Random Moment Sample (RMS)

A User Manual

Bureau of County Finance & Technical Assistance

INTRODUCTION

The federal government requires some form of cost allocation for employees who provide services in more than one federal program area. Random Moment Sampling (RMS) is the cost allocation process used by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to accurately determine the administrative costs associated with the operation of any one of several state and federally administered programs that are supervised by ODJFS.

With the implementation of a web based RMS system in 2011, combined with the County Finance Information System (CFIS) web reporting in 2012, the RMS process became completely web based; resulting in increased efficiency and accuracy.

This manual is designed to assist users in the administration of the web-based random moment sample (web RMS). Each county family service agency (CFSA) and combined workforce investment agency (WIA) is required to use the RMS process. Stand-alone WIA areas have the option of allocating their costs by other federally approved methodology. This manual presents an overview of the RMS, describes the basic cost allocation methodology for the RMS, and provides guidance for various RMS participants using the web RMS application.

OVERVIEW

The Random Moment Sampling (RMS) is a statistically valid method for determining the percent of effort expended by a given population on behalf of any variety of specific programs and activities. RMS involves a calculated number of random observations to be made quarterly on a randomly selected date and at an independently selected time. Workers in the 88 Ohio counties participating in the RMS are randomly selected to complete a simple observation form on a random date and time. RMS responses are compiled and tabulated using the methodology described in this manual. The results are used to determine, in part, the costs of administering state and federal programs.

In Ohio, the RMS method is applied to the population of employees in an income maintenance, social services, child support or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) 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 employees randomly selected on various days and at different times of the day. The RMS system selects the employee, date, and time for the observation to be performed in each agency.

Stand-alone Public Children Services Agencies select an abbreviated version of the Social Services RMS showing only those codes used by Children Service workers. Stand-alone Workforce Investment Act agencies select an abbreviated version of the income maintenance RMS or social services RMS using only those codes that apply to WIA.

The RMS system enables each local agency to enter completed observations and tabulate, validate, and analyze the data 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.

COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY FOR RANDOM MOMENT SAMPLING (RMS)

RMS is a method for allocating costs when a worker provides direct services for more than one program. RMS allows ODJFS to determine how much time workers in a cost pool spend on various programs. There are five different cost pools that may be accessed by any given combined or separate county agency. These cost pools are shared, income maintenance, social services, WIA, and child support.

- ***Shared costs*** are indirect costs incurred for a common purpose benefiting more than one major function and are not readily assignable to any specific cost center/pool, such as agency director, management information systems, and fiscal officers.
- ***Income maintenance costs*** are associated with programs such as Food Assistance, Disability Assistance, and other income support programs governed by the Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Agriculture.

- ***Social services costs*** include programs such as TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), Adult Protective Services, Child Care funded by TANF, and other adult and family support programs.
- ***Child support services costs*** are related to activities performed by child support workers for child support associated programs, such as Title IV-D, Non IV-D, parent location, paternity establishment, and collection and disbursement of child support payments.
- ***WIA costs*** include programs authorized by the Department of Labor (DOL). These costs are included in the income maintenance cost pool or the social services cost pool if workers perform duties associated with either program, or in the Workforce Cost Pool, if workers perform duties only associated with DOL programs.

In each county agency or workforce area, employee salaries and all forms of compensation, including general travel costs, are assigned 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.

A stand-alone WIA agency uses rule 5101:9-31-17 (Cost allocation requirements for workforce investment stand-alone local areas) of the Administrative Code to determine the cost allocation requirements. A stand-alone WIA is defined as WIA areas that receive only Department of Labor (DOL) funding from the ODJFS to administer their services. If the stand alone WIA allocates costs by RMS, staff participate in the workforce time study.

WEB RMS PROCESS

ODJFS utilizes a federally approved web-based RMS system for counties. This RMS system, known as web RMS, assists state agencies in conducting random moment time studies and documenting activities related to the observation moments. It is designed on the premise that workers need an easy and streamlined method to document activities, while ensuring that the data collected can be reviewed and approved by multiple levels of authority for federal compliance purposes.

RMS results are used to distribute combined administrative costs for Income Maintenance, Social Services, Child Support, and Workforce Development. Data gathered determines the percent of effort expended by those participating in the sample. These percentages are then used to distribute the program administration expenditures reported on the automated quarterly financial statements by CFSAs or WIA agencies.

Using web-based technology, web RMS generates random moments to perform a time study of the workers in the sample pool. The system automatically generates e-mails, accepts responses from workers, and incorporates an automated data collection process. All web RMS activities are now completed via the internet, so staff having a role in RMS may access the system with most internet active devices. This process results in real time reporting, with agencies having the ability to access current RMS results and reports.

RMS ROLES

All staff involved in the RMS process are assigned a role. The roles associated with the web RMS System are coordinator /alternate coordinator, RMS workers, supervisor, and Observer.

RMS COORDINATOR/ALTERNATE COORDINATOR

Successful outcome of the RMS system in each county agency rests on the understanding and diligence of the agency's RMS coordinator. 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 RMS coordinator and alternative coordinator have the same access rights to web RMS. The RMS coordinator is the liaison for communication with the ODJFS RMS administrator. Their responsibilities are:

I. Sample Creation;
II. Accepting or Rejecting RMS responses;
III. Maintain agency calendar and roster; and
IV. Closing Quarterly Sample

I. Sample Creation

A. Before creating sample

- Examine your county and cost pool's RMS calendar. If your agency is closed for different days than those reflected on the State Calendar (view the "20XX State Calendar" at Master Data>Maintain Calendar, please contact the CFIS_Help_Desk to request the appropriate calendar for your sample. Do not attempt to select/assign a calendar within the system
- Request the addition of any new coordinator or supervisors. (This can also be done at any time throughout the sample period.)
- Verify work schedules. If a work schedule does not already exist in the RMS system, please contact the CFIS_Help_Desk to request the addition of necessary work schedules.
- Check sample size. The sample size can be increased or decreased as long as the minimum sample size requirement is met.
- Change roster members. The RMS coordinator adds new positions or removes vacant positions that will remain unfilled through the majority of the next RMS sample period.

B. Reminders

- Create your sample and generate the observations no later than five business days prior to the beginning of the new sampling period.
- Generate and print control list reports no earlier than the first day of the sample period.
- This tool is for RMS coordinators' use only and is not to be shared with supervisors or participants.
- The e-mail notice that is sent to participants is in HTML format. By default, GroupWise is set to display e-mail in plain text format. RMS participants must set their GroupWise system to display e-mail in HTML format in order to access the link to the observation moment.

SAMPLE QUARTER DATES

The RMS sample quarters are one month ahead of the coordinating Financial Period. This allows the RMS data to be collected in time for use in the related financial quarter.

Sampling Period	Financial Period	Quarter
December – February	January – March	1
March – May	April – June	2
June – August	July – September	3
September – November	October – December	4

SAMPLE SIZE PER QUARTER

RMS Type	Agency Size or Type	Number of Observations
IM	Metro	2,300 Total
IM	Suburban/Rural	354 Total
SS, CW, WF, CS	1 – 10 Participating Positions	Minimum of 33 Per Worker
SS, CW, WF, CS	11 – 74 Participating Positions	Minimum of 354
SS, CW	75 or more Participating Positions	Minimum of 2,400

II. *Accepting*/Rejecting RMS Responses

Another function of the RMS coordinator is to accept or reject RMS responses. This is covered in more detail later in the manual under "Administering the RMS."

III. Maintaining Agency Calendar and Roster

When certain types of changes occur, the county or area agency must update roster information in webRMS before the start of the next reporting period. The following changes would necessitate a new roster:

A. New employee and/or changes in positions;
B. New work location;
C. Employee no longer with the agency;
D. Closed work location;
E. Changes in employee data (job title, phone number, name change, reassignment, etc.); or
F. Location changes (employee work hours or days)

NOTE: Changes to the roster must be entered into webRMS at least 5 days before the beginning of the next RMS quarter.

IV. Closing a Quarterly Sample

The RMS coordinator must approve the Quarterly Sample within 5 days after the end of the quarter.

RMS WORKERS

Workers engaged in directly related program functions participate in the RMS time studies, but cannot participate in more than one type of study (i.e., child support, income maintenance, social service, child welfare, or workforce). Employees included in the time study are those performing direct program functions 100% of the time, 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.

RMS OBSERVERS/SUPERVISORS

RMS Supervisor

The RMS coordinator assigns each RMS worker to a supervisor or designee in webRMS when setting up the roster. The participants supervisor or designee (set up as "contact 1"), is responsible for ensuring RMS workers complete the sampling process in a timely manner.

RMS Observer

The RMS Observer is the staff member who reviews 10% of the moments for quality control (also known as the control group). It is suggested that the RMS Observer be the participants supervisor, however, the supervisor may delegate this responsibility to another staff member providing that person has sufficient knowledge and understanding of the programs and activities performed by the participant to determine the accuracy of the response.

Sample Control Group

To ensure sampling accuracy and quality control, ten percent of all RMS samples are selected as a control group. The webRMS system will flag the control group observation moment and send an e-mail notification to the supervisor. The supervisor or their designee is responsible for validating the observation moment response within the same twenty four hour response period as the employee completing the response. By validating the response, the supervisor/designee is verifying that the appropriate program and activity was selected by the employee.

ADMINISTERING WEBRMS

OBSERVATION MOMENTS

The RMS process begins with an RMS worker receiving an observation at any given moment via e-mail. An observation is comprised of two basic elements: the specific program being served by the worker and the specific activity being performed at that moment.

The worker will receive an e-mail link, approximately zero to fifteen minutes before the observation moment time. Once the observation moment arrives, the worker will be able to click on the link and enter the Employee ID or PCN# to open the RMS electronic form.

The electronic observation consists of three parts: the program or general administration duties code, and the activity code associated with the program or administration duties, and a required comments section. In order to complete the electronic RMS form, the worker will:

1. Select the appropriate program code from the dropdown menu;
2. Select the appropriate activity code from the dropdown menu;
3. Complete the comments to explain the details of the activity and program being worked on;
4. Complete the Case Number or Client ID of the client being serviced at the time of the moment; and
5. Click on the "***Save***" button.

NOTE: The system will display the message that the observation saved successfully and will exit.

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. Employees must ensure documentation is available to support the program and activity codes selected. Documentation should link the worker 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 worker was performing when the moment occurred. 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.

The documentation requirement does not apply when the observation form indicates:

- The worker was involved in a non-reimbursable activity; non-reimbursable activities would include, activities that are not being reimbursed or are being reimbursed through a mechanism other than an agency's specific program allocation, such as a special project allocation, contract or memorandum of understanding with another family services agency or workforce development agency;
- Worker was not scheduled to work; or
- The position is idle or there is an invalid response. This would include when a position is idle due to vacancy, absence, meal or other break, personal business, or an incorrect label on the observation form.

For activities coded 002 (case Number), examples of acceptable documentation include:

- A screen print from Client Registry Information System Enhanced (CRIS-E), Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS), CRIS-E/SETS automated interface, or Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (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 workers were when the moment occurred for those providing transportation or home care services
- Excerpts from case note supporting the worker’s work on the case and showing the date and time of the observation.

COMPLETION OF OBSERVATION MOMENTS

The participants supervisor or designee (set up as “contact 1”) as established in the roster, will receive an email if a moment is not completed and submitted within 2 hours of the hit and again 18 hours after the hit. It is anticipated that the supervisor will follow up on the email to determine why the moment is still active. If the participant is on leave and the position was idle at the moment, it is suggested that the supervisor notify the RMS coordinator to respond to the moment as “position idle”. Costs associated with these hits are pooled for redistribution.

The Observer will receive an email reminder every 2 hours until the moment has been validated (email address that is linked to the supervisor UserID).

RMS coordinators or alternate coordinators also receive email notification if an observation has not been responded to within 18 hours after the moment. The 18 hours email will be generated to the person (set up as “contact 2”) in web RMS. RMS coordinators and alternates may also access alternative methods of completion of moments and, in circumstances where the worker does not have access to the system, contact the worker and complete the form, including documentation, on the worker’s behalf.

It is suggested that the Observer/designee review the comments and follow the comments back to the source documentation to ensure the validity of the response and the adequacy of the documentation.

REVIEWING OBSERVATIONS

The RMS coordinator can review the status of RMS observations that have been submitted at any time during the RMS sample period. The chart below shows the meaning of the status indicators:

STATUS COLORS

Status Color	Status
Green text	Observation is ready for review. It has been either completed by the participant or the observation has expired.
An asterisk and bold	Observation is marked to be validated by Observer and has not been validated.
A double asterisk and bold	Observation has been validated by the observer
Normal text	Observation not ready for QA, either because it has already been reviewed or not expired or is scheduled for a future date.

In order to view the status of observations:

A. Select Observation Details from the Sample Data main menu. Select the sample you wish to review by using the drop-down list on the left side of the screen. Select the Sample and Region from the drop-down list for each category.

B. The default Status is Work List which displays observations that are ready to be reviewed. Other observations can be viewed by selecting appropriate status from the status drop down list.

C. A list of all observations for the selected sample appears on the left side. These are the observations that are ready for QA and approval.

D. This list can be further filtered based on First Name, Last Name, Participant ID, Observation ID, or Moment Date. Select the desired filter from the drop-down choices, enter the criteria, and click the Search button.

E. Select the participant by clicking the circle next to the ID and Name. Detailed data is displayed on the right side of the screen. Select History to view an observation log of the selected sample. Select View Confidential Data to display the client ID and client name of the specific case the participant was working on at the sample moment. Select Hide Confidential Data to hide this information.

ACCEPTING/REJECTING OBSERVATIONS

When the RMS coordinator reviews the observation for completeness and accuracy there are 5 review options:

1. ***Accept*** - Participant filled all required information and the response is acceptable.
2. ***Invalid*** - In cases where a participant is no longer employed at the scheduled observation time or unscheduled holiday etc. These observations will be excluded from the sample.
3. ***No response*** – Observations have expired and the participant has not responded to the e-mail request.
4. ***Resend e-mail*** - Observation email link can be resent to the participant by clicking on the "***Resend E-mail***" button on the observation details screen. This button will appear only if the observation is not expired and not responded yet by participant.
5. ***Conversion of observation type*** - Observation type can be changed from electronic to paper or phone by selecting them from the ***Change Type*** dropdown and clicking the ***Go*** button.

NOTE: The RMS coordinator must approve the Quarterly Sample within 5 business days after the end of the quarter.

VALIDATING THE 10% CONTROL GROUP OBSERVATIONS

The RMS Observer will receive 10% of the observation moments to validate for quality control (also known as the control group), as follows:

The RMS Observer will receive 10% of the observation moments to validate for quality control, also known as the control group, as follows:

- Select ***Observation Details*** - ***Observer*** from the ***Sample Data*** main menu. Select the sample you wish to review by using the drop-down list on the left side of the screen. Select the *Sample* and *Region* from the drop-down list for each category.
- The default ***Status* is *Work List*** which displays observations that are ready to be reviewed. Other observations can be viewed by selecting appropriate status from the status drop down list.
- A list of all observations for the selected sample appears on the left side. These are the observations that are ready for validation.
- This list can be further filtered based on ***First Name, Last Name, Participant ID, Observation ID,* or *Moment Date***. Select the desired filter from the drop-down choices, enter the criteria, and click the ***Search*** button.
- Select the participant by clicking the circle next to the ID and Name. Detailed data is displayed on the right side of the screen. Select ***History*** to view an observation log of the selected sample. Select *View* ***Confidential Data*** to display the client ID and client name of the specific case the participant was working on at the sample moment. Select ***Hide Confidential Data*** to hide this information.

CORRECTIONS

The worker can change a response if a mistake in discovered after the observation has been submitted. The worker retains access to the RMS link for 24 work week hours and can click on the link again to change the response within that time period. The link will take them to the RMS hit and corrections can be made before the 24 hour period expires unless the RMS coordinator has accepted the moment. If a worker discovers an error in the moment within the 24 hour period and the RMS coordinator has already accepted the moment, the RMS coordinator can change the status to invalid and save the moment and notify the worker that changes can be made. The worker must fully document and be able to justify the reason for the change.

IMPORT INTO CFIS

Each quarter the RMS data will be imported into the CFIS system as part of the cost allocation process.

RECORDS RETENTION

Subject to the retention set forth in rule 5101:9-9-21 (County agency records retention, access, and destruction) of the Administrative Code financial, programmatic, statistical, recipient records and supporting documents must be retained for a minimum of three years after 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.

Appendix
MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS

Instructions for Creating Samples

1. Select Sample Details from the sample data menu
2. Click the Add button
3. The Participant Data Period field will auto populate with the correct year/quarter.
4. Enter the Sample Code, Sample Name and Select the Sample Date Ranges for the sample quarter.
5. Remember to follow the Desk Reference "Sample Code" and "Sample Name" naming convention, using your agency's appropriate name and number. Every space, hyphen, and capital letter - must match ***exactly***. Example:
   - Sample Code: **2011Q4 XX-IM** (replace the XX with your county number)
   - Sample Name: **(JFS 02710) – XXX County Income Maintenance RMS** (replace the XXX with your county name)
6. It is recommend that you use ***copy*** and ***paste*** from the existing sample as follows:
   a. Copy the sample code from existing sample;
   b. Paste in the sample code field for the new sample and change the **Q3** to Q**4**;
   c. Copy the sample name for one quarter to the next as it does not change; and
   d. Save the sample once you have the sample code and name completed.
7. Enter at least the minimum observation count required by cost pool and area type.
8. Select the ***Generate Observations*** button
9. Click on ***Sample Observations*** distribution chart to review the sample moment distribution.

NOTE:
At this point, the coordinator has electronically signed the sample that it is ready for the period to begin. The final step is to approve the sample set and will be performed by state staff after review of the sample code, name dates and observation count. Once the State RMS Administrator approves the sample, the sample status on the Sample Data>Sample Details screen will change to "***Approved***." At that time the sample is final and changes can only be made under extenuating circumstances and with the approval of the BCFTA Bureau Chief.

Instructions for Closing Samples

1. Go to the ***Sample Data*** menu and select ***Sample Details*** from the drop down box;
2. Choose the sample you want to close;
3. Click on the ***close*** button;
4. You will receive a system message asking you to verify that the basis and fund source history has been updated. This refers to reviewing the ***RR412 report***.
5. Click on ***OK***. Once you select OK, you will not be able to make any additional changes.

Instructions for Maintaining Calendar Roster

Maintain Sample Participant - How To Update *__Future__* *__Roster__* *__Data__*

1. Select ***Maintain Participant*** from **the *Participant Data*** main menu to make changes to participant data. By selecting this menu a list of all participants are displayed detailing the Region Code, Participant ID, and Participant Name.
2. The list can also be filtered by ***First Name, Last Name,*** or ***Participant ID***. Select the desired search field from the drop-down menu, enter the criteria, and click the ***Search*** button.
3. To find a participant, search the alphabetized list. Move between pages by selecting a page number, ***previous*** or **next***.* Select the participant by clicking in the circle.
4. Detailed participant information is displayed on the right side of the screen. From this screen, add a new participant or change the data of an existing participant. Select ***Add, Edit**, or **Deactivate*** based on the desired action and make the appropriate changes. Select *Save* or *Cancel* to complete the action.

NOTE: ***Changes made on this screen will reflect only for future samples and will not reflect in existing samples.***

Maintain Sample Participant - How To Update *__Current__* *__Roster__* *__Data__*

1. This menu will allow you to make changes to participant data for a specific sample. Select ***Maintain Sample Participant*** from the ***Participant Data*** drop-down menu. Select the sample from the drop down list. A list of all participants for the sample is displayed detailing the Region Code, Participant ID, and Participant Name.
2. This list can be defined even further by searching based on **First Name, Last Name,** or **Participant ID.** Select the desired search field from the drop-down choices, enter the criteria, and click the *Search* button.
3. To find a participant, search the alphabetized list. Move between pages by selecting a page number, ***previous*** or ***next.*** Select the Participant by clicking in the circle.
4. Detailed participant information is displayed on the right side of the screen. From this screen, you can change certain information on an existing participant. Select ***Edit*** and make the appropriate changes.
5. You can also apply the changes to current participant's information by selecting ***Check to Update Main Participant***.
6. Select ***Save*** or ***Cancel*** to complete the action.

UPLOAD FILE

Uploading Large Changes To Roster

1. Upload File allows the user to upload participant data files. Participant rosters **do not need** to be uploaded each quarter. The upload is primarily used when you have a large amount of roster changes from the prior quarter.
2. Select ***Upload File*** from **the *Participant Data*** main menu. Select the Region(s) from the region list displayed (one, multiple or all regions can be selected) by clicking check box adjacent to the region. Select the file you wish to upload by either typing the file name in the ***Select File*** field, or use ***Browse*** to search your local computer then Select ***Upload File***.
3. The system will display the uploaded file in a table with the status as Received. The system will validate the uploaded file, if no errors are found; the *Status* is changed to ***Ready for Approval***. If errors are found in the uploaded file, the system will change the *Status* as ***Error***. Select the ***Error*** link to view the error report which identifies ***the Error Code, Error Message,*** and ***Line Number***.

   NOTE: **Correct any identified errors and repeat the process to re-upload the file.**