



In-Home Service Providers Need Full Reimbursement for Travel Time

The Need:

- More adequately reimburse in-home family preservation and support services providers for time spent traveling to families.

Why?

- More families will receive preventative services, reducing the need to place children in foster care.
- The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) will be better able to maintain the provider capacity needed to meet the requirements of the new federal Family Preservation Prevention Services Act (which provides IV-E funding).
- DCYF will be more able to meet the federal Children's Bureau requirement that placement prevention and reunification services are equitably available to all families regardless of where they live.

What the Legislature Can Do:

- Provide \$2 million to pay the full \$65 hourly rate for time spent travelling to families.

Background:

DCYF 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.

In rural, and some urban communities, the time spent travelling to client families is often significant but DCYF currently pays **for travel at only at 75% of the regular vendor rate**.

In 2017, the legislature provided funding to bring the travel rate up from 50% of the vendor rate to the current 75% rate. The additional \$2M requested this year would bring the rate up to match the regular vendor rate.

Private agencies serving families in their homes are unable to continue to provide evidenced-based and family preservation programs at a financial loss. **The lack of adequate reimbursement for travel time prohibits many agencies from serving families 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 some urban areas where distances are not great but time spent in traffic is. Providers report continued losses on most in-home services and some have had to stop delivering in-home services altogether.**

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