

DCYF Family Time Rates

2022 Decision Package

Family Time is a service provided by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) that **provides time for parents or guardians and children and youth to interact**. Providing this service at a high level is critical, as research demonstrates that timely and consistent visitation is key to timely permanency.

The Family Time contracted line of service has evolved significantly since the contract was first created. During the 2008 recession, mileage reimbursement was cut for travel below 60 miles. Rates were also cut. There has never been an hourly rate increase for this line of service.

DCYF has seen a significant increase in transport-only visits and increased referrals for emergent 72-hour visitation, especially following the passage of HB 1194 (2020). This decision package will fund a rate adjustment that covers the full cost of effectively providing this service.

Due to the antiquated rate system, DCYF is not effectively meeting the demand of visitation services, and additional resources are needed to stabilize contracted visitation.



This proposal advances equity in the Child Welfare space:

One of the many reasons DCYF emphasizes Family Time is to help begin to address equity and racial disparity issues for children in foster care. Children of color are overrepresented in the Child Welfare system, and we know that children participating in regular visitation are more likely to return home.

With the current rate structure and payment methods, families in rural areas will continue to struggle to have visitation with their children. The contractors aren't able to hire personnel in and around the rural areas to meet the court order visitation needs for these families. This creates pressure for the caseworker, who has a high caseload and will most likely be unable to provide consistent and frequent visitation.

INCREASING THE HOURLY AND CONTRACTOR RATE WILL:

- ✓ Increase contractor capacity to hire and retain staff.
- ✓ Reduce disruptions to ongoing visit services.
- ✓ Attract and retain better-qualified service workers.
- ✓ Reduce the impact of delayed and disrupted visits to families and DCYF caseworkers.
- ✓ Increase the number of unsupervised visits being provided by contractors.
- ✓ Increase DCYF performance on visitation services.
- ✓ Result in timely permanency for more children and youth in DCYF care.

DCYF Strategic Priority Alignment:

- Improve quality and availability of provider services
- Safely reduce the number/rate of children in out-of-home care

COSTS

21-23 BIENNIUM: \$36.1 MILLION

We are requesting:

- ✓ A reimbursement rate increase to \$37.19.
- ✓ Reimbursement starting at mile zero.

Contact

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CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES