


To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator
DCF Area Administrators
Child Placing Agency Directors
Child Welfare Agency Directors
County Departments of Community Programs Directors
County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Group Home Providers
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Fredi-Ellen Bove 
Administrator

Re: **Youth Justice Data**

PURPOSE

This memo provides notification to counties regarding upcoming policy changes regarding youth justice (YJ) data and upcoming YJ enhancements to eWiSACWIS.

BACKGROUND

On January 1, 2016, DCF assumed responsibility for the community-based juvenile justice system. This change included the transfer of responsibilities and oversight for youth justice data collection and reporting.

Specifically, state statute {s. 48.526(1)} requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to "...establish information systems and monitoring and evaluation procedures to report periodically to the governor and legislature on the statewide impact of this section." Further, when DCF gathered statewide input in 2016 from counties, tribes, and youth justice system partners, stakeholders identified improvement of data collection as a high priority undertaking to strengthen the youth justice system.

INFORMATION SUMMARY

1. *Youth Justice Data Workgroup*

When DCF conducted input gathering in 2016, the need for consistent statewide data on the youth justice system was a theme. Counties vary widely in their use of eWiSACWIS to enter youth justice data, and the system is not designed specifically for youth justice. DCF formed a workgroup in July 2017 to begin to address the need for standardized youth justice data collection statewide. Workgroup participation was solicited through the Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA). Twenty-three counties were represented on the workgroup, along with representatives from various units within DCF. County members included directors, managers, supervisors, data specialists, and workers.

The first three meetings of the data workgroup focused on developing a **short-term strategy** for collecting a limited number of data elements statewide related to youth justice. The workgroup identified factors to use to prioritize what to track short term: ease of entry, useful to counties, has a common definition, and captures basic information about the youth justice system. The long-term strategy will be to develop a comprehensive plan for YJ data collection for the state, and DCF will provide updates on that long-term strategy as it develops.

DCF, on the advice of the work group, decided that beginning in summer 2018, counties will be required to track the following information in eWiSACWIS: (1) referrals to juvenile court intake, and (2) human services intake decisions. DCF also decided to make further enhancements to eWiSACWIS to allow counties to track some additional information over the life of a case. Over the past two months, DCF and county representatives undertook the design process to determine how to track these items in eWiSACWIS; those changes are projected to go live in June of 2018. A comprehensive data policy will be drafted for review and release in the summer of 2018.

2. Basic User or Advanced User

Counties will have the choice of being Basic or Advanced users. Counties at the **Basic** level will enter referral and intake information into eWiSACWIS. Counties who want the benefits that come with being an **Advanced user** will enter a limited amount of additional information for all YJ cases. The chart below explains the two options and their benefits. Once the data policy is issued, counties will be asked to decide whether they will be Basic or Advanced users.

	Data entry	Benefits
Basic User	YJ referral and intake information	<p>Enables county to discontinue use of local stand-alone databases if duplicative</p> <p>Ability to run reliable reports on intake and referral data (and compare to statewide reports)</p> <p>Ability to track and run reports on child welfare history of youth justice cases</p>
Advanced User	<p>YJ referral and intake information</p> <p>Limited YJ disposition & case closing data</p>	<p>Enables county to discontinue use of local stand-alone databases if duplicative</p> <p>Ability to run reliable reports on intake and referral data (and compare to statewide reports)</p> <p>Ability to track and run reports on child welfare history of youth justice cases</p> <p>Ability to run reliable reports on YJ cases at key stages (from referral through disposition and case closure)</p> <p>Ability to track individual youth justice cases more comprehensively through the life of a case in eWiSACWIS</p>

3. Training & Information

DCF will provide opportunities to learn about these Youth Justice eWiSACWIS enhancements before they go live.

Communication and training will include, but not be limited to:

- In-depth training for super-users prior to the release;
- Overview of changes at regional supervisors meetings in the month(s) prior to the release;
- Video on eWiSACWIS Knowledge web explaining the changes;
- Webinar describing the changes and answering questions; and
- eWiSACWIS guide(s) explaining how to enter a variety of common scenarios.

DCF will be distributing a numbered memo in the near future with more specific information regarding the new processes and action steps for counties.

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MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>