CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Home Visiting Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

December 19, 2024 -9:00am-1:00pm Virtual Meeting

Welcome and Introductions

DCYF Home Visiting Policy and Systems Manager, Nelly Mbajah welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.

HVAC Slides

Legislative Update

DCYF Senior Policy Advisor Mary Sprute-Garlant and Start Early Director of Policy Erica Hallock provided updates about upcoming legislative priorities and DCYF request legislation.

Discussion	• Expecting a four-year budget deficit totaling \$10-12 billion.		
	Washington State Standard Monday's "Making Sense of Washington		
	State's Budget Hole".		
	<u>Sign up for Notes from Olympia from Start Early</u>		
	<u>Start Early Notes from Olympia December 2024 Interim Edition</u>		
	Representative Tana Senn has been named Secretary to DCYF.		
	• For the incoming governor's budget, they have the ability to submit		
	an addendum and Governor elect Ferguson has indicated his top		
	priority is \$100 million in additional law enforcement at the local		
	level.		
	 DCYF's task is to follow the administration's budget and cannot 		
	advocate for things outside the governor's budget.		
	• Regarding no further funding for 6109, does that mean funding for a		
	certain number of years and will that stay in place? Or is it just one		
	year of funding?		
	 It was just one year of funding. That's all we received initially. 		
	 Since this is a proposal, the legislature could opt to fund it 		
	although that is highly doubtful. Please note, just because		
	something is in or not in the governor's budget doesn't mean		
	it will be in the final budget.		
	• Is the 400,000 for the expansion?		
	• We received a million dollars for expansion. We're anticipating		
	that will not be spent this year because of the time it takes for		

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	hiring. The issue we face is that the budget does not always
	align with when dollars go out.
	 If that money is swept, then it's gone, and it won't go back.
	The reason the expansion started was part of the budget was
	adopted in 2023 but didn't start until the following year. The
	strategy was to prevent the underspent to give a year to plan.
	Does that mean that our expansion budget is 600K?
	 Yes, that's correct.
•	There was also a proposed cut to the foundational public health that
	is significant.
•	Is there something that advocates are focusing on in relation to home
	visiting?
	 Yes, we have a one pager focused on rates. We will continue
	to talk about rates in partnership with DCYF with regards to
	education and information. We'll continue to talk about the
	need. Our number one priority is to protect.
	 <u>Home Visiting advocacy document</u>
•	Do you anticipate all travel to be frozen across DCYF through
	February?
	 Different state agencies have discretion on what they deem
	essential and non-essential. Guidance should be forthcoming.
	I don't anticipate the travel freeze to be lifted before February.
	 We haven't gotten any guidance on how this impacts
	our contractor's travel but state employees' travel is
	frozen.
	Will you give us advice?
	 Yes, definitely once we receive guidance on that.
	 DSHS has no travel outside of the state. Inside of the
	state is case by case. It will be a rough year for state
	agency participation and these budget cuts are pretty
	significant.
	This is a long session, correct?

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	 Yes, it is 105 days, ending on April 28th. 		
	 I would ask all of us to hold in mind the families we are serving as 		
	well as our home visiting workforce and think about them in terms of		
	the economic impact of our state's taxation system. Think about what		
	these losses of services mean to our families.		
	• The 400k reduction was for FY25 only. The funding as it stands in the		
	Gov budget goes back to 1M in FY26 and FY27.		
Follow up	Please reach out to Mary (<u>mary.sprutegarlant@dcyf.wa.gov</u>) with any		
	follow up questions.		

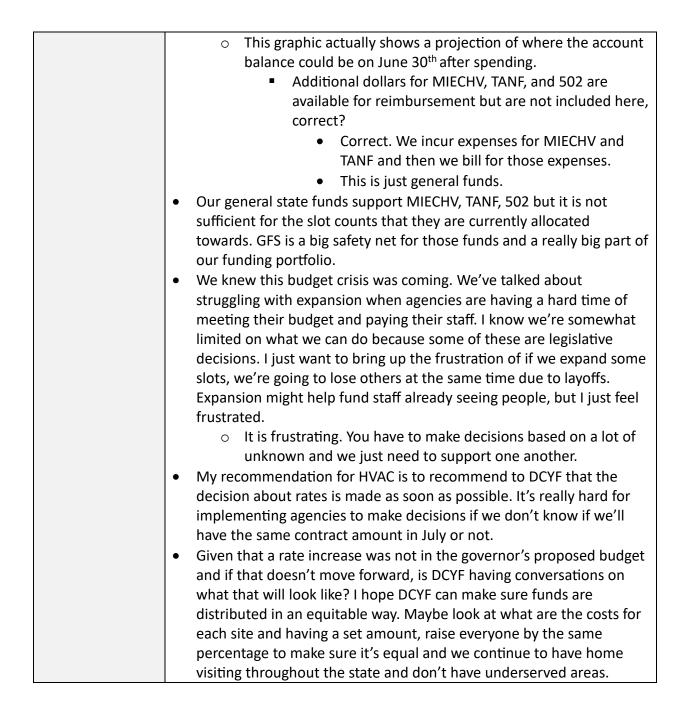
Home Visiting Service Account (HVSA) Fund Balance & Senate Bill 6109 Update

DCYF Home Visiting Policy and Systems Manager, Nelly Mbajah and Home Visiting Practice and Implementation Manager Rene Toolson led the group in a review of the HVSA Fund Balance and Senate Bill 6109 Update.

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Discussion	 Is the account balance you are sharing only State General Funds, so not including Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and or 502? Correct, TANF and MIECHV are reimbursement based. They don't go into the account. Is there a way for DCYF leadership to assert a protection for this funding? I'm assuming part of the money that hasn't gone out is in anticipation of rates. This money shouldn't be swept so that we can support some level of rate increase for providers. We are currently doing some active thinking and having that
	 Is the account balance the same as underspend or is the account balance simply the amount of the money in the account? Since we're halfway through fiscal year 2025, can we assume a good portion of
	that \$2.1 will go out to programs?

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	 It has been several years now of unknowns and significant change. That is a challenge for many reasons. Doing an across the board increases does nothing to address inequity. Doing targeted increases may be a better alternative. We are looking at a lot of different scenarios and the more targeted approach is more considered. Is using the account balance re: the state funds (2.1 million) and the resources associated with other funding streams (MIECHV, TANF, 502) to go towards rates, a strategy to protect dollars that are currently very vulnerable? Can MIECHV speed up if they will approve using a rate? Can we use the funds toward rates and make that more protected? July seems too late. Can we speed it up to protect the resources? We have some control of it but not all. We are working with MIECHV to see if that is an option. There is only so much we can do to push that forward. We are trying to figure out how to protect what we have. We don't want to have service or families impacted. We are trying to balance internal initiatives and processes with the federal pieces and how to best utilize
	the resources that we have. It is an effort to protect but there
	are pieces beyond our sphere of control.
Follow up	Please reach out to Nelly Mbajah (<u>nelly.mbajah@dcyf.wa.gov</u>) for any
	follow up questions.

Rates Evaluation Update

DCYF Assistant Secretary for Partnership Prevention Services, Vickie Ybarra gave an update about the next steps with the rates evaluation.

Discussion	• DCYF is not moving forward with a rates evaluation at this time. Since
	we have not fully implemented rates in home visiting, I felt it was
	premature to do this evaluation. Additionally, I wanted the
	opportunity to consider the DOH contractual resources that would be

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	necessary to complete this kind of evaluation. My suggestion is to
	reevaluate in the spring.
	 I think we have a key opportunity to look at this from a
	developmental evaluation process and looking at the input of
	partners in the development of the rates work and early
	implementation. I think the development of the rates work could be
	very informative for HVAC and for DCYF to think about how voices
	and perspectives are incorporated in designing a new reimbursement
	process. The early implementation information we could gather
	would also be helpful for expansion of the RBC work assuming that's
	still going forward in the spring. There are some opportunities we
	lose by delaying.
	\circ I agree that early implementation offers opportunities for
	valuable learning. I know researchers tend to think about
	learning in formal structured way. We've implemented
	rate based contracting with many contract groups and my
	hope is we do not have to conduct a formal evaluation in
	order to hear from those who've been involved to improve
	our process. I think the local implementing agencies have
	been fairly engaged and vocal about their preferences. We
	don't necessarily need to do a formal evaluation as we
	have an opportunity to hear from the contractors along
	the way of implementation and makde adjustments. We
	will still be in early implementation in the spring and can
	reevaluate then because there are so many unknowns
	right now.
Follow up	Please reach out to Vickie (<u>vickie.ybarra@dcyf.wa.gov</u>) with any follow up
	questions.

Updates



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HVAC Updates Discussion 6109 Procurement updates (service & training)

• Originally, we were running to procurements one for a startup program and the other for expanding existing programing. Those procurements went live in October and closed in November. We received a few applications for startup but they were missing important elements so we did not move forward with that. For expansion, the requests triple the amount of dollars we have. We're in the process of budgeting and that announcement will come out in January after working on proposals. We're going forward with that
 freeze. 6109 was issued and the DCYF Contracts Office informed us because of the way the money goes out the door it is not a direct client service contract. Therefore, we reissued a formal solicitation. Anyone who did apply will need to reapply. They will need to register with DES and fill out forms for competitive procurement. The process is running through contracts office which requires a protracted protest time period. We have to allow two and half weeks of protest if someone is not funded. The application deadline is January 10, there's a bidders' conference on January 6 and the materials are only released to local implementing agencies (LIAs). While it is a public procurement, you're not eligible to apply unless you are a current LIA funded by DCYF. You have to implement one of the nine home visiting models and you may only propose to implement the model you're currently funded to do. Hopefully, if there are no protests, we'll be able to move forward with contract negotiations by the end of January. Our timeline would be to execute contracts the first week of February. We're continuing to move forward even though we don't know the final budget. There's still a lot of uncertainty.

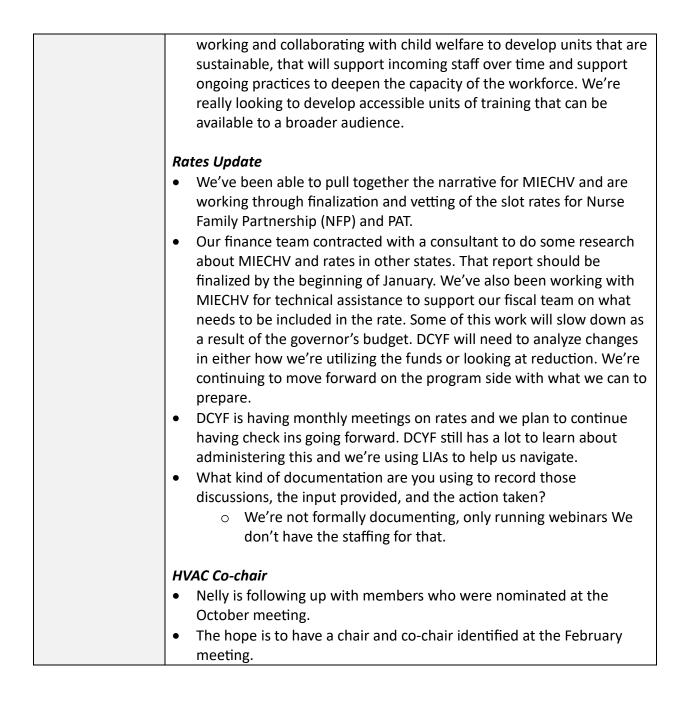
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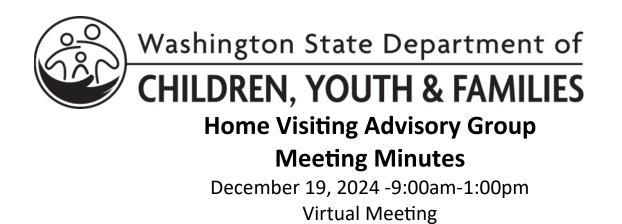
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• If funding does not continue for 6109 for implemented organizations,
if that LIA has an open funding slot, can we move between funding
sources so that we don't lose families? The agency has been working to create pathways for
Family First and being able to draw down funds for home
visiting. Those conversations are still going forward. We've
also discussed creating referral pathways with child
welfare agencies because we were not drawing down
federal funds for Family First. That work will continue
regardless of 6109. We never want families to be cut off
from services.
• The funding for expansion was secured in 2023 with a start date of
7/1/24 and was accompanied by additional funds for LIAs. There is a
lot of legislative focus on LIA investment and the importance of
serving more families. The move to rates is very important to the
legislature. The way home visiting is funded now will harm any ability
to grow the program. That's correct. We've done a series of contract increases in
the last couple of years. We were given a year to do
planning and our agency made the determination that no
additional dollars would be going out without rates.
• We just completed a procurement for a trained entity to provide
foundational training for the substance use disorder work that's
called out in 6109, as well as just general services for families
impacted by substance use disorder. We've identified two agencies
but are on pause now as we await the parameters of the funding
freeze. If things move quickly, we're hoping to have trainings starting
in March or April. They will be foundational trainings. Both agencies
have strong capacity for centering equity and a deep understanding
what it means to serve families who have been disproportionally
impacted over time. The trainings will be focused on, not only harm
reduction but, building relational safety and trust and cover topics
such as bias and stigma attached to with substance use. We're

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Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next	•	If you have any questions or additional feedback, feel free to reach out
Steps/Follow Up		to Nelly Mbajah (<u>nelly.mbajah@dcyf.wa.gov</u>).
	•	The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 20, 2025, 9 a.m.
		to 2 p.m.