

Parent-Child-Caseworker Visitations

(FY 2020 Appropriation Act - Public Act 67 of 2019)

March 1, 2020

Sec. 564. (1) *The department shall develop a clear policy for parent-child visitations. The local county offices, caseworkers, and supervisors shall meet an 85% success rate, after accounting for factors outside of the caseworkers' control.*

(2) *Per the court-ordered number of required meetings between caseworkers and a parent, the caseworkers shall achieve a success rate of 85%, after accounting for factors outside of the caseworkers' control.*

(3) ***By March 1 of the current fiscal year, 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.***



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Section 564(3) PA 67 of 2019

The Modified Implementation, Sustainability and Exit Plan review of cases in reporting period 16 (January-June 2019) revealed:

- Sixty-three (63.9) percent of children had visits of sufficient frequency with their parents to promote parent-child relationships.
- Sixty-nine (69.7) 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.
- Standardized assessment tools for development of family-specific visitation plans.
- Continued education of community partners regarding the role and importance of parent-child visitation in child welfare cases.

Efforts to Mitigate Barriers

- Family Team Meeting (FTM) facilitator training continues with a focus on worker specific skills related to developing, implementing, and revising parent-child contacts in order to develop and work with a comprehensive family team. Further enhancements to this training include:
 - Forming and maintaining a family team for purposes of parent child visitation.
 - Utilizing natural and system supports in meeting the needs of visitation.
- The Safety and Facilitation Experts FTM pilot was implemented to place focus on two crucial times in a child welfare case, removal and return home. Specially trained facilitators place focus on a number of case elements, including continuing the connection between parents and children when removal must occur and ensuring appropriate supports are in place as visitation increases prior to return home.
- The Foster Care Supportive Visitation program provides intensive and individualized parent-child visit services to families whose children are in foster care and where reunification is the case goal. General activities include providing in-home parenting education, observing parent-child interactions, and giving helpful feedback to the parent before and after each session. Contract amounts were increased to increase the number of families the program can service.
- Development of contracts for the delivery of evidenced-based services to address needs related to parenting skills.
- Training is provided, as needed, to ensure a clear understanding of visitation policy, proper documentation of visitation in Michigan Statewide Automated Child

Parent-Child-Caseworker Visitations Section 564(3) PA 67 of 2019

Welfare Information System, and the use of data in identification of trends and gaps locally and statewide.

- As a part of continuous quality improvement efforts, development and revision of tools to assist in improving parent-child visits including:
 - Foster care caseworker transfer tool that includes a renewed focus on maintaining parent-child visits.
 - Supervisor case read tool; emphasis placed on identifying barriers to visitations and interventions to address those barriers.
 - Development of survey for foster care caseworkers, parents, caregivers and older youth to help identify barriers to visitation to inform policy and practice.
 - Revision of FTM policy, practice guidance, and documentation requirements to provide better guidance on developing comprehensive parent- child visit plans.
 - Efforts to identify decision points in foster care cases to address issues of overrepresentation of minorities coming into care and strategies to address issues of permanency, safety and well-being.

Tracking

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