

What is the Wisconsin Random Moment Time Study (RMTS)?

BACKGROUND

The Department of Children & Families (DCF) has designed the Social Services Random Moment Time Study (SS RMTS) sampling process to facilitate allocation of staff time and costs eligible for federal reimbursement related to performing foster care/placement and foster care/placement prevention activities eligible for federal reimbursement under Title XIX and Title IV-E.

Placement occurs when the agency arranges for the residence of a child or a juvenile in a licensed facility or with relatives, either facilitated by a child welfare agency through a formal voluntary placement agreement or a court order under Chaps. 48 or 938, Statutes. Placement facilities include, but are not limited to, court-ordered relative homes, foster homes, group homes, shelter-care and residential caring centers (RCC). Other related terms include out-of-home care, foster care, and substitute care.

Placement Prevention refers to the act, by the agency, of providing assessment, planning and monitoring services to a family where a child or juvenile is at imminent risk of being placed outside of the family home, either through a formal voluntary placement agreement or a court order under Chaps. 48 or 938, Stats.

The SS RMTS uses a quarterly random moment time study sampling process to identify the amount of time County, Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare, and Child Placing Agency staff spends on job activities throughout the workday. The results of the time study are summarized to obtain the statewide average of time spent by county staff and child placing agency staff on activities during a quarter. The SS RMTS results are used to allocate costs related to county and Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) human/social services workers between benefiting programs on a statewide basis. The SS RMTS is part of the Department of Children and Families' cost allocation plan that is submitted to and approved by the Federal Division of Cost Allocation. As such, activities, such as completing the employee roster, must be consistent with the process described in the approved cost allocation plan.

The SS RMTS determines, on a statewide basis, the proportion of worker time spent on adult vs. children's cases. The SS RMTS further determines for the proportion of time spent on children's cases the proportion of time spent on foster care and preventing foster care activities eligible for federal foster care (IV-E) reimbursement. Activities eligible for IV-E reimbursement includes:

- Assisting in Title IV-E eligibility determinations or redeterminations;
- Recruitment, licensing, and rate setting of foster homes;
- Placement of children into foster care, group home, shelter care and residential care;
- Preparation for and participation in judicial determinations;
- Case management and supervision, such as scheduling and communicating with service providers;
- Development and review of case plan;

- Referral for services; and
- Transportation for foster care administration, such as transportation to and from out-of-home placement, intake assessments, supervised visits and to court hearings or studies.

The Social Services RMTS is a federally approved method used to accurately determine proportions of worker time that is devoted to the Title IV-E Program (foster care and prevention of foster care activities). The results of the SS RMTS are used in Wisconsin's claim for federal reimbursement by applying the percentages to DCF's Cost Pool; which is comprised of costs associated with child protective services (CPS) and other services that serve children and families.

Employees comprise the direct cost portion of the Department of Children and Families Cost pool, and therefore must be included in the RMTS roster (with specific exceptions for direct support staff such as supervisors and clerical staff).

The IV-E foster care administrative revenue is one of the funding sources for the Children and Families Allocation (CFA), so maximizing the IV-E administrative claim is important to sustaining the state funding that counties receive for child welfare services.