

Parent-Child-Caseworker Visitations

(FY2017 Appropriation Act - Public Act 268 of 2016)

March 1, 2017

Sec. 564 (1) *The department shall develop a clear policy for parent-child visitations. The local county offices, caseworkers, and supervisors shall meet a 50% success rate, after accounting for factors outside of the caseworker's control.*

Sec. 564 (2) *Per the court-ordered number of required meetings between caseworkers and parent, the caseworkers shall achieve a success rate of 65%, after accounting for factors outside of the caseworker's control.*

Sec. 564 (3) *Between February 1 and February 29, 2016, the department shall provide to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the senate and house fiscal agencies, the senate and house policy offices, and the state budget office a report on the following:*

(a) *The percentage of success rate for parent-child visitations and court-ordered required meetings between caseworkers referenced in subsections (1) and (2) for the previous year.*

(b) *The barriers to achieve the success rates in subsections (1) and (2) and how this information is tracked.*



Michigan Department of
Health & Human Services

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MDHHS completed a quality assurance compliance review on a sample of FY 2016 cases. Findings from the review concluded the following:

- Eighty-one percent of children had visits of sufficient frequency with their parents to promote parent-child relationships.
- Eighty-two percent of caseworkers visited with parents at a frequency sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency and well-being of the child and promote achievement of case goals.

Barriers to Compliance

- Time involved in transportation and supervision of visits is difficult for workers.
- Resources necessary to reimburse foster parents for transportation to visits.
- The number of available volunteers for visitation is a continued barrier.
- Standardized assessment tools for development of family specific visitation plans are not in place.
- Continued education of court personnel regarding the role and importance of parent-child visitation in child welfare cases.

Efforts to Mitigate Barriers

- Volunteer training has been developed to provide hands on knowledge for volunteers for transportation, supervision and mentoring of parent-child visits. Volunteer training is provided to all child welfare volunteers who currently assist with visitation.
- Work with volunteer organizations to increase the number of volunteers in order to increase capacity for visitation. Development and promotion of training for volunteers which will provide guidance for transportation, supervision and mentoring.
- The department is developing a parenting time guide and revising the MiTEAM (Michigan Teaming, Engagement, Assessment and Mentoring) manual to include further guidance to workers on visitation planning and evaluation.

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- Family Team Meeting (FTM) training that addresses issues of developing, implementing and revising parent-child contacts to utilize support other than the caseworker.
- Provide opportunities to educate relative caregivers about the importance of parent-child-visits and the relative caregivers' role in visitation.
- The department has piloted some behavioral based and trauma informed visitation tools in an effort to standardize parent-child visitation evaluation. In each case the parenting time tools were not specific enough to meet the needs of the caseworkers and/or required extensive training and financial resources to be implemented. Further exploration of tools and the feasibility of standardization is underway.

Tracking

MDHHS developed standard reports, a book of business and performs quality assurance compliance reviews to track compliance with caseworker-parent visits and parent-child visits and to monitor compliance with policy.