


STATE OF WISCONSIN  
Department of Children and Families  
Division of Safety and Permanence

To: DCF Area Administrators  
Bureau Directors  
Child Placing Agency Directors  
Child Welfare Agency Directors  
County Departments of Community Programs Directors  
County Departments of Developmental Disabilities Services Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
Group Home Providers  
Indian Child Welfare Directors  
Private Child Placing Agencies  
Residential Care Center Providers  
Section Chiefs/Licensing Chiefs  
Shelter Care Providers  
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators

From: Fredi-Ellen Bove   
Administrator

Re: The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-34)  
Reauthorization of Title IV-B

The President signed P.L. 112-34, the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act, into law on September 30, 2011. Generally, the Act extends programs funded under title IV-B of the Social Security Act through fiscal year 2016 and authorizes new title IV-E demonstration projects through FY 2014. This summary includes many, but not all, provisions in the Act. Further guidance will be forthcoming on implementation of these provisions where applicable or necessary, as well as any needed statutory changes for compliance.

**Reauthorizes Title IV-B, subpart 1 Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program**

The Act reauthorizes, through FY 2016, the title IV-B, subpart 1 Child Welfare Services Program and amends several plan requirements. It continues the title IV-B, subpart 1 funding at the current authorization level of \$325 million.

New Plan Requirements:

1. Title IV-B agencies must now include in the plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care an outline of:
  - how the agency will monitor and treat emotional trauma associated with a child's maltreatment and removal, in addition to other health needs identified through screenings; and
  - protocols for the appropriate use and monitoring of psychotropic medications, as part of its current oversight of prescription medicines.
2. State and Tribal title IV-B agencies must describe activities undertaken to:
  - reduce the length of time children under age five are without a permanent family; and
  - address the developmental needs of children served under titles IV-B and IV-E.
3. State title IV-B agencies must describe the sources used to compile information on child maltreatment deaths and, if applicable, why certain sources of information from the State vital statistics department,

child death review teams, law enforcement agencies or offices of medical examiners or coroners are excluded and how the agency will include the information.

Effective Date: October 1, 2011.

### **Reauthorizes Title IV-B, subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program**

The Act reauthorizes, through FY 2016, the title IV-B, subpart 2 Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program as well as funding for research, training and technical assistance, the court improvement program, State monthly caseworker visit formula grants, and competitive regional partnership grants. It authorizes \$345 million in mandatory funds and up to \$200 million in discretionary funds to programs under title IV-B, subpart 2.

#### New Plan Requirements:

1. The State or Tribal title IV-B agency must describe how it identifies which populations are at the greatest risk of maltreatment and how it targets services to those populations.
2. The Act amends the following definitions:
  - The definition of *family support services* is amended to add mentoring as an allowable purpose;
  - The definition of *time limited reunification services* is amended to allow peer-to-peer mentoring and support groups for parents and primary caregivers, as well as services and activities to facilitate access to and visitation of children with parents and siblings.

Effective Date: October 1, 2011.

### **Educational Stability and Credit Reports for Youth**

Agencies must now meet the educational stability case plan requirement at the time of each placement change, not just at initial placement into out-of-home care as was the original requirement under the Fostering Connections Act. Wisconsin law is already in compliance with this requirement.

The Act requires that each child age 16 and older in out-of-home care receives a copy of any consumer credit report each year until discharged from out-of-home care, and that the child must be assisted in interpreting the credit report and resolving any inconsistencies.

### **Monthly Caseworker Visit Standards and Use of Funds**

The Act revises the monthly caseworker visit data standards and calculation methodology as follows:

- For each of FYs 2012-2014: Agencies must ensure that the total number of monthly caseworker visits to children in out-of-home care is not less than 90 percent of the total number of monthly caseworker visits that would occur if each child is visited once per month.
- For FY 2015 and each FY thereafter: Agencies must ensure that the total number of monthly caseworker visits to children in out-of-home care is not less than **95 percent** of the total number of visits that would occur if each child is visited once per month.
- For FY 2012 and each FY thereafter: At least 50 percent of monthly caseworker visits must occur in the child's residence.
- If the State agency fails to meet any of the applicable standards, the agency's grant for the following FY is subject to a reduction in Federal Financial Participation of one, three or five percentage points, depending on the amount by which the agency misses the standard.
- Current state policy supports this federal performance requirement. The Caseworker Contacts eWReport and the [Caseworker Contacts Dashboard](#) have been updated to reflect this change in methodology.

The Act specifies that State agencies must use monthly caseworker visit funding to improve the quality of caseworker visits with an emphasis on caseworker decision making and caseworker recruitment and

retention.

Effective Date: October 1, 2011

**Targeted grants to increase the well being of, and to improve the permanency outcomes for, children affected by substance abuse (Regional Partnership Grants)**

- Regional Partnership Grants (RPG) are competitive, targeted grants awarded to regional partnerships that provide integrated activities and services that are designed to increase the safety, permanency and well-being of children who are in an out-of-home placement as a result of a parent's or caretaker's methamphetamine or other substance abuse.
- The new language removes references to methamphetamine, including the requirement that gave weight to grant applications that focused on methamphetamine use.

**Court Improvement Program**

- The Act reauthorizes the State court improvement program (CIP) funding.
- The Act adds concurrent planning and increasing and improving engagement of the entire family in court processes relating to child welfare, family preservation, family reunification and adoption to the purposes of the basic and training State CIP grants.
- The Act also allocates \$1 million for the creation of a Tribal CIP. Tribal CIP grants will be awarded on a competitive basis.

**Renewal of Authority to Approve Title IV-E Demonstration Projects Designed to Test Innovative Strategies in Child Welfare Programs**

The Act allows the federal Department of Health and Human Services to approve up to 10 new title IV-E child welfare waiver demonstration projects, in each of FYs 2012-2014. The law establishes new application and eligibility criteria for child welfare waiver demonstration projects including tribal eligibility, specific goals that must be met as part of the project, and evaluation methods. A proposed project must be designed to accomplish one or more of the following goals:

- To increase permanency by reducing time in foster care and promote successful transition to adulthood for older youth;
- To increase positive outcomes for infants, children, and families in their homes and communities, including Tribal communities, and improve the safety and well-being of infants, children and youth; or
- To prevent child abuse and neglect and re-entry into care.

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT: DCF Area Administrator

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: **For Credit Reports for Youth:**  
Christine Lenske, Independent Living Specialist  
DCF/DSP/BPOHC  
608-267-7287  
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**For Caseworker Contact Requirements:**  
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Bureau of Permanence and Out-of-Home Care  
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**For General Title IV-E Questions:**  
David Harkins Division of Safety and Permanence  
608-261-8687  
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**For Other Questions:**  
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MEMO WEB SITE: <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/memos>

Attachments [The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act \(Public Law 112-34\)](#) (See Attachment B)

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