal voluntary placement agreement between the agency, the parents, and the placement provider.

Documentation of the removal date is recorded in the “Removed From Home” field and is required when the placement is the first placement for the child or a previous placement ended with a discharge as described below.

Placement Setting and Placement Setting Begin and End Dates

A child may be placed with multiple providers and experience multiple placement settings during a single placement episode. These changes may be due to actions initiated by the agency, the provider, the child, the parent, or the court. Also changes in the child's legal or financial status, e.g. SSI Eligibility, are documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

Each of these unique placement settings has a "Placement Begin" and "**Placement End**" date documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

In the instance where a child is removed and has only one placement setting prior to his or her discharge from placement, the placement setting begin date is the same as the removal date and the placement setting end date is the same as the discharge date.

If the child is removed and has multiple placement settings prior to discharge, the removal date is the same as the begin date for the first placement setting and the discharge date is the same as the placement ending date for the last placement setting.

Specific placement service ending values in eWiSACWIS are used to denote changes in a placement setting or a transfer to a new agency while a child's placement episode continues pending permanency goal achievement and subsequent discharge from placement. Values associated with changing a child's placement or transferring responsibility for a child is provided in Attachment 1.

Additional placement service ending values may be used to document specific legal or fiscal changes or to end placements that are made in error for the child, but do not necessarily reflect actual changes in the child's placement provider. These values are listed in Attachment 1.

PLACEMENT SETTING EXAMPLES AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Based on the Placement Setting values provided on the Out of Home Placement page, examples of the various placement settings subject to eWiSACWIS documentation are provided below.

As noted above, Placement Setting values are filtered based on the Service Category chosen during documentation of the Out of Home Placement.

Standard Placement Settings (Required to be documented as an Out of Home Placement)

Certain placement settings are always subject to be documented in eWiSACWIS due to Federal AFCARS or Title IV-E requirements. For purposes of this manual, these placement settings are referred to as “**standard**” settings. Standard placement settings represent the use of a facility or provider as a physical placement of the child from his or her family home. Therefore, the standard placement settings included below are always documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

- Foster Homes (Relative and Non-Relative), including Receiving/Assessment Homes
- Court Ordered Relative Homes - Unlicensed Relatives or Court Ordered Kinship Care
- Group Homes and Family Group Homes
- Missing from Out of Home Care
- Pre-Adoptive Homes
- Residential Care Centers (RCCs)
- Shelter Care/Reception Centers (Applicable under situations described below)
- Secure Detentions (Applicable under situations described below)
- Supervised Independent Living
- Treatment Foster Homes (Relative and Non-Relative)
- Trial Reunification
- Unlicensed Non-Relatives

Specific examples of these settings and how they are to be documented on the Out of Home Placement page are detailed in the “How Do I” appendix to this manual. Such documentation should be completed in a timely manner to ensure that the documentation regarding the location and placement status of the child is inclusive of all such placement settings and reflect the past and current location or status of the child. Timely documentation also serves to provide accurate and timely payment to providers when applicable.

A brief explanation and simple case examples regarding the documentation of the use of Secure Detention and Shelter Care facilities follow. For more detail regarding documentation procedures, please refer to the respective “How Do I” guides.

Variable Placement or Service Settings

Documentation requirements, if any, of other placement settings may vary depending on the reason for using the facility or provider and other case specific circumstances. These placement settings are referred to as “**variable**” settings in that these requirements vary based on whether or not case circumstances require documentation on the Out of Home Placement page or could be documented on the Service page. When documenting the use of a variable placement or service setting, it is important to make the distinction between documenting the use as a placement (Out of Home Placement page) versus documenting the use of a facility as a service (Service page). The use of a Service for a placement is not subject to Title IV-E eligibility and practice requirements or AFCARS reporting requirements.

For example, a child goes from his home into a secure detention facility as part of a sanction and then returns home, this is considered a service that was provided to the family. This situation would be documented on the Service page.

However, if the child goes to the secure detention facility and then moves directly from that facility to a licensed placement facility, the original placement into the secure detention facility was the first placement setting in the child's placement episode and thus, must be documented as an Out of Home Placement.

Ultimately, one should follow the guidelines that if the facility is being used as a court ordered out of home placement, or if it is one of multiple placements within an episode, then it needs to be documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

If the facility is being used to provide a service to the child or family (i.e. secure detention or shelter care as part of a sanctions or respite care as part of an in-home safety plan), then it should be documented on the Service page.

Listed below are some variable placement settings and scenarios describing documentation requirements or options:

Hospital/Inpatient Facility

Documentation on the Out of Home Placement page for a child in a hospital or inpatient facility is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the hospital or inpatient facility placement takes place within a current placement episode.

Case Examples- Documentation Required as an Out of Home Placement

Example 1- A child is removed from his family during the course of a CPS investigation and placed in a hospital for medical treatment. Subsequent to the hospital stay, the child is placed in a foster home under a court order. The hospital placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the hospital placement setting and the foster home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

Example 2- A child is removed from his family and placed in a foster home. During this placement, the child exhibits significant psychiatric symptomology and is placed in an inpatient psychiatric facility for further assessment and treatment. The foster home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the foster home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the inpatient facility setting.

Case Example- Documentation as a Service

A child requires medical attention during the course of ongoing services where he is being served in his family home. His parents admit him to the hospital for treatment. The child subsequently returns home. Use of the hospital setting in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of hospitals/inpatient facilities not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented on the Service page.

Mental Health Institution

Documentation of the placement of a child in a mental health institution, such as Mendota Mental Health Institute or Winnebago Mental Health Institute, is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the institutional placement takes place within a current placement episode.

Case Examples- Documentation as an Out of Home Placement

Example 1-A child is removed from his family during the course of delivering ongoing case management services and placed in a mental health institution to address severe emotional and behavioral concerns. Subsequent to the institutional placement, the child is placed in a foster home under a court order. The institutional placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the institutional placement setting and the foster home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

Example 2-A child is removed from his family and placed in a foster home. During this placement, the child exhibits severe emotional and behavioral problems and is placed in a mental health institution for further assessment and treatment. The foster home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the foster home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the institutional placement setting.

Case Example- Documentation as a Service

A child requires specialized mental health treatment services and supervision not available in the community during the course of delivering ongoing in-home services to his family. His parents decide to voluntarily place him in a mental health institution. The child subsequently returns home following treatment within the institution. Use of the mental health institution in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of hospitals/inpatient facilities not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented on the Service page.

Secure Detention / Shelter

If secure detention or shelter (i.e. non-secure detention) is being used as a temporary corrective action service, such as a sanction or a 72 hour hold, the county is encouraged to enter the use of the facility in eWiSACWIS. In these cases the data entry may be entered as a service on the Service page.

Case Examples- Documentation Required as an Out of Home Placement

Example 1- A child who has been adjudicated as a delinquent is removed from his family and placed in secure detention or shelter care as part of a 72-hour hold. At the conclusion of the hold, the child is placed in a group home under court order. The secure detention placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the secure detention or shelter placement setting and the group home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

Example 2- A child who has been adjudicated as a delinquent is removed from his family and placed in a group home. During this placement, the child is alleged to have committed another delinquent act and is placed in secure detention or shelter pending the next court hearing. The group home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the group home placement and the next setting within the placement episode is the secure detention or shelter placement setting.

Case Examples- Documentation as a Service

Example 1- A secure detention facility or shelter care facility is used as a 72-hour or sanction for a child who currently resides with his family. The child subsequently returns home following the hold or the sanction. Use of secure detention or shelter in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode. Documentation may only be documented through the Service page.

Example 2- A child is currently placed in out of home care and a secure detention facility or shelter care facility is used as a sanction (versus a change in the child's placement) while the child remains in a placement such as a group home, foster home, etc. The child's out of home placement setting continues to be documented on the Out of Home Placement page. The use of the secure detention or shelter as a sanction may only be documented on the Service page.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of the use of shelter and secure detention facilities as a corrective action service is not subject to federal AFCARS or Title IV-E requirements. As such, if the agency chooses to document these services in eWiSACWIS, they may only be appropriately documented on the Service page.

Youth Correctional Facility and Aftercare Placement

Documentation of the placement of a child in a youth or juvenile correctional facility is required when the child subsequently enters into a standard placement setting listed above or when the correctional placement takes place within a current placement episode. In addition, if a child returns to the agency for aftercare placement, documentation of these placements is required.

Case Examples- Documentation as an Out of Home Placement

Example 1- A child is placed in a youth correctional facility due to an adjudicated delinquency. Subsequent to the correctional placement, the child is placed in a group home under a court order. The youth correctional facility placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the correctional placement setting and the group home is the second placement setting within the same placement episode.

Example 2- A child adjudicated as a delinquent is removed from his family and placed in a group home. During this placement, the child commits another delinquent act and is ordered to a youth correctional facility. The group home placement is the start of a placement episode where the removal date is the begin date of the group home placement. The next placement setting within this placement episode is the youth correctional facility placement setting.

The child is not discharged from the group home placement setting as the agency anticipates the child will return for placement under an aftercare supervision order. However, if the child is not expected to return for after care services, the child would be discharged from the group home placement to end the placement episode.

Case Example- Documentation as a Service

A child is directly committed to a youth correctional facility following a brief period in detention. The child is not expected to return to the county of origin for aftercare services or may transition to adult corrections at a future date. Use of the youth correction facility in this example does not constitute the removal of the child from the home or the start of a placement episode.

As presented in the attached How Do I's, documentation of use of a youth correctional facility not subject to documentation as part of a placement episode can be appropriately documented on the Service page.

Any documentation of variable placement settings where such documentation is not required **can** be documented on the Out of Home Placement or Service page for local reporting and monitoring purposes. In these instances, these placements are not subject to AFCARS reporting requirements and therefore, are excluded from the state's AFCARS file. In addition, these placements are not reimbursable under Title IV-E and therefore, excluded from fiscal claiming by the Department of Children and Families, Bureau of Finance through the use of applicable management reports. As such, an agency may establish local expectations that these specific placement settings are to be documented routinely in eWiSACWIS without compromising federal reporting or claiming responsibilities.

Specific examples of these settings and how they are to be documented on the Out of Home Placement page is detailed in the "How Do I" appendix to this manual. Such documentation should be completed in a timely manner to ensure that the documentation regarding the location and placement status of the child is inclusive of all such placement settings and reflect the past and current location or status of the child. Timely documentation also serves to provide accurate and timely payment to providers when applicable.

OTHER PLACEMENT-RELATED DATA ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Children, youth, and families served in the child welfare system present a wide array of needs to which agencies respond with a variety of creative service and placement resources. The following examples provide further direction regarding the documentation of placement information under unique service and placement conditions.

Medicaid (MA) Waiver Programs

For children who are both in one of the MA Waiver Programs and in the child welfare system due to either CPS or Juvenile Service concerns, use of any Out of Home Placement must be documented as described in this manual.

Funds that are received by local agencies from CIP, COP or the Children's Waiver to offset the child's cost of care must be documented in eWiSACWIS as described in the respective How Do I guide.

Missing from Out of Home Care

Missing from Out of Home Care (OHC) represents a placement setting within a child or juvenile's current placement episode. When a child or juvenile has been determined to be missing from out of home care, the Missing from OHC placement setting (previously known as the "AWOL/Runaway" placement setting) must be documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

A child or juvenile is considered Missing from Out of Home Care when he or she is under the placement and care responsibility of the department or a county agency, living in an out of home care setting, and any of the following criteria are met:

- The child or juvenile is unaccounted for a period of time that cannot reasonably be justified by the child or juvenile's age, maturity, or emotional capacity which shall not exceed eight hours.
- When efforts to locate the child or juvenile have been unsuccessful.
- When it is known or suspected that a child juvenile has been taken by force or coercion.
- When the child or juvenile is in the company of an unauthorized person or located in an unauthorized place.

The child or juvenile's Missing from OHC placement setting must be documented or updated on the Out of Home Placement page within three business days, excluding holidays and weekends when the child or juvenile:

- Has been missing for 24 hours and
- Returns to out of home care and is no longer missing from out of home care.

Receiving/Assessment Homes

Placement in a foster home that is used by the agency as a receiving/assessment home constitutes a placement, usually at the start of a placement episode. Pending future policy clarification regarding rate setting for receiving/assessment homes and the direction regarding provider and payment documentation in eWiSACWIS, children placed in these settings are subject to the Uniform Foster Care Rate (UFCR) policy regardless of how payment to these providers is arranged by the agency.

The current method to appropriately document use of receiving/assessment homes is provided in the How Do I contained in the Appendix.

The placement must be ended on or before the 30th day of placement to coincide with policy; if the child remains in the same foster home this does not mean you get an additional 30 days to complete the Child & Adolescent Needs & Strengths (CANS). If the placement is to continue, a new placement and subsequent UFCR (reflecting actual supplemental and exceptional fees) should be created.

Respite Care

Respite care services may be provided to parents or foster parents. In instances where respite care services are provided to parents to ensure child safety or support family reunification, the service (whether provided by a foster home or some other provider arrangement) is to be documented as part of a service on the Service page.

If respite care is provided to a foster parent, the service is to be documented as part of a service on the Service page while the foster home Out of Home Placement remains open.

Supervised Independent Living

A Supervised Independent Living placement offers 16- to 21-year-olds, who are in court ordered out of home care (OHC) placement through the county child welfare agency or the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW), the ability to live in their own (or shared) apartment, flat or room with supervision, support and monitoring from a caseworker and/or provider from a contracted agency.

The child welfare agency responsible for supervision of the youth maintains case management and any associated ongoing services for the duration of the court order. In addition, the child welfare agency provides financial assistance when needed.

Supervisory contact with the youth can range from moderate (2-3 times a week based on stability of the youth and the length of time the youth has been involved in Supervised Independent Living) to intense (where daily contact with the youth is necessary for a successful placement).

Note: If the county child welfare agency, BMCW, or contracted agency is not supervising a child's independent living placement, then the placement should not be documented in eWiSACWIS and the final placement prior to the independent living placement should be documented as a discharge.

Trial Reunification

Per federal AFCARS and Title IV-E requirements, Trial Reunification is referred to as a “trial home visit” and represents a placement setting within the child’s current placement episode. Use of the Trial Reunification placement setting is documented on the Out of Home Placement page.

If successful and full reunification of the child with his or her family is achieved following use of a Trial Reunification placement setting, the Trial Reunification placement setting is ended and the child is discharged from the placement episode to reunification with his or her family. If the child requires an Out of Home Placement after a successful Trial Reunification, this new placement would constitute a removal from his or her home and would represent the first placement in another placement episode.

If the Trial Reunification is not successful and full reunification cannot be achieved, the Trial Reunification placement setting is ended and the next placement setting selected for the child is documented on the Out of Home Placement page. This change in the child’s placement setting, from Trial Reunification to the next placement setting, occurs within the current placement episode and therefore, does not represent a re-entry of the child into out-of-home care.

For further technical direction regarding documentation of the Trial Reunification on the Out of Home Placement and payment pages, please refer to the corresponding How Do I guide.

Voluntary Kinship Care

Many children reside with relatives where the parent and the relative have made the living arrangement voluntarily and the relative caregiver is eligible for and receives a Kinship Care services payment to support their care of the relative child. Voluntary Kinship Care services also include long-term kinship care as authorized by Chap. 48.977, Stats., and the agency is not or is no longer responsible for placement or permanency planning responsibilities.

In some situations, the child and his or her parents become involved in the child welfare system due to CPS or juvenile service concerns and the relative caregiver continues to provide care under a court order. When the child’s voluntary Kinship Care services becomes court ordered a placement episode has begun as defined. This new status is true even though the child has not changed placement providers. As such, the voluntary kinship placement (documented on the Service page) must be ended. The child’s court-ordered placement is documented as part of his or her family case and the placement is documented using the Service Type and Placement Setting of Kinship Care – Court-Ordered must be initiated. The removal date and the placement begin date are to reflect the date the court authorized the court-ordered placement with the relative caregiver. Court ordered kinship care is subject to Federal AFCARS reporting and IV-E Eligibility determinations are done.

Wraparound Services

Placement documentation for children who are in wraparound-type programs such as Wraparound Milwaukee, Family Partnerships, Inc., and Children Come First, are subject to the same documentation requirements as prescribed above. Based on the unique arrangements made by local agencies with these types of providers, documentation of placement information is to be consistent with local protocol and provider payment arrangements. eWiSACWIS has functionality to streamline payment processes with the prescribed documentation requirements.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For additional information regarding placement data entry on or problems in carrying out placement documentation responsibilities consistent with the direction provided in this manual, please contact the help desk. The help desk can be reached by phone or via e-mail as described below:

Phone: 608.261.4400

Toll-free: 866.335.2180

TTY: 888.845.4160

E-mail: Helpdesk@wi.gov

Note: For e-mail submissions, please use eWiSACWIS in the subject line or in the body of the email.

Provide the help desk agent a brief but informative description of the problem. Information like the Case ID or Provider ID and the name of the page on which the problem occurs will facilitate a quicker response and resolution. (For cases, access reports, and providers, the ID can be found at the top of the respective page.)

Remember that the person taking the call does not know the eWiSACWIS application, so the more detail you can provide the better. Let the help desk agent know if the problem is affecting multiple users. This is especially important for technical problem calls.

HOW DO I'S

For each of the above Standard and Variable Placement Settings described above, technical instructions on how to document the actual placement setting appropriately are provided in the attached Appendix.