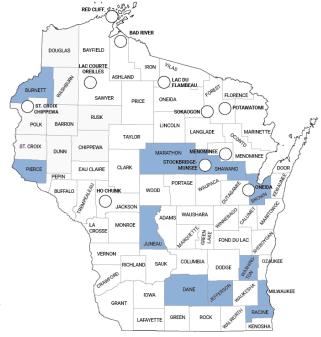
Access Response Time Pilot Highlights



The Access Response Time Pilot launched in November 2024 with the goal of making the response time decision point easier for the workforce and more consistent across the state.

11 pilot agencies are using six criteria instead of danger threats to determine how quickly to respond to screened-in reports.

- Allows for simpler, more straightforward response time decision-making.
- Gives Initial Assessment professionals the chance to meet with families before safety threats are identified.
- No changes to the screening decision.



Participating agencies.

What are pilot agencies saying?

Access professionals find it **easier to use** the response time tool than danger threats to make response time decisions.

The tool is helping to support critical thinking.

There has been a positive impact on staff well-being, leading to better engagement with families.

The pilot runs through the end of 2025. Keep watching the Putting Families First Newsletter for more information: https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first/news.



Access Response Time Pilot Background



Current State

After a report of child maltreatment is screened in at Access, Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies must determine how quickly to respond. Currently, local agencies use the information in a screened-in report to look for present danger threats or likely impending danger threats.

- Present danger results in a same day response.
- Likely impending danger results in a 24-48 hour response.
- If neither is identified, then the agency responds within 5 business days.



Opportunities

Statewide data shows response time assignments vary widely across the state. In some counties, as few as 7% of screened-in reports receive a same-day response, compared to 43% in others.

Local CPS agency staff and supervisors have indicated that the process of identifying danger threats from an Access report is often ambiguous and more difficult than it needs to be.

Goals



Make the response time decision clearer and more straightforward.

Ensure an Initial Assessment (IA) worker meets with the family and gathers additional, necessary information before safety threats are identified.

A Reduce the risk of confirmation bias.

Remove the hurdle of needing to disprove a response time conclusion when the IA professional finds no safety concerns, but present danger was identified at Access.

Standardize this decision point and increase consistency across the state.



Access Response Time Pilot Overview and Next Steps



What are Pilot Agencies Doing?

- 1) There are **no changes to the screening decision**.
- 2) After a report is screened in at Access, pilot agencies:
 - Use a list of factors to determine the response time.
 - Assign a response time that's within 24 hours or within 5 business days.
- 3) Pilot agencies may:
 - Choose to respond faster when none of the 24-hour criteria are present, but something in the report suggests a need to go sooner.
 - Choose to respond within 5 business days when one of the 24-hour criteria is present, but a mitigating factor is in place to keep children safe.
- 4) Pilot agencies **continue to decide when to respond within the 24-hour or 5-day assignment**, depending on the circumstances in the report.

Evaluation

In addition to eWiSACWIS administrative data, pilot agencies have provided input on the new process and their experiences throughout the pilot.

- As expected, there has been an increase in 5-day response time assignments.
- Response time assignments are moving toward greater consistency across agencies.
- Case outcomes have not changed (i.e., no overall changes in rates of safety findings, case dispositions, or removals at the point of first contact with families).
- Qualitatively, the pilot method is overwhelmingly preferred to current state.

See what agencies are saying about the Access Response Time Pilot: dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/familyfirst/access-pilot/access-pilot-what-agencies-are-saying.pdf.

Timeline

- The pilot will continue through 2025.
- O DSP is monitoring data and gathering feedback from pilot agencies.
- Watch for more information as DSP prepares for expanded use in 2026!

