

Approval of Foster Care Maintenance Rates In Excess of \$2,000

Policy Number: PMT 8.01 OCM 8.01

Subject: Maintenance rates; exceptional rate requests

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Any information referenced within this document is considered to be a part of this policy with the exception of the "related resources" section.

Summary:

This policy establishes the procedure to acquire approval of foster care maintenance rates that exceed the \$2,000 monthly cap as set forth by the Department of Children and Families.

Related Resources:

[Documentation of Foster Care Placements, Initiating Payment and Adjusting Rates](#)
(Currently under revision.)

[Request for Approval of Foster Care Rate of Over \\$2,000 per month form](#)

Policy:

The Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare recognizes that children in foster care may have exceptional needs that can drive the cost of care beyond DCF's established cap on maintenance payments to foster parents. In order to ensure the needs of children in care are fully met while further ensuring that limited resources are used judiciously, this policy sets forth a procedure to acquire approval of foster care maintenance payments that exceed the Department's monthly limit.

Procedures:

1. Requests for foster care maintenance rates that exceed the DCF cap can originate from Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) or from rate setters employed by the ongoing case management agency with responsibility for the case.
2. When a request is made, the request must be copied to BMCW's fiscal program evaluation managers (PEMs). The PEMs will track the requests to monitor the frequency, justifications and amounts of these exceptional rate requests.

3. It is the responsibility of the ongoing case management agency to review the request and to gather all supporting documentation available in order to determine the necessity of the request.
4. ***Supporting documentation must be specific to the foster parent(s) and the child in placement.*** A general description of services provided by a CPA is insufficient to justify increased child-specific payments; rather, the justification must detail additional costs borne by the foster parent to meet their child's exceptional needs.
5. Documentation to justify a maintenance rate increase may also include, but is not limited to:
 - CPA documentation
 - Ongoing Case Manager comments (also include in eWiSACWIS case notes)
 - Medical and/or psychological evaluations
 - Foster parent input
6. After the ongoing agency has reviewed all information and made a determination that the maintenance rate increase is justified, the agency will submit its justification for the rate approval to the BMCW Fiscal PEMs.
7. BMCW will make a final determination and will notify the agency of approval or disapproval of the request within three business days.
8. *The ongoing agency shall not enter any rate change into eWiSACWIS until it has received approval of the rate increase from BMCW.*
9. Continuation of the approved exceptional maintenance rate will be determined based on the child's current needs as indicated by the CANS and the rate-setting process. Please notify a BMCW Fiscal PEM in the event that the monthly maintenance rate no longer exceeds \$2,000.00.

Responsibilities:

Ongoing case managers and their supervisors; CPA case managers, ongoing agency rate-setters/fiscal liaisons; BMCW PEMs