



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Michael B. Colbert, Director

February 24, 2012

TO: PCSA Directors and SACWIS Point of Contacts

FROM: Jennifer R. Justice, Deputy Director
Office of Families and Children

RE: FFY 2012 Monthly Visitation Standards

New Method for Calculating Monthly Visitation Compliance

Please find the attached federal guidance regarding modifications to the calculation method for the annual statewide monthly visitation compliance federal target. While the compliance standard for 2012-2014 is still 90%, there is a modification in how the statewide formula is calculated. The new method counts *months of placement when a child needs a visit and of those, how many months a visit did occur*. It attempts to account for concerns many states (and counties) expressed historically re: "...one visit out means the youth is counted out for their entire foster care episode." In the past, if one visit was missed, a youth was excluded from the formula as being compliant overall and was considered non compliant regardless of whether one or ten required monthly contacts had been missed.

While county specific compliance percentages are important to counties, it is important to note the actual federal measures look at the state as a whole and all of the youth in foster care and all of the completed/required visits. County specific information is not shared for this report. As with prior years, youth who experience multiple stays within a Federal Fiscal Year have each full month in care/custody added together to create an overall episode period for the applicable Federal Fiscal Year.

Here is a simple example of how the statewide annual compliance rating is calculated using only 3 youth as the total number of kids in care during the Federal Fiscal Year:

Example of Federal Monthly Visitation Calculation Method for Foster Youth

Child A:

1 visit completed out of 2 required monthly visits = (50%)

Child B:

12 visits completed out of 12 required monthly visits = (100%)

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

Child C:

6 visits completed out of 7 required monthly visits = (86%)

Individually A, C do not meet the federal visitation 90% standard and B does.

Statewide Federal Monthly Visitation Compliance Indicator (using the same 3 kids):

Total Months Requiring Visits: $2 + 12 + 7 = 21$ required monthly visits

Total Months with Visits $1 + 12 + 6 = 19 =$ completed monthly visits of the 21 required

Indicator 19/21 = 90.4% Overall Statewide - Pass!

Visitation Reports

Visitation reports within the Business Intelligence Channel “BIC” and Results Oriented Management “ROM” downloads are being modified to accommodate the new standard. ROM calculation definitions were developed by the University of Kansas and are also attached for your convenience. Continued efforts to ensure each child in custody is visited each month should assist us in meeting the annual target. In subsequent years (FFY 2015 and thereafter) the threshold moves to 95%. The standard also clarifies that at least 50% of required visits must occur in the placement setting. The prior guidelines re: custody AWOL youth, IV-e Court / Juvenile Justice youth and out of state custody youth still apply (they are counted in the population of youth who must be visited each month). ***As in prior years, failure to meet federal targets will result in a loss of IV-B revenue.***

We are also working through requirements to provide a monthly visitation report for non custody youth and will keep you updated on our progress.

Other Visitation Considerations

Please keep in mind, OAC 5101 2-42-65 *Caseworker Visits and Contacts with Children in Substitute Care* requires custody youth to be visited more frequently if there is an active safety plan and / or the child is placed in a treatment or medically fragile home. Qualitative descriptions of safety/well being, appropriateness of placement, progress toward meeting case plan/permanency goal and service needs from both the child/substitute care giver perspective should also be included in SACWIS activity logs and are reviewed during the federal onsite Child and Family Services Review.

If you have additional questions, please contact your Technical Assistance Specialist and/or the SACWIS Helpdesk. Thank you for your continued efforts!

ACF

Administration
for Children
and Families

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families

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4. **Key Words:** Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act; Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act; Child Welfare Services Program; Monthly Caseworker Visits

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: State Agencies Administering or Supervising the Administration of Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act.

SUBJECT: Data requirements for States related to reporting monthly caseworker visits under title IV-B of the Social Security Act (the Act) as revised by the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act [Public Law (P.L. 112-34)], enacted September 30, 2011.

LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES: Title IV-B, subpart 1, sections 422 & 424 of the Act, P.L. 112-34, and ACYF-CB-IM-11-06.

PURPOSE: This Program Instruction (PI) provides guidance to States regarding revisions to data collection and reporting requirements on monthly caseworker visits to children in foster care.

BACKGROUND: The President signed P.L. 112-34 into law on September 30, 2011. Generally, P.L. 112-34 extends programs funded under title IV-B of the Act through Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016. More specifically, P.L. 112-34 revises title IV-B of the Act to modify requirements for submission and assessment of data on monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care.

For FFY's 2007 through 2010, States submitted data on monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care. These data report their progress in achieving the target that by October 1, 2011, 90 percent of children in foster care are visited on a monthly basis by their workers and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child. As directed in ACYF-CB-PI-11-06, States must also report monthly caseworker visit data for FFY 2011 to the Children's Bureau (CB), following the methodology outlined in that PI. These data were due on December 15, 2011.

INSTRUCTION: With the passage of P.L. 112-34, States must continue to collect and report information to CB on monthly caseworker visits. However, beginning with the submission of data for FFY 2012, States must report their information using a new data reporting methodology, consistent with the changes in the law made by P.L. 112-34. ACF will assess compliance based on the revised performance requirements outlined in statute (section 424(f) of the Act).

The New Monthly Caseworker Visit Requirements

Section 424(f) of the Act requires that each State must meet the following performance requirements for monthly caseworker visits beginning in FFY 2012:

- *For each of FFYs 2012-2014:* The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 90 percent of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care.
- *For FFY 2015 and each FFY thereafter:* The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 95 percent of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care.
- *For FFY 2012 and each FFY thereafter:* At least 50 percent of the total number of monthly visits made by caseworkers to children in foster care during a fiscal year must occur in the child's residence.

States failing to meet any one of the above applicable requirements in a FFY will be subject to a reduction in the rate of Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for title IV-B, subpart 1 expenditures in the subsequent FFY. See the *Potential Reduction in FFP* section in this document for further information.

Population to be Included in Data Reporting

In determining which children States must include in the data reporting population, the following applies:

- All children under age 18 who have been in foster care for at least one full calendar month during the FFY are included in the population.
- At this time, we are not requiring that States include youth in the data reporting population for monthly caseworker visits if they are age 18 or older.
- A child with more than one foster care episode during the 12-month period is considered as one child.

- Children who are placed in an out-of-state foster care placement are included in the data reporting population of the State that has placement and care responsibility for the children.
- If a State considers children who have gone home for a trial home visit to be in foster care, then the children are included in the population.
- Children who have run away from a foster care placement are included in the population for as long as the child remains in the State's placement and care.
- Children in foster care who are covered by a title IV-E agreement between the State title IV-E agency and an Indian Tribe or another agency (e.g., juvenile justice) are included in the population.

Who Qualifies as a Caseworker?

Section 422(b)(17) of the Act requires agencies administering titles IV-B and IV-E to describe standards for monthly caseworker visits with children in foster care. At a minimum, the standards are to ensure that caseworker visits are well-planned and focused on issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the child. Visits may be conducted by any caseworker with whom the title IV-B/IV-E agency has assigned or contracted case management or visitation responsibilities and must be held face-to-face. Within these parameters, the agency may determine which caseworkers are appropriate to conduct the visits (see the Child Welfare Policy Manual, Section 7.3 Q/A #5).

Data to be Submitted

States are required to submit data for FFY 2012 and succeeding fiscal years according to the revised requirements described previously in *New Monthly Caseworker Visit Requirements* (section 424(f) of the Act). States must submit the data listed in items #1 - 4 specified in *Data Needed for Computation and Verification* and the derived percentages specified in *Calculation of Percentages*. CB will annually communicate the submission deadline for each FFY in the PI for the Child and Family Services Plan or Annual Progress and Services Report.

States must report the caseworker visit data for any FFY for the full 12-month period, e.g., for FFY 2012, States must report data for the period from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012.

Data Needed for Computation and Verification

The following data are required to compute the percentages and verify the selection of the data reporting population for each FFY:

1. The aggregate number of children in the data reporting population (described above);
2. The total number of monthly caseworker visits made to children in the reporting population. If multiple visits were made to a child during the calendar month, the State must count them as one monthly visit;
3. The total number of complete calendar months children in the reporting population spent in care;
4. The total number of monthly visits made to children in the reporting population that occurred in the child's residence. If multiple visits were made to a child during the month and at least one of those visits occurred in the child's residence, the State should count and report that one monthly visit occurred in the residence of the child.

Calculation of Percentages

Based on these data, States must calculate percentages in the following way:

- The ***percentage of visits made on a monthly basis by caseworkers to children in foster care*** is determined by taking the number of monthly visits made to children in the reporting population (item #2) and dividing it by the number of such visits that would occur during the FFY if each such child were visited once per month while in care (item #3). The quotient is multiplied by 100 and expressed as a percentage, rounded to the nearest whole number.
- The ***percentage of visits that occurred in the residence of the child*** is determined by taking the number of monthly visits made to children in the reporting population that occurred in the residence of the child (item #4) and dividing it by the total number of monthly visits made to children in the reporting population (item #2). The quotient is multiplied by 100 and expressed as a percentage, rounded to the nearest whole number.

Verification of Data Reporting Population

CB will assess the accuracy and completeness of the data reporting population by comparing the aggregate number of children who are in the reporting population (item #1) to an extract of equivalent data the State reports through AFCARS for the two six-month periods that make up the same FFY. The State must satisfactorily explain

differences of greater than +/- 10 percent between the two sources as a condition of ACF acceptance of the caseworker visit reporting data.

Option to Use Sampling

Under the revised data reporting requirements, States still have the option to use sampling to meet the monthly caseworker visit data reporting requirement. In reporting data, States must identify whether any of the submitted data (items #1-4 ***under Data Needed for Computation and Verification***) were derived through sampling.

Any State wishing to use a sampling methodology to fulfill the revised monthly caseworker data reporting requirements must contact their CB Regional Office to obtain approval before submitting data for FFY 2012 (or any subsequent FFY if a new or revised sampling methodology is to be employed following approval of the FFY 2012 sampling methodology). To gain approval, the State must either obtain an updated sampling methodology developed by the CB Data Team or develop its own sampling methodology in consultation with the CB Data Team.

Minimum Performance Requirements Rather than Target Percentages

Under the revised data reporting requirements, the statute eliminated the requirement for States to develop target data percentages. Instead, States must meet required minimum performance standards, as stated earlier. Consistent with the statute, States must:

- Ensure for FFY's 2012 through 2014 that the total number of monthly caseworker visits to children in foster care is not less than 90 percent of the total visits that would be made if each child were visited once per month.
- Ensure for FFY 2015 and thereafter that the total number of monthly caseworker visits to children in foster care is not less than 95 percent of the total visits that would be made if each child were visited once per month.
- Ensure for FFY 2012 and thereafter that not less than 50 percent of monthly caseworker visits occur in the residence of the child.

Potential Reduction in Federal Financial Participation (FFP)

Changes to sections 424(f)(1)(B) and 424(f)(2)(B) of the Act require a reduction in FFP for failure to meet the percentages for monthly caseworker visits and visits in the residence of the child as prescribed in statute. The following chart details the FFP reductions associated with each level of non-compliance:

If the title IV-B agency falls short of statutory percentage by:	The Federal match for the title IV-B, subpart 1 will be reduced by:
Less than 10%	1 percentage point
10% to less than 20%	3 percentage points
20% or more	5 percentage points

The FFP reductions will be separately assessed for the monthly caseworker visit requirement and the visits in the residence of the child requirement. For example, if the percentage of the State’s required monthly visits in a single FFY is 14 percent below the required level and the percentage of the visits occurring in the residence of the child is 5 percent below the required level, the FFP rate reduction applied to title IV-B, subpart 1 funds in the following FFY would be 4 (3+1) percentage points.

In any FFY in which a State fails to meet the prescribed minimum percentage for one or both data requirements, ACF will continue to make the full Federal allotment available to the State, but the State must increase its match rate in order to access the full Federal allotment. Any FFP reduction(s) shall be combined and applied to the title IV-B, subpart 1 funding allocation for the FFY following the year for which the required compliance level was not met.

INQUIRIES TO: Children’s Bureau Regional Program Managers

/s/
 Bryan Samuels
 Commissioner
 Administration on Children, Youth
 and Families

Attachment:
 Children’s Bureau Regional Program Managers

CV.1 Monthly Worker-Child Visit (of those months in care the entire month)

Operational Definition: The percent visit months children under 18 years of age were in foster care the entire month who had at least one face-to-face visit during each month.

- **Visit** – Any face-to-face contact is considered a visit.
- **Entire month** – to be counted in this measure a child must be in care the entire month
- **Under 18** – Months in which the child is 18 years of age any part of the month are not counted in this calculation for that month (in care at least part of the last day of the previous month and first day of the next month).
- **Visit Month** – the unit of analysis for this measure is a visit month which is a month that a child was in foster care the entire month. To be in foster care the entire month means that the child was in foster care at least part of the last day of the previous month and first day of the next month. Visit months can be added across other Report Periods such as quarter, fiscal year, etc. and represent visit months, not unique children.
- **In foster care** – Children that are in a federal episode are counted as “in foster care” even if that child is in runaway or trail home visit status

Calculation:

Numerator: (Of visit months counted in the denominator) Number of visit months where children had at least one caseworker face-to-face visit during the month

Divided By

Denominator: Number of visit months where children under 18 years of age and in foster care for the entire month

Report Table: Other categories for the visit met are grouped as follows:

- + Total Visit months – Visit month is when a child was in care the entire month
- + Met (Graphed) – Visit months with face with a face visit in the visit month
 - Visited in-home – (of Met) visit month with at least one in-home visit
 - Visited in-person only – (of Met) visit month with face-to-face visit but no in-home visit
- + Not Met – (of total visit months) Visit months with no face-to-face visit
 - Other not in-person visit (of Not Met) those that had another visit type
 - No visit (of Not Met) those with no visits of any kind

Views

Report views group children (removal episodes) in different ways for reporting purposes. The following provides a description of how children are grouped (sometimes called a cohort) which serves as the denominator for the report measure.

Report Period Views: Report Period Views allow you to select specific time periods you want to look at and can aggregate across time since each monthly visit is a independent observation.

Trend: Per Report Period

Visit Month(s) (denominator): The visit month(s) in which a child under 18 year of age was in foster care an entire month during each month. Months can be added together (e.g. quarter, six-months) since the unit of analysis is a month of care.

Notes:

- Visit months are the unit of analysis so when looking at data for multiple months there is duplication of unique children

Unit/Crosstab: In Time Period

Visit Month(s) (denominator): a month or months in which children under 18 years of age was in foster care over the Time Period specified.

Notes:

- Each row in the drilldown represents a report month not a child.

Cumulative Views: Report Period Views allow you to view cumulative performance during a federal fiscal year.

Trend: FY to Date

Visit Month(s) (denominator): Cumulative visit months for the federal fiscal year as of each report period.

Notes:

- Since the results are cumulative, visit months are carried over to subsequent Report Periods within federal fiscal years even if they were not in care during that report period.

Unit/Crosstab: FY to Date

Visit Month(s) (denominator): Cumulative visit months for the federal fiscal year as of the last month specified in the Time Period.

Federal Definition:

The total number of visits made by caseworkers on a monthly basis to children in foster care during a fiscal year must not be less than 90 percent (in FFY 2012-2014) or 95% (in FFY 2015 and each FFY thereafter) of the total number of such visits that would occur if each child were visited once every month while in care.

Management Heirarchy Assignments

Assignment is made using the management heirarchy as of the end of each month if case is open (not federally discharged).

CV.2 Monthly In-home Visit (of full months in care and visited)

Operational Definition: The percent of visit months that a child had a face-to-face visit (children under 18 years of age and in foster care the entire month) where at least one of the visits was in-home during the month.

- **Entire month** – to be counted in this measure a child must be in care the entire month
- **In-home** – The child was visited in the child’s residence during the month.
- **Under 18** – Months in which the child is 18 years of age any part of the month are not counted in this calculation for that month (in care at least part of the last day of the previous month and first day of the next month).
- **Visit Month** – the unit of analysis for this measure is a visit month which is a month that a child was in foster care the entire month. To be in foster care the entire month means that the child was in foster care at least part of the last day of the previous month and first day of the next month. Visit months can be added across other Report Periods such as quarter, fiscal year, etc. and represent visit months, not unique children.
- **In foster care** – Children that are in a federal episode are counted as “in foster care” even if that child is in runaway or trail home visit status

Calculation:

Numerator: (Of visit months counted in the denominator) Number of children who had at least one in-home visit during the month

Divided By

Denominator: Number of visit months with a face-to-face visit for children under 18 years of age in foster care each month for the entire month

NOTE: the denominator for this measure is the same as the numerator of measure Monthly Worker-Child Visitation (of those in foster care the entire month).

Report Table: Other categories for the visit met are grouped as follows:

- Met (Graphed) – (of Total) visit months where children had at least one in-home visit
- Not Met – (of Total) visit months where the child did not receive an in-home visit
- Total - Visit months children had a face-to-face visit during the month

Views

Report views group children (removal episodes) in different ways for reporting purposes. The following provides a description of how children are grouped (sometimes called a cohort) which serves as the denominator for the report measure.

Report Period Views: Report Period Views allow you to select specific time periods you want to look at and can aggregate across time since each monthly visit is an independent observation.

Trend: Per Report Period

Visit Month(s) with visit (denominator): the visit months in which a child under 18 year of age was in foster care an entire month during each month and had a face-to-face visit during each report period.

Notes:

- Children are counted each month so there is much duplication across varying time periods

Unit/Crosstab: In Time Period

Visit Month (denominator): the visit months in which a child under 18 year of age was in foster care an entire month during each month and had a face-to-face visit over the Time Period specified.

Notes:

- Each row in the drilldown represents a report month not a child.

Cumulative Views: Report Period Views allow you to view cumulative performance during a federal fiscal year.

Trend: FY to Date

Children included in cohort (denominator): each month shows the cumulative number of visit months (child was in care the entire month) during a fiscal year and had a face-to-face visit.

Notes:

- Since the results are cumulative, visit months are carried over to subsequent Report Periods within federal fiscal years even if they were not in care during that report period.

Unit/Crosstab: FY to Date

Children included in cohort (denominator): shows the cumulative number of visit months (child was in care the entire month) during a federal fiscal year and had a face-to-face visit as of the last month in the Time Period specified.

Federal Definition:

At least 50 percent of the total number of monthly visits made by caseworkers to children in foster care during a fiscal year must occur in the child's residence.

Management Heirarchy Assignments

Assignment is made using the management heirarchy as of the end of each month if case is open (not federally discharged).