

**eWiSACWIS Financial Documentation Manual**  
*(Documentation Principles and Terminology)*

Overview .....2  
Key Financial Terms and Definitions .....3  
Contact Information .....11

## Overview

The primary purpose of this manual is to clarify financial documentation principles and requirements for eWiSACWIS. The manual is divided into three main components:

- Key terms and definitions for financial documentation
- Contact information for financial-related documentation
- Quick Reference Guides by financial task

For purposes of this manual, the term “**child**” is used to address both children and juveniles served by county child welfare agencies, the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS), the state Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP), or as part of the state’s juvenile correction aftercare program. The manual is intended for use by county and state fiscal staff and fiscal managers to clarify and support accurate and timely documentation of financial related tasks.

Additional direction may be needed to further clarify specifics surrounding other related program policies and practices that integrate with eWiSACWIS. This may include but is not limited to Waiver Program related questions, questions specific to Child Support, and policy and procedure while working with federal benefits coming from the Social Security Administration.

The guides serve only as a core set of activities and pages that pertain to a related task. These activities are not inclusive of all documentation needed for children who are subject to state and federal reporting requirements. The documentation depicted in these guides does not contain actual cases and names, nor are the demographics of the cases necessarily reflective of typical case information.

## Key Financial Terms and Definitions







Term	Definition
<b>Administrative Rate</b>	An additional monthly payment necessary for the administration of the foster care program. This rate generally is structured by the Parent Agency of a foster Home. Allowable costs include referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement activities, case assessment, criminal records checks, prospective foster parent medical exams, potential foster home studies for out of state placements, and IV-E eligibility activities.
<b>Basic Rate</b>	<p>The rate intended to cover food, clothing, housing, basic transportation, personal care, and other expenses on a monthly basis. The fixed monthly payment for a foster child is determined solely by the age of the child. A child's basic maintenance rate will increase when the child reaches the age of 5, 12, and 15. The higher rate is effective on the date on which the birthday occurs. Because the rate is based on the needs of each child, it may also include extra payments (supplemental and exceptional payments) in addition to a basic maintenance rate.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> No monthly payment for the combined basic maintenance, supplemental, and exceptional rates may exceed \$2,000.</p>
<b>Batch</b>	A batch is a program that is assigned to run without further user interaction. Batch jobs run in the background and produce data (such as payments or checks) and reports.
<b>Benefit</b>	A type of Federal, State, or personal fund given to a child to be used to assist with that child's personal needs, or to offset costs of care incurred by an agency while caring for that child in care.
<b>Benefit Record</b>	A documented record of any benefit a person has or is currently receiving.
<b>Benefit Record Type</b>	<p><b>Child Support:</b> Benefits are payments made by a parent through a court order and collected by KIDS and disbursed to the appropriate County providing care for the child. Benefits shall reimburse all outstanding cost of care (Food, Clothing and Housing) for that child beginning with current month costs.</p> <p><b>Interest:</b> Funds, paid by the bank, that was earned on the principal (money) remaining in the bank account at the end of each month. Funds are distributed to individual trust accounts based on what percentage an individual trust account with remaining funds is to the sum of all trust accounts having remaining funds. Benefits (money) shall be used in the same manner as SSI – Federal.</p> <p><b>Other - CIP, AODA etc:</b> Benefits are payments received from various waiver programs. The Bureau of Finance is in the processes of developing a tool to assist counties in determining what monies received should be entered into eWiSACWIS. Until such time as that tool is available please contact Cindy Schultz if you have questions surrounding this particular situation. <b>Note:</b> The benefit can also be used to document personal need deductions moved from a child's account.</p> <p><b>Parental Support:</b> Benefits are voluntary payments made by the parent of the child in care for that child's cost of care. Payments are sent, by the parent, directly to the County that is providing care for that child. Benefits shall be used in the same manner as Child Support.</p> <p><b>Railroad Retirees:</b> Benefits are payments received from the Railroad Retirement Board for a child that is under the age of 18 and is eligible due to a parent that has qualified as being totally disabled or is deceased. Benefits shall reimburse a child's cost of care (Food, Clothing and Housing) for the month (prior month) it was received. Funds, exceeding the cost of care, shall remain in the trust account to be used for personal needs. Funds remaining, at the time of his or her 18th birthday shall be disbursed to the individual for whom benefits were received.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Benefit Record Type (cont.)</b>	<p><b>Relinquished Adoption Assistance:</b> Benefits are payments previously paid to an adopting parent for a child under the age of 18 that has been removed from the adopting home and whose care is now being provided by the state/county. Benefits shall be used in the same manner as SSI – Federal.</p> <p><b>Social Security Administration (SSA):</b> Benefits are payments from the Social Security Admin for a child, under the age of 18, having a deceased or disabled parent that qualified for Survivors or Disability Insurance benefits. Benefits shall reimburse a child’s cost for care (Food, Clothing and Housing) for the month (prior month) it was received. Funds, exceeding the cost of care, shall remain in the trust account to be used for personal needs. Funds remaining, at the time of his or her 18th birthday, shall be refunded to SSA for the purpose of being disbursed to the individual for whom benefits were received.</p> <p><b>Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – Federal:</b> Benefits are received from the US Treasury for children that are under the age of 18 who qualify if he or she meets social Security’s definition of disability for children and if his or her income and resources fall within the eligibility limits. The resource limit shall not exceed \$2,000.00. Benefits shall reimburse all outstanding cost of care (Food, Clothing and Housing) for that child beginning with current month costs. After those needs are met, funds may be used for personal needs such as recreation and miscellaneous expenses. Remaining funds shall be saved for the child.</p> <p><b>Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – State:</b> Benefits are a supplement provided by the State of Wisconsin for a child that is receiving SSI – Federal Disability benefits. Benefits shall be used in the same manner as SSI- Federal.</p> <p><b>Veterans Benefits (VA):</b> Benefits are payments received from the Veterans Administration for a child that is under the age of 18 and is eligible due to a parent that has qualified as being totally disabled or is deceased. Benefits shall reimburse a child’s cost for care (Food, Clothing and Housing) for the month (prior month) it was received. Funds, exceeding the cost of care, shall remain in the trust account to be used for personal needs. Funds remaining, at the time of his or her 18th birthday, shall be disbursed to the individual for whom benefits were received.</p>
<b>Cancelled</b>	A status indicating that a piece of case work or provider work is no longer valid. Generally this is related to Checks, Payments, or Overpayments.
<b>Check</b>	<p>A Check may consist of one or several different Payments and Overpayment Adjustments.</p> <p><b>Pending:</b> This is the first stage in the check process. Checks appear in a pending status immediately after the “Pay Gen” batch runs (during the MF1 or WF1 batch runs). They will remain in this status until the “Pre-Audit” (MF2 or WF2) batch runs, which moves a check from a Pending status to an In Process status.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Note:</b> When a check is in a “Pending” status you may cancel or stop this check or any associated payments.</p> <p><b>Pending Release:</b> This is the first stage in the check process only for services that are set up to “Require Release”. A check will remain in “Pending Release” status until the check status has been updated to “Released”. Once a check appears in a Pending status it must manually be Released so that it can move to an In Process status.</p> <p><b>Released:</b> This is the 2nd stage in the check process only for services that are set up to “Require Release”. Once a check has been moved to a “Released” status the “Pre-Audit” batch (run during the MF2 or WF2 batch runs) moves the check from a Released status to an In Process status.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>Note:</b> When a check is in a “Released” status you may set the status back to “Pending.”</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Check (cont.)</b>	<p><b>In Process:</b> This is the 2nd stage in the check process (3<sup>rd</sup> stage for checks processed using the release function). A check that is in the In Process status is assumed to be correct in its makeup. The check was not cancelled in the pending stage and is waiting to be printed and mailed.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The check status will remain “In Process” until a check number and check date is applied to that check. Once a check number and date is recorded for that check the status will move from “In Process” to “Outstanding.”</p> <p><b>Outstanding:</b> This is the final stage in the check process. A check that is in an “Outstanding” status has check numbers and dates recorded. The check number and check date correspond with the actual check number and the date of the actual check processing.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Once a check has reached an “Outstanding” status it can be used for reimbursement in Trust Accounts, and will ultimately be figured into the IV-E claiming calculations.</p>
<b>Child Specific Rate</b>	This type of rate is documented on the Out of Home Placement. It is used to generate a paid rate that is specific to the child that is placed.
<b>Cost of Care</b>	The total cost to a county for a child's placements and other services. Counties have discretion regarding what types of services that they document as paid outside of the standard paid placement service and associated Rate Setting.
<b>Costs &gt; Spending Limit</b>	An additional monthly payment used to only document costs that exceed the State’s \$2,000 spending limit on the total foster care payment.
<b>Draw Down</b>	A term used to describe the action of Benefit refunds being used to reimburse cost of care. A draw down will only take place against cost of care that is in an “Outstanding” status, and only in General Trust Accounts. Trust Account draw down entries are automatically generated by a batch program, and are recorded as a “Reimbursement” on the Trust Account ledger payments.
<b>Exceptional Rate</b>	<p>An additional monthly payment for caring for a child whose needs may be so extreme that the basic maintenance and supplemental rates do not provide sufficient funding to ensure the child’s care in a foster home are met and to prevent placement in a more restrictive setting. The funding level associated with these criteria is indirectly established by the Department by this policy through the establishment of a maximum monthly foster care payment.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> No monthly payment for the combined basic maintenance, supplemental, and exceptional rates may exceed \$2,000.</p>
<b>Ledger</b>	A line item display, within a trust account, of refunds deposited and withdrawals of those refunds against that county's cost of care.
<b>Maintain Rate</b>	<p><b>By Service:</b> All providers will use the same rate established for the specific service. An example of a “Service” specific rate would be a Foster Home – Level 1 or Kinship services rate, where each provider carrying the service will generate the same standard rate.</p> <p><b>By Age:</b> The rate is governed by the child’s age. An example of an “Age” based rate would be for a Foster Home – Level 2+, where each provider carrying the service will generate the same standard basic rate depending on the child’s age (0-4, 5-11, 12-14, 15+).</p> <p><b>By Provider:</b> The rate is governed at the provider level. For a specific service, each provider carrying that service can have a different rate. An example of a “Provider” specific rate would be a Group Home service where the rate is specific to that provider.</p>
<b>Manual Check</b>	Used when a worker issues a physical check, on the spot. The financial worker will enter a One Time Payment into the system for a service which is designated as an Emergency Payment on the Payment Request page. A check number must then be recorded for that physical check, through the Manual Checks page.

Term	Definition
<b>Manual Overpayment</b>	A method to document an overpayment that was not recorded automatically by eWiSACWIS.
<b>Non-System Disbursed Payment</b>	This is a specific type of payment used to document that a payment occurred, yet it is not desired to attach the payment to a check. This type of payment is used most often when document placement costs for FPI, YES, or Wraparound placements where the state can claim the costs of the Non-System Disbursed placement payment. The actual costs of the program are paid out via a System Disbursed payment that is attached to a check containing the full amount of the program's costs.
<b>One-Time Payment</b>	These are manually documented payments, often used to document clothing allowances or supplemental payments that were overlooked. One time payments are generated using the Payment Request page. The weekly or monthly check process will pick up any fully approved one time payment requests.
<b>Outstanding</b>	<p>A status related to Checks and Overpayments. For Checks, an outstanding status means check numbers have been recorded as the check has been printed and mailed. When a check is in an Outstanding status the payments that make up the check can be used in the State's IV-E claiming calculations.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> A little twist in thinking, for Overpayments, an outstanding status means that the Overpayment is true and has not been repaid.</p>
<b>Over the Limit/Not Over the Limit</b>	If the balance of benefits within a trust account amounts to more than \$1500 then a Trust Account is considered “over the limit.” Assuming that all draw down batches have been run and the balance truly is greater than \$1500 then a spend down is required. At that time, the county should spend some of the money in surplus on the child on items that will benefit the child's well-being.
<b>Overpayment</b>	The documentation of a provider being overpaid for a child’s cost of care. Overpayments can be generated by the system or manually by the user.
<b>Overpayment Adjustment</b>	The documentation of monies against an overpayment (to resolve an overpayment). Adjustments can be withheld automatically from a provider's future checks, or documented manually as a provider sends in money to repay the overpayment.
<b>Overpayment Adjustment Type</b>	<p><b>Balance Write - Off:</b> Use this adjustment type in instances where the county has agreed to write-off a portion of the overpayment.</p> <p><b>Manual Adjustment - Link to Check:</b> This is a special type of adjustment. The purpose of this adjustment type is to allow you to immediately adjust an overpayment and link that adjustment to a Pending Check. You would use this type of adjustment to manually influence a Pending Check without having to wait for the payment adjustment batch to run. For example, a payment is already generated and attached to a Pending Check. The payment is for the full month. It is realized, after the fact that the placement had ended sometime during the month.</p> <p><b>Payment:</b> This adjustment type would be used to indicate at payment that was sent in by the provider to go against that provider's overpayment.</p> <p><b>Recoupment:</b> This adjustment type is automatically generated by the system with the monthly financial batch run. It corresponds directly to the amount entered under the repayment method for an individual overpayment or for the provider as a whole.</p> <p><b>Settlement:</b> Use this adjustment type where a formal agreement of payment for an overpayment has been reached that is less than the original overpayment. For example, the provider was overpaid \$2000 and after negotiations, the provider agrees to pay back \$1500 or the \$2000.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Overpayment Adjustment Type (Cont.)</b>	<p><b>Settlement Write – Off:</b> This adjustment will be automatically created by the system when a user creates a “Settlement” adjustment type. The Settlement Write-Off will be the difference between the original overpayment amount and the settlement amount. For example, in the situation documented above under “Settlement” we had a settlement of \$1500 for a \$2000 overpayment. The Settlement Write-Off will total \$500 (the remaining balance of the original overpayment).</p>
<b>Overpayment Status</b>	<p><b>Balance Write – Off:</b> This status is system driven and indicates that a portion of this overpayment had been written-off at some point during collection of the overpayment. The overpayment will be considered fully repaid even though a portion of it has been written-off.</p> <p><b>Cancel:</b> This status should be used to indicate that an overpayment was created erroneously. Canceling an overpayment will back the deduction of those monies out of the IV-E claim. Canceling an overpayment is an indication that the overpayment never really happened.</p> <p><b>Closed:</b> This is the final status for all overpayments that have been fully repaid (without and write-off occurring against the original overpayment).</p> <p><b>Outstanding:</b> This status indicates that the Overpayment is true and has not been repaid.</p> <p><b>Sent to Collections:</b> This status should be used in instances where the provider has refused to cooperate with repayment of an overpayment and the county is pursuing collection through a Collections Agency.</p> <p><b>Settlement Write – Off:</b> This status is system driven and indicates that a portion of this overpayment has been written-off, as part of a settlement agreement, at some point during collection of the overpayment. The overpayment will be considered fully repaid even though a portion of it has been written-off.</p> <p><b>Uncollectible:</b> This status should be used to indicate that the county has pursued all avenues for collection of the overpayment and have found the overpayment to be uncollectible. The overpayment will remain deducted from the IV-E claim and will not be marked as repaid.</p>
<b>Override Parent Agency Rule</b>	<p>If there is a name other than the foster home provider’s name in the Parent Agency field and the payment is to go directly to the foster home provider, overriding the parent agency is necessary.</p>
<b>Parent Agency</b>	<p>The agency that is responsible for the licensing and supervision for a home provider, most often associated to a level 3 or 4 foster home. In eWiSACWIS, all payments made to a home provider go directly to the parent agency. That parent agency is then responsible for paying the home provider.</p>
<b>Payee</b>	<p>The provider receiving payment. In most Foster Home scenarios the “Placement Provider” and the “Payee” are one in the same. However, in level 3 or 4 homes, Group Homes, or RCCs the “Placement Provider” often is governed by a Parent Agency or a Child Placing Agency that is responsible for receiving the payment. In these scenarios the “Placement Provider” and the “Payee” will differ.</p> <p>It is important to realize that all payment and check data will reflect under the Payee.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Payment</b>	<p>A payment will consist of the Basic Maintenance, Supplemental, Exceptional, and Administrative costs for a particular child and provider. There can be several payments attached to one check. In essence, the payment comes before the check. Visually, payments are reflected several different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="485 256 2032 354">  This icon indicates that the payment is not attached to a check. You will see payments recorded like this for one-time payment requests that have not been picked up by a check batch, or for “Episode Driven Payments” (Zero-dollar payments) for Group Homes, RCC, and some Wraparound Payments. </li> <li data-bbox="485 386 2032 451">  This icon illustrates a payment that is attached to a check. Following this icon will be two hyperlinks, the first will be the hyperlink for the payment and the second will be the link for the check that the payment is attached to. </li> <li data-bbox="485 483 2032 516">  This icon describes an overpayment, which can also be thought of as a negative one-time payment. </li> <li data-bbox="485 557 2032 686">  This icon indicates a type of payment that is used most often when document placement costs for FPI, YES, or Wraparound placements where the state can claim the costs of the Non-System Disbursed placement payment. The actual costs of the program are paid out via a System Disbursed payment that is attached to a check containing the full amount of the program's costs. </li> <li data-bbox="485 719 2032 816">  This icon indicates a payment that has been canceled and the month has been locked for repayment. The payment generation batch will not re-process months with locked payments. Payments can be unlocked from the Options Menu on the Payment Request page. </li> <li data-bbox="485 849 2032 946">  This icon indicates a payment that has been canceled and has since been unlocked for repayment. If there are no locked payments for a month the payment generation batch will reprocess the month and the unlocked payments will be attached to checks. </li> </ul>
<b>Payment Generation Batch (Pay Gen)</b>	<p>Recurring payments are generated by the “Pay Gen” batch. These payments are most often generated for Out of Home Placements, such as foster homes, Group Homes, RCCs and Kinship etc. One time payments and Overpayment Adjustments are also picked up by the batch. Pay Gen automatically pro-rates for partial month periods, and generates overpayments automatically when appropriate. The Pay Gen batch will continue to generate payments for Placements and Services until a closing date has been entered.</p>
<b>Placement Provider</b>	<p>The provider where the child is physically resides for care.</p>
<b>Payment Request</b>	<p>Payments in eWiSACWIS are generally tied to a placement. However, in some instances you can request a “One-Time payment” for things like clothing allowance or transportation costs through the Payment Request page.</p>
<b>Provider Repayment Method</b>	<p>This is a formally documented method to withhold money from a provider's future checks in order to repay any existing overpayments for that provider.</p>



Term	Definition
<b>Rate Setting</b>	<p>A tool used to document costs paid to a provider above the Basic Maintenance Rate. The Rate Setting identifies Supplemental costs based on results from the child’s Child &amp; Adolescent Needs &amp; Strengths (CANS). There is also an area of the Rate Setting used to justify Exceptional costs that are paid above the identified Supplemental and Basic Maintenance costs.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Any type of payment to a provider that goes above the Basic Maintenance Rate must use a Rate Setting to justify the additional payment costs. This includes Receiving homes.</p>
<b>Reference ID (Non-WiSACWIS)</b>	<p>This is a Non-WiSACWIS ID. The ID is specific to the documentation of children who have recorded costs of care that were never a part of eWiSACWIS, and is being reimbursed by current benefit refunds. The Reference ID offers the county a way to pull together all refunds documented for a specific person, without having them created as a true person record in eWiSACWIS.</p>
<b>Reimbursement</b>	<p>The action of taking current Benefit refunds and applying them to existing cost of care for a child and county. The reimbursement will show as a withdrawal on the Trust Account Ledger. The net result of the reimbursement will be used in the State's IV-E claiming calculations to the Federal Government.</p>
<b>Reversal</b>	<p>A Trust Account action used to back out system generated reimbursements or withdrawals for trust account benefits. Most often this is used if the benefit was used incorrectly. The ending result of the reversal should leave the Trust Account back at its original balance before the reimbursement occurred. The reversal also correctly adjusts claiming costs.</p>
<b>Service Rate</b>	<p>The rate is specific to the service type. All providers will use the same rate established for the specific service. An example of a “Service” specific rate would be a Foster Home – Level 1 service rate, where each provider carrying the Foster Home - Level 1 Rate will generate the same standard Basic Maintenance Rate.</p>
<b>Spend Down</b>	<p>A Trust Account term used to describe the action of withdrawing refunds out of a child's Trust Account for the purpose of spending those monies on the child. This is a requirement when the Trust Account is indicated as “Over The Limit.” The current thresh-hold for a Trust Accounts balance is \$1500.</p>
<b>Split Payment</b>	<p>An action that allows a user to set eWiSACWIS to generate multiple payments from one system generated payment. The payments can be split by percentage or a set amount. This is most commonly used when a payment should be sent to two distinct providers that share in the care of a given child.</p>
<b>Spread Interest</b>	<p>For those counties that hold all Benefit refunds in an interest bearing account, eWiSACWIS offers the county the ability to spread interest earned across all active Trust Accounts.</p>
<b>Supplemental Rate</b>	<p>An additional monthly payment intended to cover the costs of caring for the child's specific needs. The supplemental rate is based on results from the child’s Child &amp; Adolescent Needs &amp; Strengths (CANS).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> No monthly payment for the combined basic maintenance, supplemental, and exceptional rates may exceed \$2,000.</p>
<b>Target Population</b>	<p>The categorization of Youth Aids or Non-Youth Aids based on the selected criteria that ultimately directs the cost of care for the given child to come out of a specific funding source (“pot of money”).</p>
<b>Transaction Group</b>	<p>This provides a common link between deposits and withdrawals within a trust account. This allows a Trust Account manager to see which withdrawals have been applied to which deposits.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Trust Account</b>	A fiscal tool used to capture the reimbursable costs of care for a given child and county, and the benefits that have come into the county to offset that cost of care. The net result of the reimbursement will be used in the State's IV-E claiming calculations to the Federal Government.
<b>Trust Account: Dedicated</b>	A Dedicated Account is essentially a holding tank. Refunds documented in a Dedicated Account will never draw down against any cost of care. Most often a Dedicated account is used to document SSI benefits received in a lump sum to cover 6 months or more. These monies cannot be used toward the cost of care until the county receives formal direction on how the funds can be used to go against existing cost of care. Once direction has been given the funds can be transferred to the General Account.
<b>Trust Account: General</b>	The General Account is the main trust account used to off-set the cost of care. This type of trust account holds all benefits (other than SSA payments that are received in a single payment for a period greater than six months) and will be the account from which the State will gather its reimbursable cost of care for that child and county.
<b>Voucher Number</b>	The Voucher Number equates to a batch of checks. Each check run is assigned a specific voucher number. The voucher number then serves as a pointer to all checks produced for that given batch run. Voucher Numbers are established for a given fiscal year. The fiscal year runs July 1st to June 30th. Voucher Numbers should never be duplicated across fiscal years.

## Contact Information

For additional information regarding financial related data entry or problems in carrying out documentation consistent with the direction provided in this manual, please contact the eWiSACWIS Help Desk. The help desk can be reached by phone or via e-mail as described below:

608.264.6323 or toll-free 855.264.6323

e-mail: [DCFHelpdesk@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFHelpdesk@wisconsin.gov) (include eWiSACWIS in the subject line)

For email submissions, please use eWiSACWIS in the subject line or in the body of the e-mail.

Please provide the Service Desk agent a brief but informative description of the problem. Information like the Case ID or Provider ID and the name of the page on which the problem occurs will facilitate a quicker response and resolution, the more detail you can provide the better. Let the Service Desk agent know if the problem is specific to a particular case or provider, or if the issue is more widespread.