

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

ACTION  
 NOTICE

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\*PROGRAM CATEGORIES:

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<input type="checkbox"/> CC	<input type="checkbox"/> FL	<input type="checkbox"/> NA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> W-2
<input type="checkbox"/> CS	<input type="checkbox"/> IT	<input type="checkbox"/> RA	<input type="checkbox"/> WIA
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<input type="checkbox"/> CR	<input type="checkbox"/> LM	<input type="checkbox"/> TA	

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

**FROM:** Kris Randal  
Division Administrator

**RE:** Wisconsin Works Work Participation Rate Improvement Best Practice Approaches

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this memo is to provide Wisconsin Works (W-2) Agencies with case management best practice approaches and revised reports to help Wisconsin achieve the Work Participation Rate (WPR).

**BACKGROUND:** Wisconsin is required to meet the Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) All Families WPR of 50% on an annual basis. W-2 Contractor Agencies were informed of requirements that needed to be met in order for activities to count towards the WPR in 2007. However, as indicated in [Administrator's Memo 15-03](#), the primary reason Wisconsin is not meeting the WPR is that W-2 Contractors are not assigning an adequate amount of hours of countable activities to participants. In addition to the best practices provided in [Operations Memo 15-06](#), the Bureau of Working Families (BWF) is providing three additional case management best practice strategies that will help W-2 Agencies improve their WPR numbers. BWF has also updated *Web1 WPR Report 04* and added *Web1 WPR Report 04a* to help W-2 Agencies identify individuals who could meet the WPR. If Wisconsin fails to raise its WPR by September 2016, Wisconsin will be subject to a financial penalty of \$26.9 million. This penalty will increase by 2 percentage points for each subsequent year of noncompliance until it reaches 21% of the state's grant.

**REPORTS:** The current *Web1 WPR Report 04: Individuals needed to achieve WPR* has been revised. New features include summary and detail of "Number of CSx Individuals with 20 required hours, who are within 5 hours of meeting" (detail on Tab 2) and "Number of CSx Individuals with 30 required hours, who are within 5 hours of meeting" (detail on Tab 3). A CSx placement is defined as either a CS1, CS2, CS3, or CSJ placement. The new detail tabs list the information formerly found on the "Individuals not in the All Families Rate Numerator" tab, with additional columns showing "Hours Required to Meet WPR", "Total Reported Core Hours", and "Total Reported Non-Core Hours".

A new report called *WPR Report 04a: Individuals needed to achieve WPR* has been published in the DCF/WISDOM/Employment Programs/Wisconsin Works/Work Participation Rate Incentives WEBI folder. This report was created to be inclusive of all individuals required to meet WPR requirements and to assist agencies with their WPR monitoring of participant cases.

This report was designed as an extension of WPR Report 04 and shows all cases that need to meet both 20 and 30 required hours to achieve the WPR. This report specifically shows the entire list of participants who are not yet meeting federal WPR requirements, from the participants who need only a few more hours to those who are participating in zero hours. This ensures that the agencies can determine why a participant did not meet the WPR, even if they appeared to have been assigned appropriate hours. A FEP can then tailor the participant's Employability Plan in such a way as to achieve the participant's and FEP's goals for the participant, as well as be included in the WPR.

Both WebI *WPR Reports 4 and 4a* include a feature where the "CARES PIN" listed for each individual links directly to the *FReD Report 03: Individual Participation Detail Report* for the same month to allow W-2 Agencies to view the activities assigned for that specific individual. Tab 4 on each report: "Individuals from the current RP740TANF estimated to NOT meet WPR" highlights individuals who are within 10 hours of meeting their WPR requirement, and includes columns showing "Federal Required Hours", "Weekly Federal Hours Scheduled", "Weekly Core Hours Scheduled", and "Weekly Non-Core Hours Scheduled".

More information about these reports can be found at the [W-2 Message Center](#) for the W-2 Reports Listserv. Additional report documentation can be found in the Documentation folders in WebI. As a best practice, W-2 Contractors should ensure that their staff are familiar with the utilization of these reports and make sure the reports are distributed to key staff in their organization on a regular basis. All W-2 Contractors should be making full use of these reports to monitor activity assignment to ensure staff are assigning activities with sufficient hours to meet the WPR.

**BEST PRACTICE STRATEGIES:** W-2 Agencies should use the following best practices when assigning activities to work eligible individuals.

1. **W-2 Agencies should only assign 25% or less of total weekly hours to time limited activities in the Job Search and Job Readiness category for any placement or family profile.** Any W-2 Activity that falls under the Federal category of Job Search and Job Readiness may only count as a Core activity for four consecutive weeks, and for no more than 240 hours for a single parent of a child under age six and 360 hours for all other work-eligible individuals in the preceding 12 months. The following activities count towards the same 240/360 time limit:

- Disability and Learning Assessment (AD)
- AODA Counseling (CA)
- Career Planning & Counseling (CE)
- Occupational Testing (OC)
- Mental Health Counseling (CM)
- Career Advancement Services (CR)
- Job Retention Services (JR)
- Employment Search (ES)
- Job Readiness/Motivation (MO)
- Mental Health Assessment (AM)
- AODA Assessment (AA)
- Physical Rehabilitation (PR)
- Life Skills (LF)
- Physicians Assessment (AL)
- Mentor/Coach (MN)

*WPR Report 04/04a: Individuals needed to achieve WPR* shows the Average Weekly Job Search Hours Worked and Total Job Search Hours Available for the Month. The term “Job Search” includes any activity listed above. The amount of hours worked should not exceed the amount of hours available. This report currently shows a large number of participants who are assigned Job Search or Job Readiness activities when there are not enough available hours remaining or the amount of weekly hours worked is close to the number of hours available for the entire month.

2. **W-2 Agencies should assign at least five hours more than the minimum number of hours needed to meet the WPR requirement for any particular family profile.** Hours should be assigned according to the amount an individual is capable of participating, up to and including 40 hours per week. Both the *RP740TANF – W-2 TANF Activities Detail Report* and the revised *WPR Report 04/04a: Individuals needed to achieve WPR* show that many individuals are only a few hours short of meeting their WPR requirement (e.g. participants required to participate in Core activities for 20 hours per week are assigned 18 hours per week rather than 25). Assigning more hours than the minimum requirement allows for a small amount of non-participation without impacting the WPR, in addition to setting a higher expectation for participants who are willing to participate. Data shows that many of these individuals are willing and able to participate in all of their assigned activities, but aren’t assigned sufficient hours to meet the WPR. Assigning five more hours of Core activities (e.g. Job Skills Training, Work Experience, Working Part-Time, etc.) will help the participant connect to the workforce and obtain meaningful employment, in addition to helping Wisconsin meet the WPR. Assigning more hours for each activity also ensures the participant is using the full allotment of hours for time-limited activities. See Operations Memos [15-06](#) and [07-55](#) for more information about assigning activity codes.
3. **In an effort to raise the WPR, W-2 Agencies should focus on both CSx and W-2 Transition (W-2 T) participants in the single parent, youngest child greater than or equal to six family profile.** Data shows that the majority of participants who are assigned close to the WPR minimum number of hours in activities, but are not meeting their WPR requirement, are in a CSx (e.g. CS1, CS2, CS3, or CSJ) placement. However, the CSx caseload has been on decline, which also requires an increase in the number of W-2 T placements meeting WPR. *RP740TANF – W-2 TANF Activities Detail Report* allows W-2 Agencies to see which participants at their agency have a family profile of W-2 Single Parent Family with Child  $\geq 6$ , and are not tentatively meeting WPR. This report can also be filtered by “Placement Type”. The second page of the “WPR Breakdown by Agency” tab shows a chart that details which combinations of placement and family type are likely to meet, or not meet, their WPR requirements. As this is a weekly report, tentative meeting status does not account for time limits on activities or non-participation. W-2 Agencies should first focus on ensuring that participants who are most likely to meet the WPR due to participation are assigned sufficient hours of appropriate activities that will help the participant enter the workforce. Both the *RP740TANF – W-2 TANF Activities Detail Report* and the revised *WPR Report 04/04a: Individuals needed to achieve WPR* provide details that will help W-2 Agencies improve case management for all paid placements.

**CONTACT:** DFES/BWF Regional Administrators