

Child Placing Agency Performance Based Contracts

State Fiscal Year July 1, 2024, through
June 30, 2025
Annual Report



WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
**HUMAN
SERVICES**
Bureau for Social Services

Regulatory Management
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Introduction

W. Va. Code § 49-2-111a requires the West Virginia Department of Human Services (DoHS) to enter into performance-based contracts with child placing agencies (CPAs). The statute defines performance-based contracting as being contracts which structure the procurement of services around the purpose of the work to be performed; set forth the desired results in clear, specific, and objective terms with measurable outcomes; and link payment for services to contractor performance.

Any performance-based contracts must include adequate capacity to meet the anticipated service needs in the contracted service area of the CPA; the use of evidence-based, research-based, and promising practices, where appropriate, including fidelity and quality assurance provisions; and CPA data reporting, including data on performance and service outcomes, including, but not limited to:

- Safety outcomes;
- Permanency outcomes;
- Well-being outcomes;
- Incentives earned;
- Placement of older children;
- Placement of children with special needs; and
- Recruitment and retention of foster parents.

Beginning in July 2021, the Bureau for Social Services (BSS) implemented higher per diem payments¹ to all CPAs for accepting children with moderate and severe behavioral health issues, as well as children who were medically fragile. Payments were based on the level of the child’s needs and are increased or decreased after periodic reviews of the child. Children enter care at Tier II and are evaluated using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) within the first 30 days to determine their actual level of need. Rates are increased or decreased depending on their scores in specific items of the CANS. These scores are reviewed by the Administrative Service Organization (ASO), Acentra, and rates are adjusted accordingly. The following chart shows a breakdown of tiered foster care payments.

Age Range	Tier I (Traditional foster care)	Min. to Foster Parents (Tier I)	Tier II (Mild to moderate behavioral mental health issues)	Min. to Foster Parents (Tier II)	Tier III (Therapeutic foster care for moderate to significant behavioral mental health issues)	Min. to Foster Parents (Tier III)
0 – 5	\$68.00	\$26.00	\$93.00	\$30.00	\$130.00	\$38.00
6 – 12	\$70.00	\$28.00	\$95.00	\$32.00	\$132.00	\$40.00
13 - 21	\$73.00	\$31.00	\$98.00	\$35.00	\$135.00	\$43.00

¹ In December 2020, BSS implemented an age tiered per diem payment. Prior to these significant increases, CPAs were paid \$55.00 per child, per day and from that amount were required to pay their foster parents no less than \$20.00 per child, per day.

Also in early 2021, DoHS began outlining required outcomes of performance expected from CPAs as well as an incentive-based payment schedule to meet those outcomes.

BSS initiated bi-weekly meetings with its CPAs to develop performance-based contracts for family foster care. These meetings were held to solicit feedback from the agencies as well as to establish outcomes for our foster care contracts. During the meetings, BSS staff and providers collaborated to develop a scorecard that measures the performance of each agency and compares each agency individually against the state average.

One of the most important factors in developing these outcome measures was ensuring CPAs were measuring performance that was within their level of control. Each measure developed is a direct result of a federal standard, compliance measure, or supports the vision of the child welfare system in the state.

Description of Measures

Performance measures were developed collaboratively with the agencies. The performance measures include standards the State is measured against during its federal review process by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families' Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). These measures focus on 12 items of safety, permanency, and well-being:

- Item 1 measures safety of children in their foster care setting by agencies reporting the number of children in their care during the calendar month that had a substantiated finding of maltreatment. This number is converted to a percentage of children considered safe at the end of the month.
- Item 2 measures the number of children who received two monthly visits by their agency case worker during the month according to their contract. This item is also tracked during the CFSR and creates a financial penalty for the State when the percentage is below 95%.
- Item 3 measures the percentage of youth placed with the agency during the calendar month who were required to and did receive a CANS assessment.
- Item 4 measures the percentage of children who are part of a sibling group and are placed together in the same foster home. This item measures the State's progress in developing homes who take sibling groups. Keeping siblings together is a best practice in child welfare and a focus for West Virginia.
- Item 5 measures the percentage of children who remained in the same foster home during the calendar month and is also a CFSR item. Disrupted placements create additional trauma for children in foster care. West Virginia has made a concerted effort to keep children from making multiple moves while in foster care which decreases the amount of time to reunification or other forms of permanency.
- Item 7 measures the percentage of youth in foster care during the month that have a transition plan for older youth in place. This plan outlines the adult life skills they need to master as well as the steps to help the youth become self-sufficient in preparation for aging out of foster care.
- Item 8 measures the percentage of children with the CPA who are adopted within six months of termination of parental rights. Timely adoption is also a CFSR measure. CPAs currently receive \$1,000 for each completed adoption.
- Item 9 measures the percentage of children who receive visits with their family as recommended by their visitation plan. Maintaining connections is also a CFSR measure, and frequent visitation with family has been shown to decrease the length of time to reunification.

The remaining four items measure recruitment and retention of foster parents by the agency; raw numbers as well as length of time a family has been a foster home. This allows both the individual agency and the state to measure the percentage of increase in homes.

CPAs: Scorecards

West Virginia CPAs are required to submit monthly performance measures to DoHS. Beginning in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023, July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, DoHS worked closely with CPAs to further refine the performance measures based on reporting barriers. Baseline values were determined by DoHS using aggregated reporting data for the previous and current fiscal years. The baselines were agreed upon by the child placing agencies. DoHS and child placing agencies worked through the additional identified reporting barriers, finalized the baseline values, and identified performance measures that are within the control of the agencies and measurable.

Each CPA utilizes a single Excel workbook developed and provided by DoHS. The workbook provides tabs for each month in the fiscal year for the CPAs to complete each measure. In addition, there are two read-only tabs that summarize the data to provide simple aggregation for the CPAs. Below is an example of an agency scorecard.

Foster Care CPA Measures		YTD	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22
1. Safety. Rate of maltreatment of children in CPA Agency's care during the reporting period. <i>Notes: Only include Institutional Investigation Unit investigations (IIUs) that originate from your agency's foster homes. Do not include IIUs that originate from other agencies.</i>	(A) Number of unduplicated children in care during the reporting period		174	186	181	175	158	149
	(B) Number of total unduplicated children with IIUs substantiated by foster family during the reporting period (only include number of children identified in investigation, and not total in household)			1				
	Percentage of children without substantiated IIUs	99.96%	100.00%	99.46%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
2. Safety. Percentage of children receiving 2 monthly visits from the CPA worker. <i>Notes: A minimum of two monthly visits from the CPA's worker are required. If a child is in care for only 2 weeks in a month, a minimum of one visit is required. Include all children in care during the reporting period in the calculation. If a child did not receive required visits every month, do not include them in item B.</i>	(A) Number of unduplicated children in care during the reporting period		163	186	181	175	158	117
	(B) Number of children receiving 2 monthly visits from the CPA worker (or 1 visit for children placed at least 14 days or less during the reporting period)		163	176	179	161	157	117
	Percentage of children receiving required CPA worker visits	98.74%	100.00%	94.62%	98.90%	92.00%	99.37%	100.00%
3. Placement. Percentage of children placed, with a CANS completed as required. <i>Note: This question is designed to document CANS due in the reporting period (and not children placed in the reporting period).</i>	(A) Number of children in placement that require an initial CANS during the reporting period		4	12	19	9	6	8
	(B) Number of children in (A) that received a CANS within 30 days of entry/intake		4	12	18	9	6	7
	Percentage of children receiving a CANS within 30 days	98.52%	100.00%	100.00%	94.74%	100.00%	100.00%	87.50%
4. Placement. Percentage of siblings placed together. <i>Note: A sibling group is all children residing in home of origin, removed by a petition</i>	(A) Number of sibling groups in care		47	41	37	35	33	30
	(B) Number of sibling groups in care where BCF or court recommended or required separation							
	(C) Number of sibling groups recommended placed together Calculation: A-B		47	41	37	35	33	30
	(D) Number of sibling groups not placed together		10	7	6	6	7	8
	(E) Number of sibling groups placed together Calculation: C-D		37	34	31	29	26	22
	Percentage of sibling groups in CPA's care who are placed together	74.09%	78.72%	82.93%	83.78%	82.86%	78.79%	73.33%

Monthly Submission Process

Each month, CPAs submit their workbook to the designated staff at the DoHS Central Office. The workbooks are reviewed for data issues, such as missing values or invalid numbers, and performance standards.

The State established a DoHS Foster Care Analysis review team to review measures monthly. During SFY 2023, the review team established the baseline percentages for all items and finalized the four measurable items that are determined to be within the control of the agencies. These include:

- Youth who receive a CANS assessment within 30 days of placement;
- Youth 14 and older with a transition plan;
- Monthly caseworker visitations; and
- Youth receiving visits in accordance with their visitation plan.

Baseline items include a baseline percentage of performance measures such as number of new homes recruited, number of placement disruptions within the CPA’s control, percentage of two monthly face-to-face visits, percentage of sibling groups referred and accepted, and other measures associated with stability, permanency, and well-being. The baseline percentages were developed using overall agency averages and median.

Overall Averages of Performance Measures for July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, Reporting Period

Performance Measures	Average
Percentage of total children without substantiated Institutional Investigative Unit (IIU)	99.17%
Percentage of children receiving required CPA worker visits	99.21%
Percentage of children receiving a CANS within 30 days	97.09%
Percentage of siblings placed together	88.46%
Placement stability percentage	96.05%
Percentage of youth with a transitional plan	98.10%
Percentage of adoptions completed within six months	80.20%
Percentage of children receiving visitation services according to the visitation plan	99.49%
New foster homes opened	412
Percentage of new foster homes that accept sibling groups	72.27%
Percentage of new foster homes that accept children ages 13 and older	22.77%
Percentage of active foster homes with a placement	79.48%
Families licensed for at least two years	52.72%
Average time to becoming a licensed foster home	99 days
Foster homes closed	450

The highlighted performance measures were determined in SFY 2024 to be measurable items within CPA controls. In SFY 2025, BSS staff and CPAs participated in one-on-one quarterly meetings to discuss performance measures, non-compliance barriers, and resolutions. Corrective action plans were placed on CPAs who did not meet established baselines for the highlighted measures above. Completion or continuation of these plans was discussed at each quarterly one-on-one meeting.

Adoption Incentives

In December 2021, BSS began paying CPAs for completed adoptions pursuant to W. Va. Code § 49-2-111a(i). A process was developed to verify that all required documentation has been obtained for audit purposes. Once

verified, the state issues payment to the agency. For SFY 2025, BSS has paid a total of \$369,000 for adoptions completed by CPAs.