



Washington Association for Children & Families

PAYMENT TO IN-HOME SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR TRAVEL TIME TO FAMILY HOMES

HISTORY

The Children's Administration funds in home family preservation services and evidenced-based programs to protect child safety, promote reunification of children with their families, and comply with court orders. Many of the current in home services contracts do not fully reimburse providers for time travelling to client homes. Many pay only a half rate for travel time, and one evidence based program (Parent Child Interaction Therapy) pays for no travel time at all. In both rural and urban communities, the travel distance or time spent commuting to clients is often significant.

Service providers are unable to provide evidenced-based programs and family preservation programs at a financial loss. Lack of full reimbursement for travel time prohibits many private agencies from providing in home services in rural areas, resulting in lack of service availability in too many areas of our state. In addition, over time it has also become a serious problem in King County, where distances are not great but time spent in traffic is significant.

Current travel time reimbursement rates are not adequate or sustainable; they do not cover the costs of service delivery. Providers report continued losses on most in home services, and some have had to stop delivery of services, particularly in rural areas of the state.

CA supports this position in a Policy Level Decision Package, *Reimbursing Contactors for Travel*.

REQUEST

We are asking that that the legislature provides funding to pay the full hourly rate for all time spent travelling to families. The CA projected biennial cost is \$4.4 million to increase the travel reimbursement from 50% to 100% of the hourly clinical rate. In addition, we request \$370,000 for the biennium to pay agencies for travel time delivering Parent Child Interaction Therapy.

By adequately reimbursing providers for their costs, CA will maintain a robust and diverse pool of service providers and will help our state meet the federal Children's Bureau requirement that placement prevention and reunification services for families are equitably available to all families regardless of where they live.