



Department of
Job and Family Services

Office of Fiscal Services
Bureau of County Finance and Technical Assistance

RMS Manual

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Introduction to the Random Moment Sample Manual

This manual is designed to assist users in the administration of the Random Moment Sample (RMS). The RMS is required to be used by each county department of job and family services (CDJFS), child support enforcement agency (CSEA), public children service agency (PCSA), and workforce investment act area (WIA) to accurately determine the administrative costs associated with the operation of state and federally assisted programs that are supervised by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS).

Workers in the 88 Ohio counties participating in the RMS are randomly selected to complete a simple observation form on a random date at any given time. Responses (popularly called random moment samples – RMS) obtained from these workers are then compiled and tabulated using the methodology described in this manual. The results are used to determine, in part, the costs of administering state and federally assisted programs.

This manual will present an historical overview of the RMS, describe the basic cost allocation methodology for the RMS, and provide detailed instructions for the RMS process. County agencies are required to use the RMS for identifying, allocating, and charging costs within the Income Maintenance, Social Services, Child Support, Workforce and participating Juvenile Court cost pools. ODJFS will update the manual as the need arises.

Random Moment Sample History

The state of Ohio has used a number of time study methods prior to the current Random Moment Sample (RMS) process. Every time study method has advantages and disadvantages. Most time studies utilize staff that has direct client contact. The amount of time employees spend on individual program activities is used to divide the costs in their respective cost pool. That cost pool may include the supervisor's salary along with materials and equipment used to support the staff in that cost pool. The federal government requires some form of cost allocation for employees who provide services in more than one federal program area.

Until the RMS was adopted, Ohio used a full time reporting system. For the first two weeks of each quarter, employees recorded their program activities. The results of those studies were used to distribute costs for the entire quarter. Employees had to report their activities either every half hour or every fifteen minutes, depending on whether they were in the Income Maintenance or Social Services cost pool.

Some of the disadvantages of this system included difficulty in accounting for the work of vacationing employees and the activity reporting frequency which consumed valuable work time. In addition, when employees were involved in an activity such as a food stamp desk review during the first two weeks, it would result in proportionately more charges to the food stamp program for the entire quarter, which may not accurately reflect actual activity throughout quarter.

To resolve this, Ohio implemented a Random Moment Sample time study. The goal was to determine the activities of employees at random moments during a given sampling period. This method would more accurately determine the percent of total time employees were spending on various activities. After some negotiation, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) agreed to the system. The RMS system uses enough samples to develop statistically valid numbers to distribute costs. Initially, 354 random moments were considered the minimum needed to develop the percentages used to allocate costs. Later it was determined that in very small counties, this can result in each employee getting a relatively large number of moments, or hits, during the quarter. Therefore, the minimum number of random moments needed is determined by agency size.

Originally the federal government wanted the RMS statistics to be gathered for the same time period as the expenditures. Because of reporting deadlines, Ohio requested that the study be offset by one month so reports could be submitted on time. For example, costs for April through June are split by RMS statistics gathered from March through May. This allows time for the state to allocate costs and timely completion of federal reports.

For Income Maintenance activities, the random moment time study was implemented in July 1987 on a trial basis, with full implementation taking place during the October-December quarter. The Child Support RMS was implemented a year later. The Social Service RMS was not implemented until July 1992. In addition, the Child Welfare RMS and Workforce RMS have been added for stand alone Children Services and Workforce Development agencies respectively.

Random Moment Sample Overview

The Random Moment Sampling (RMS) is a statistically valid method for determining the percent of effort expended by a given population (e.g., income maintenance workers, social service workers, child support workers, workforce development workers) on behalf of any variety of specific programs and activities. The computerized RMS system used in Ohio is an alternative to other more cumbersome and time-consuming measurement devices, such as daily time sheets and activity logs. The system depends on accurate, timely and objective observations by workers. Successful outcomes of the RMS system in each county agency rests on the understanding and diligence of the agency's RMS Coordinator.

The RMS procedure involves a calculated number of random observations to be made for each population. An observation is comprised of two basic elements: the specific program being serviced by the sampled worker and the specific activity being performed at that moment by the sampled worker. A truly random survey of worker observations provides a highly accurate picture of what all workers in a given population are likely to be doing, within an acceptable degree of error.

In Ohio counties, the RMS method is applied to the population of workers assigned in the Income Maintenance unit, Social Services unit, Child Support unit, and Workforce Investment Act unit. Because each county has different work methods, routines, and policies, each agency is constituted as a separate population. Thus, each agency is required to execute "a predetermined number of observations" for workers randomly selected on various days and at different times of the day. The RMS system selects the worker, date, and time for the observation to be performed by each employee in each agency.

Stand alone Public Children Services Agencies use an abbreviated version of the Social Services RMS form showing only those codes used by Children Service employees. Stand alone Workforce Investment Act Agencies use an abbreviated version of the Income Maintenance RMS form showing only those codes that apply to the Workforce Investment Act.

The RMS system enables each local agency to enter completed observation forms into the system, and to tabulate, validate, and analyze the data. The system also allows an agency to produce printed copies of the results at any time during the reporting period. This useful feature can assist an agency in estimating the costs likely to be charged to various funding sources during that period.

Ohio Administrative Code rules 5101:9-7-20, 5101:9-7-21 and 5101:9-7-23 establishes the requirements for RMS.

Cost Allocation Methodology for Random Moment Sampling

In each county agency, employee salaries and all forms of compensation, including travel costs, are allocated to cost pools. All stand alone county job and family services agencies have a minimum of three cost pools: Shared, Income Maintenance and Social Services. In addition, some combined family services agencies may also have a Child Support cost pool. In the case of a combined family service agency that includes PCSA, the Child Welfare workers will be in the Social Service cost pool. Stand alone CSEA, PCSA, and WIA agencies/areas have only a single cost pool.

RMS is also a method for charging costs when an employee provides direct services for more than one program. RMS allows ODJFS to determine how much time employees in a cost pool spend on various programs.

The following are examples of primary activities included in the RMS:

- Income Maintenance (IM) cost pool: TANF, Medicaid, SSI Case Management, Health Chek, Disability Assistance, Food Stamps, Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET), and TANF-related Child Welfare and Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- Social Service (SS) cost pool: Case Management, Abuse and Neglect Investigations, Day Care Operating, Title IV-E, Title XX, Title XX TANF Transfer, TANF Related Child Welfare, APS, Non-Allocated Child Welfare, Kinship Navigator, Medicaid, and Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- Child Support (CS) cost pool: Title IV-D and Non IV-D activities such as parent location, paternity establishment, establishment of support orders, support enforcement, medical support, collection and disbursement of payment, distribution, and TANF.
- Juvenile Court (JC) cost pool: Juvenile Courts that have entered into agreements with ODJFS may obtain IV-E reimbursement for costs associated with court actions for children eligible to receive foster care maintenance payment and children determined by the Court to be at serious risk of removal from the home and for whom the Court has undertaken a plan of reasonable effort to prevent such removal. The only staff included in the cost pool are those who perform Title IV-E activities.

Since the advent of welfare reform, workers within a combined CDJFS may provide a greater variety of program activities, so the programs that were traditionally considered exclusively IM or exclusively SS now appear on both time studies.

Shared Cost Distribution

Shared costs are indirect costs which are incurred for a common purpose that benefit more than one major function and are not readily assignable to any specific cost center. Shared costs benefit two or more of the following major program areas: Income Maintenance, Social Services, and Child Support. Employees whose activities meet the definition must be classified and reported as "Shared." Some examples are agency director, personnel, management information systems, and fiscal officers.

The shared cost pool includes salaries, related compensation and operational costs inclusive of rent, leases, utilities, supplies, etc., for all employees assigned to indirect local agency functions and may include administrative contracts related to more than one major program areas. Shared costs are identified in both combined and stand alone CDJFS.

Shared costs are allocated by a two-phase process. In the first phase, shared costs identified are allocated to IM, SS, and CS cost pools based on the average number of full time equivalent (FTE) positions reported for these categories for the pay periods that occur in the previous quarter. The automated Quarterly Report of CDJFS Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions report (JFS 04290) shows the number of staff for each category and calculates a quarterly percentage for each category. The Quarterly Report of CDJFS Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions report (JFS 04290) is submitted to ODJFS by counties in two formats: a hard paper copy and a QuIC upload. Percentages are calculated for each category of IM, SS, and CS by dividing the total average number of full time positions into the average number of full time positions reported for IM, SS, and CS.

In the second phase, shared costs are further distributed to various programs based on the results of the IM, SS, and CS quarterly time studies as follows:

- The IM portion of shared costs identified through phase one is added to the IM combined costs to create an IM administrative cost pool. These costs are then distributed to TANF, Medicaid, Food Stamps, DA, FSET, WIA, Health Chek, SSI Case Management, and other IM-related programs based on percentages derived from the quarterly IMRMS results.
- The SS portion of shared costs identified in phase one is added to the SS combined costs to create a SS administrative cost pool. These costs are then distributed to SSI Case Management, TANF, WFRMS, Title XX, Health Chek, Child Welfare related Medicaid, Title IV-E, Non-allocated Child Welfare activities, and other social services related programs based on percentages derived from the quarterly SSRMS results.
- The CS portion of shared costs identified in phase one is added to the CS IV-D and Non-IV-D costs to create a CS administrative cost pool. Costs are distributed between IV-D and Non IV-D activities based on percentages derived from the quarterly results of the CSRMS.

Random Moment Sample Process

RMS Purpose

The Random Moment Observation form data is used to distribute combined administrative costs for Income Maintenance, Social Services, Child Support and Workforce Development. The data gathered on a county agency's observation form determines the percent of effort expended by the population of a cost pool on behalf of any variety of specific programs and activities. The RMS process is based on a calculated number of random observations for each population.

RMS Time Study Coordinators

The county must assign a RMS time study coordinator and alternate coordinator(s) to administer the time studies. At least one alternate must be selected to complete the RMS process in the coordinator's absence. Each county determines the number of alternates needed based on the location of the sample population, the sample size, available staff time, and/or other pertinent factors. For purposes of this manual, the rules applicable to the "coordinator" are also applicable to the "alternate coordinator." The responsibilities of the coordinator include:

1. Act as the liaison for communications with the ODJFS RMS time study administrator.
2. Provide quarterly updates to ODJFS regarding new appointments, terminations, transfers, staff assignments, core work hours or other information likely to affect RMS operations.
3. Receive, distribute, monitor, collect, and return RMS forms. If alternate coordinators have been appointed, the coordinator will work with the alternates to track the RMS forms. This specifically refers to the distribution and collection of forms, the monitoring of returned forms for completeness, and the submission of the final RMS data to ODJFS.
4. Personally interview four percent of the selected individuals at the moment of observation to assure sampling accuracy, form completion, and quality control. See the Sample Control Group section for more detailed information.
5. Complete observation forms with appropriate leave codes when a position is idle due to an absence when an observation moment occurs. (worker's supervisor may also complete this task)

Staff Included in RMS Time Study

Workers included in the time study are those performing direct program functions, with the following general exceptions: administrative, supervisory or administrative support.

If a staff member assigned to a supervisory position also provides direct services over fifty percent of the time, a county agency or stand alone workforce investment area may choose to add that person to the RMS roster. Documentation must be retained by the agency to support the inclusion of the position in the time study, must be signed by the agency head, and a position description that attest to the directly related program activities performed by the position. If the position description includes the information required in this paragraph and is signed by the agency head, the agency is not required to retain separate documentation.

If a staff member assigned to an administrative support position also performs direct services, a county agency or stand alone workforce investment area may choose to add that person to the RMS roster. Documentation must be retained by the agency to support the inclusion of the position in the time study, must be signed by the agency head, and a position description that attest to the directly related program activities performed by the position. If the position description includes the information required in this paragraph and is signed by the agency head, the agency is not required to retain separate documentation.

Grouping RMS Positions

To simplify time study administration, RMS coordinators may opt to group positions that share the same building, work location and working hours in order to produce observation forms in distinct sets. This may be useful when an agency has multiple sub-groups, which can be based on floor, section or similar flex schedules. Each employee in a group will receive an individual observation form, unlike the old SSRMS in which every member in the group received an observation at the same time.

Grouping Juvenile Court RMS Positions

Juvenile Court Random Moment Sample (JCRMS) coordinators may opt to group participants so that a number of people may be observed at the same moment. It is the court's responsibility to group workers, determine the number of JCRMS groups, advise ODJFS of any changes to groupings, and to maintain lists of current JCRMS groups for the quarter. JCRMS software exists for this purpose.

The court may assign JCRMS groups to any single group as necessary and may include one to twelve workers. The juvenile court may also opt for all random moment observations to be assigned on an individual basis. This is accomplished by assigning each worker a unique group number. Any group or individual working a nonstandard schedule should be assigned a unique group number.

Quarterly County Information Update

If certain types of changes occur, the county or area agency must send updated roster information to ODJFS before the start of the next reporting period. The following changes would necessitate a new roster upload.

1. New employee and/or change in positions
2. New work location
3. Terminated employee
4. Closed work location
5. Changes in employee data (job title, phone number, name change, reassignment, etc.)
6. Location changes (core work hours or days)

Changes to the roster must be sent to BCFTA by the last day of the second month of a reporting period. E-mail roster changes to the Groupwise address BCFTA-RMS-NONQUIC_UPLOADS.

Juvenile Court RMS Update

ODJFS sends its most current copy of the following information to the juvenile court each quarter. The court must then review, update, and return the information to ODJFS no later than the thirtieth day of the second month of each reporting period.

1. Core work hours - the actual juvenile court hours are used. If the court is using flex time, report as core work hours the period in which the majority of the staff is scheduled to work.
2. Core lunch hour - the hour when the majority of employees take lunch.
3. Employee list - this must be updated from the juvenile court roster effective the thirtieth day of the second month in the reporting period. Positions that are vacant and will not be filled during the reporting period are not included. The employee list includes the following information:
 - a. Position number: a unique six-digit number for each position to be used in the JCRMS;
 - b. Employee name: the person filling the position;
 - c. Position description: classification title; and
 - d. Location code (optional): if the staff is located in more than one unit or location, the county has the option of identifying up to twenty different location codes. This allows for easier distribution of the observation forms within the county.
4. Parameter form for JCRMS:
 - a. Coordinator name;
 - b. Number of employees;
 - c. Number of groups;
 - d. Core work hours.

Sample Selection

ODJFS, through the RMS system selects the quarterly sample from the employee roster provided by the county as detailed in OAC 5101:9-7-20. The selected sample information is then sent by ODJFS via e-mail to the county agency or Juvenile Court for import into the local agency RMS system. The import will contain the designated random moments and the current database listing of all participating workers in the RMS group. Once a sample has been selected, no changes are made to the sample data during the reporting period. Any changes or additions to the roster or core work hours cannot be changed until the next sample is selected.

Sample Size per Quarter

RMS Type	Agency Size	# of Observations
IM	Metro	2,300 Total

IM	Suburban & Rural	354 Total
WF	WIA Area	354 Total
SS, CW, JC	1 – 10 Participating Positions	Minimum of 33 Per Worker
SS, CW, JC	11 – 74 Participating Positions	Minimum of 354
SS, CW, JC	75 or more Participating Positions	Minimum of 2,400

Observation Moment

At or near the time specified on the individual observation form, the coordinator approaches each worker and provides the observation form. The worker then completes the form based on what he or she is doing at that designated time.

IMPORTANT: Each observation is to occur at the moment specified. Advance notice should not be given to workers regarding the moment they are scheduled to complete the form. At a maximum, workers should receive the assigned form **no more than 24 hours in advance**. When the worker assigned to the position cannot be located at a specified moment to complete the observation form, the form is left at his or her assigned work space. The completed form will be retrieved as soon as possible following his or her return. This procedure is also used when the individual cannot be interrupted at the designated moment. If the assigned worker is on leave, the RMS coordinator or the worker’s supervisor completes the form.

Absences and Vacancies

For RMS purposes, a position is idle due to an **absence** when the worker assigned to the position is on paid or unpaid leave but intends to return to work in the future.

A position is idle due to **vacancy** when the worker who was assigned to the position has left it and does not intend to return. This includes situations in which a worker is promoted, demoted, or transferred to another position or separates from the county agency or stand alone workforce investment area.

If a position is idle at the time of an observation due to absence or vacancy, the RMS coordinator or the worker’s supervisor will mark the form with the appropriate codes for leave: 001 / 999 / 999 (Position Idle or Invalid Response).

The following chart illustrates the procedures for handling absences and vacancies of time study participants.

ABSENCES (sick, vacation, disability, lunch, etc.)	
Duration of Absence and Assignment of Work	Actions to be Taken by RMS Coordinator
Position idle due to a short-termed absence.	The RMS coordinator or worker’s supervisor will mark the observation form with the appropriate codes for “position idle or invalid response.”

Absence will last through the majority of the next RMS reporting period.	The RMS coordinator will remove the position from the RMS roster at the earliest opportunity. Once the absent worker has returned to the position, the RMS coordinator will add the position back on the RMS roster.
Position's duties are assigned to another worker or supervisor not currently in the time study.	The RMS coordinator will make note of the reassignment on the form and initial the form and that worker will complete the RMS observation generated for the vacant position. If an absence is expected to last through the majority of the next RMS observation period, the RMS coordinator will revise the name associated with the position on the RMS roster at the earliest opportunity. Once the absent worker has returned to the position, the RMS coordinator will update name on the RMS roster.
Position's duties are assigned to a worker currently in the time study and the worker is also fulfilling their originally assigned duties.	The RMS coordinator or worker's supervisor will mark the observation forms for the absent worker's position with the appropriate codes for "position idle or invalid response." Under no circumstances may a worker complete observation forms for more than one position.

Duration of Absence and Assignment of Work	Actions to be Taken by RMS Coordinator
<p>Position's duties are assigned to a worker currently in the time study and the worker's originally assigned duties have been reassigned to another worker.</p>	<p>The RMS coordinator will make note of the reassignments on the RMS observation forms for both positions and initial the forms, and each worker will complete the RMS observation forms generated for their reassigned position. If the absence and reassignments are expected to last through the majority of the next RMS observation period, the RMS coordinator will revise the names associated with the positions on the RMS roster at the earliest opportunity. Once the absent workers have returned to their original positions, the RMS coordinator will update the names associated with the positions on the RMS roster. Under no circumstances may a worker complete observation forms for more than one position.</p>
VACANCIES	
Duration of Vacancy and Assignment of Work	Actions to be Taken by RMS Coordinator
<p>Position becomes vacant during the period and the position is not reassigned to a worker who is not currently in the time study.</p>	<p>The RMS coordinator will code forms generated for that position as an invalid response.</p>
<p>Worker not currently in a time study assumes the responsibilities of a vacant position that is on the RMS roster.</p>	<p>The RMS coordinator will make note of the reassignment on the observation form and that worker will complete the RMS observation generated for the vacant position.</p>
<p>Worker currently in a time study leaves one position to assume the responsibilities of a vacant position on the current RMS roster.</p>	<p>That worker will discontinue completing the RMS observations generated for his or her former position and will begin to complete the observations assigned to his or her new position. Under no circumstances may a worker complete observation forms for more than one position.</p>
<p>Vacancy is expected to remain unfilled through the majority of the next RMS observation period.</p>	<p>The RMS coordinator will remove the position from the RMS roster at the earliest opportunity. Once the vacancy has been filled, then the RMS coordinator will add the position back on the RMS roster.</p>

Sample Control Group

To ensure sampling accuracy and quality control, four percent of all RMS samples are selected as a control group. The selected forms will be printed with the words "Control Member", which appears to the right of the time and date of the observation moment. The right side of the form contains a space for the observer to write his or her name; the RMS coordinator or alternate serves as the observer.

For the control samples, the observer asks the individual assigned to the position which program or activity he or she is working on at the specified moment and for the case number or unique identifier associated with that work and completes the form. The observer and the individual initial the observation form.

Form Completion

The RMS observation form has three parts. The worker or coordinator completes the observation form by indicating whether he or she is working on a case and then selecting the program category and the type of activity being performed at the time designated. **Only one program and one activity may be selected.** When there is a question regarding the proper completion of the form, the employee should discuss the question with the RMS coordinator.

Specific instructions for form completion appear below:

Section I: The top part of the form indicates whether the worker was engaged in a case activity. When the employee is not doing case related work, but is instead on break, at lunch or attending training, for example, the employee checks the box marked 001. When 001 is marked, at a minimum, the worker will write a description of the activity being performed in the comment section of the form. Alternately, the observation may be substantiated by documentation attached to the form.

When the employee is interviewing a participant or working on a case, he or she should mark 002 and write in a unique case identifier, such as a case number, locally assigned number, or name. Case identifiers must be provided to form an audit trail.

Section II: The employee must choose the program he or she is working on at the particular moment. When not working on a case or a program specific activity, the employee can select codes for general administrative activities that redistribute to programs.

Section III: The employee chooses the activity related to the work that is being performed at the particular moment. When the employee's work is neither associated with a case nor a direct program, an appropriate redistributable activity code should be selected.

Initials: Each form must also be initialed by the employee on the line marked "Form Completed By."

Documentation: Documentation will demonstrate that the selected program and activity codes match the work being performed by the assigned position at the time of the observation. The documentation requirement does not apply when the observation form indicates that the worker was on leave, at lunch, on break performing a non-reimbursable activity, or if the position is vacant. However, while the RMS rule does not require documentation and comments for activities marked 001, the county agency or standalone workforce investment area may choose to implement more restrictive requirements for substantiation of observations.

For those activities coded 002, examples of acceptable documentation include, but are not limited to:

- A screen print from CRIS-E, FACSIS, SETS, CRIS-E/SETS, SACWIS that shows the case identifier and what activity was taking place at the time of the moment
- An appointment book or calendar showing when the participant corresponding to the case identifier was interviewed
- A telephone log that documents when a call was placed, to whom, and its purpose
- A time log showing where employees were when the moment occurred for those providing transportation or home care services
- Excerpts from case notes supporting the employee's work on the case and showing the date and time of the observation

Documentation needs to link the employee with the case identifier and support the selection of both codes to the date and time of the observation. In other words, the agency must be prepared to document the program and activity the employee was performing when the moment occurred.

Corrections: Only the individual completing the observation form may revise and initial changes to the form.

- Incorrect information on the form must be crossed through and initialed by the employee who originally completed the form.
- Do not use white out on the form.

If the worker who originally completed the form has separated from the agency or is on an extended absence, the worker's former supervisor or the RMS coordinator may complete and initial the change and will document the reason for the substitution.

RMS Data Submission Dates

Counties use the Maximus Ledger Suite RMS county software to submit information electronically to ODJFS. The hard copy RMS observation forms are retained by the county for future reviews and audits.

All RMS data must be imported to the QuIC system and e-mailed to ODJFS no later than the twentieth of the month following the end of the RMS reporting period or the next business day following the twentieth if the twentieth is not a business day.

Sampling Period	Financial Period	Quarter	Due Date
Jun – Aug	Jul – Sep	3	9/20
Sep – Nov	Oct – Dec	4	12/20
Dec – Feb	Jan – Mar	1	3/20
Mar – May	Apr – Jun	2	6/20

Two uploads are required to be submitted to ODJFS:

- The upload from the RMS system contains data used to run precision reports on a statewide basis.
 - a. Non-QuIC RMS results should be e-mailed to the Groupwise address BCFTA-RMS-NONQUIC_UPLOADS.
 - b. Files from the RMS side of the county agency's ledger suite application have file extensions of ".RMP".
- The RMS upload from the QuIC portion of the Ledger Suite contains only the information used to allocate costs.
 - a. QuIC RMS results should be e-mailed to the following Groupwise addresses:
 1. BCFTA-PA_UPLOADS
 2. BCFTA-CSEA_UPLOADS
 3. BCDTA-PCSA_UPLOADS
 - b. Files from the QuIC RMS uploads from the portion of the county agency's ledger suite application have the extension ".DBF".

Records Retention

Counties must maintain the original RMS observation forms, electronic facsimiles (including digital images), or microfiche copies of the original forms for three years after the ODJFS acceptance of the final closeout expenditure report, or as otherwise provided by any minimum retention requirements specified by applicable state or federal law. If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action involving the records has started before the expiration of the three year period, the records must be retained until the completion of the action and resolution of all issues that arise from it, or until the end of the regular three year period, whichever is later (OAC 5101:9-7-20).