

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND ECONOMIC SECURITY  
ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO SERIES

ACTION  
 NOTICE

**DFES 15-03**

ISSUE DATE: 07/01/2015  
DISPOSAL DATE: Ongoing

PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

AS  FM  ML  TR  
 CC  FL  NA  W-2  
 CS  IT  RA  WIA  
 CF  JC  TC  
 CR  LM  TA

**TO:** W-2 Contract Agency Directors

**FROM:** Kris Randal  
Division Administrator

**RE:** W-2 Work Participation Rate (WPR) Improvement Incentive Payment

**CROSS REFERENCE:** [Administrator Memo 15-01](#), [Operations Memo 15-06](#)

**PURPOSE:**

This purpose of this memo is to announce that Forward Services has earned the quarterly WPR Improvement Incentive Payment for the first quarter of 2015. It also reminds agencies of some best practice approaches to tracking and monitoring WPR engagement within the W-2 Contract Agencies.

**BACKGROUND:**

DCF is required to meet the Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) work participation all families rate of 50% on an annual basis. W-2 contractors who meet the quarterly Federal All Families Work Participation Rate of 50% for the geographical area will be eligible for a quarterly performance incentive payment. W-2 contractors may also earn an incentive payment for improving their WPR. The baseline from which improvement is measured is the contractor's highest quarterly WPR achieved in the prior year or 35%, whichever is higher.

**WPR PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE PAYMENT 1<sup>ST</sup> QTR 2015:**

Forward Service Corporation has earned the quarterly WPR Improvement Incentive Payment for the first quarter of 2015. Forward Service Corporation is the first W-2 Contractor to earn the WPR Improvement Incentive Payment.<sup>1</sup>

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DCF-F-34-E (N. 09/2008)

<sup>1</sup> Administrator's Memo 15-01 notified the W-2 Contract Agencies that ResCare was the first W-2 Contractor to earn this incentive payment for the third quarter of 2014. After additional review, DCF determined that ResCare did not earn the incentive payment.

When asked how they were able to improve their WPR, Marcia Christiansen, FSC's Chief Executive Officer, responded by saying:

We have created an internal Performance and Monitoring Dashboard modeled after a system developed by Workforce Resources Incorporated. This Dashboard consists of a variety of caseload and performance data that is uploaded from Webl (i.e. 740A and 740TANF) on a weekly basis. The Dashboard allows us to look at data such as activity engagement, employability planning, entered employments, and use of core and non-core activities that are all relevant for a successful Work Participation Rate (WPR). We have taken this data and drilled it down to the individual FEP-level which allows us to determine best practices within our team and identify potential training needs relative to the WPR.

We have trained staff to strategically engage W-2T and CSJ customers in core and non-core activities that will potentially increase the WPR. A main focus has been to increase customer engagement in the Work Experience ("WE") activity which is an important core activity that meets the definition of the WPR. Our staff are utilizing the different types of work experience (open/ongoing, customer directed, individual matching, and large group sites) in order to engage the customer in a "WE" that is most appropriate. In some areas, we have been able to create and fill a significant number of "WE" slots at large companies that use volunteers as a nature of their business (Riverview Gardens, Salvation Army).

We have successfully secured Fast Forward grants that have led to the creation (in concert with the Technical College and local employers) of Customized/Job Skills Training sessions, and eventual employment opportunities for W-2 customers.

#### **FEDERAL PENALTY FOR NOT MEETING THE WPR:**

TANF allows the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to penalize a state for not meeting the WPR. In May 2015, DCF received a letter from ACF notifying the department that it met neither the all families nor the two parent participation rates for Federal Fiscal Year 2012 and is subject to the penalty.

The primary reason Wisconsin is not meeting the WPR is that W-2 contractors are not assigning adequate hours of countable activities to participants. W-2 contractors must develop processes to improve the assignment of hours so that participants are assigned adequate hours of countable activities.

Tracking and Improving the Assignment of Adequate Hours of Countable Activities: One of the best strategic tools W-2 Contract Agencies can use to ensure that individuals are participating in adequate hours of countable activities is the CARES-RP740TANF; W-2 TANF Activities Detail Report (CS1, CS2, CS3, CSJ and W2T) Webl Report.

This report provides detailed data about assigned activities for each individual in one of the five placements included in the report. The report includes the "Family Profile" which determines the number of required Core and Non-Core hours; the number of "TANF Work Hours Required" for that family profile; whether the individual is "Tentatively Meeting" the required work hours based on the number of assigned hours; the "Total Core Activity Hours" assigned and the "Total Non-Core Activity Hours" assigned. The report also includes the "Total Job Search & Job Readiness

Hours” assigned; the “Activity Codes” for assigned activities and the “Actual Assigned Hours” for each activity. The report is color coded so workers can easily see assigned Core Activities; time limited activities, e.g., Job Search and Job Readiness; assigned Non-Core Activities; those who are Exempt from Work Participation, i.e., caring for a disabled child or family member and Non-Countable Activities. As a best practice, W-2 Contractors should ensure that their staff are familiar with the utilization of this report and make sure the report is distributed to key staff in their organization on a regular basis. All W-2 Contract Agencies should be fully utilizing this report to monitor activity assignment to ensure staff is assigning activities with sufficient hours to meet the WPR.

Contractors should refer to [Operations Memo 15-06](#) for additional specific strategies for assigning an adequate number of countable activities as well as other strategies for improving the work participation rate.

**CONTACT:** Jason Bergh, DFES/BWF Performance Outcome Claims Coordinator  
608-535-3295, Jason.bergh@wisconsin.gov