




Division of Safety and Permanence

DSP Informational Memo Series 2023-24i

November 17, 2023

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
Private Child Placing Agencies
Residential Care Center Providers
Shelter Care Providers
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Wendy Henderson 
Administrator

Re: **2021 Wisconsin Act 132 – County Reimbursement of Subsidized Guardianship Payments**

Purpose:

2021 Wisconsin Act 132 was signed into law by Governor Evers on February 4, 2022. The bill requires the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) to reimburse expenses incurred by local child welfare agencies for subsidized guardianship payments, effective January 1, 2022. This memo provides guidance on the reimbursement structure for subsidized guardianship payments under this legislation. This memo supersedes DSP Informational Memo Series 2022-08i.

Background:

Following a demonstration period in Milwaukee, subsidized guardianship became available as a statewide permanency option in July 2011. Under statute, county child welfare agencies and the DCF Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) are required to offer subsidized guardianship to all eligible providers. Wisconsin Act 132 now provides state-wide funding to reimburse local child welfare agencies that meet the required qualifications.

Information Summary:

DCF will reimburse local child welfare agencies for subsidized guardianship payments, including subsidized guardianship payments for Indian children ordered by tribal courts located in the state of Wisconsin. Reimbursement payments will cover the incurred expenses as of January 1, 2022, for both existing and new qualifying subsidized guardianships. Local child welfare agencies will continue to be responsible for meeting all subsidized guardianship requirements as provided in Wis. Stat. § 48.623 and Wis. Admin. Code DCF 55, including determining eligibility and conducting annual redeterminations for subsidized guardianships.





Reporting and Reimbursement Requirements:

Counties will be reimbursed quarterly via SPARC line 3456.

Each quarter's reimbursement total will be the sum of new payments and adjustments to prior quarter's payments that meet the following criteria:

- Payment is for the cost of subsidized guardianship payments incurred on or after January 1, 2022;
- Payments must be in connection with a Subsidized Guardianship Agreement;
- County agencies must enter payments into eWiSACWIS;
- Payments must be in connection with a check with a status of "Outstanding"; and
- All transactions must be completed **as of the Monthly Financial 3 (MF3) batch run after the recently completed quarter** (March, June, September, or December - see the current [Financial Batch Calendar](#)). Reimbursement will occur in the month following the close of the quarter.

Transactions processed after the MF3 date will be reflected in next quarter's reimbursement (regardless of the month in which the cost of care occurred). **DCF will not process mid-quarter SPARC adjustments.** Agencies wanting prompt reimbursement for the previous month's payments should prioritize processing of check batches before the MF3 deadline.

Eligibility:

As a reminder, subsidized guardianship eligibility requirements in Wis. Stat. § 48.623(1) include the following (see Wis. Stat. § 48.623 and Wis. Admin. Code DCF 55 for specifics relating to subsidized guardianship requirements):

- The child has been placed in out-of-home care under a voluntary placement agreement pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 48.63 or under a substantially similar tribal court order or under a court order containing a finding that continued placement of the child in their home would be contrary to the welfare of the child.
- The child has been residing in the home of the guardian for not less than six consecutive months.
- The child's situation precludes return of the child to their home or adoption/customary adoption as appropriate permanency options for the child.
- The child demonstrates a strong attachment to the guardian.
- If the child is age 14 or older, they have been consulted regarding the guardianship arrangement.
- The proposed guardian is the child's relative pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 48.02(15), like-kin pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code DCF 55.02(7), or extended family member pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 48.028(2)(am).
- The proposed guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child.
- The proposed guardian has been licensed as the child's foster parent and the proposed guardian and all adults residing in the guardian's home meet background check requirements in accordance with Wis. Stat. § 48.685.



- The proposed guardian and child welfare agency enter into a subsidized guardianship agreement **before** the guardianship is ordered.
- Proposed guardian is appointed as guardian by a court pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 48.977 or a substantially similar tribal law.
- Court order under enumerated statutory provisions placing the child outside the home is **terminated or dismissed** when guardianship is ordered.
- If the county child welfare agency or DMCPs knows or has reason to know that the child is an Indian child, they have complied with applicable notice provisions and placement preference requirements under the Wisconsin Indian Child Welfare Act, federal Indian Child Welfare Act, and the 2016 ICWA Regulations.

Additional Resources:

eWiSACWIS Knowledge Web:

- [Common Financial Processes](#)
- [Checks and Payments Maintenance](#)
- [Outstanding Checks](#)
- [Financial Batch Calendar](#)

eWReports Child Welfare Dashboards includes a Subsidized Guardianship dashboard containing summary and detail data for each quarter’s payments and adjustments; to access these data:

- Log into eWiSACWIS using your WAMS ID and password;
- Click the “Quick Links” page
- Click the “Reports – Scheduled & On-Demand” link
- Click the “eWReports Child Welfare Dashboards” panel
- Scroll to the Fiscal section

[SPARC](#)

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

ATTACHMENT LINKS: [2021 Wisconsin Act 132](#)