

2018 Supplemental Budget Decision Package

Agency: 307 Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Decision Package Code/Title: PL – B6 / Creating a New Service Array

Budget Period: 2017-19

Budget Level: Policy Level

Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) requests \$2,907,000 (\$2,848,000 state) to provide an array of new services to expedite and facilitate family reunification efforts.

Many families involved in Washington’s child welfare system face challenges that affect child safety and well-being, parenting skills, and family relationships. The new services that target child protection and well-being will strengthen parenting skills and family relationships resulting in families who more quickly exit the child system. Families and youth involved with DCYF will strengthen their independent living skills and ability to cope with daily life challenges through services such as stable housing, mental health, and substance abuse services, and supports toward successful transition to adulthood.

Fiscal Summary:

Operating Expenditures	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
001-1 General Fund-State	\$0	\$2,848,000	\$2,481,000	\$2,481,000
001-A General Fund-State	\$0	\$59,000	\$51,000	\$51,000
Total Cost	\$0	\$2,907,000	\$2,532,000	\$2,532,000
Revenue	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
001-A General Fund-State	\$0	\$59,000	\$51,000	\$51,000
Object of Expenditure	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Object N – Client Services	\$0	\$2,907,000	\$2,532,000	\$2,532,000

Package Description:

DCYF intends to pilot a number of new services, capture data on impact to families and determine which options should be scaled to statewide. These new services include:

Legal Aid: The dependency process cannot be closed when a parenting plan is not in place to ensure the safe parent has primary residential custody. Family court handles contested plan and, once established, DCYF may place the child with the safest parent. If that parent does not have custody and cannot afford

the cost of modifying the contested parenting plan, the dependency case will remain open until the parenting plan issues can be resolved.

HB 5890 passed in 2017, which allowed DCYF to pay the cost of an attorney and to modify the parenting plan, but did not provide funding. Legal aid services would be the safest parent could retain legal custody of the child; it supports reunification by resolving safety issues and dismiss the dependency order, ending DCYF involvement. In recent examination of trial return home cases, those that were open beyond six months were frequently still open due to the lack of a parenting plan.

Housing Navigators: Lack of housing is a safety issue for children and youth—it affects family stability, access to regular medical care, nutrition, education, and other supports. Homeless parents may seek the most viable housing option for their families, which can include staying with individuals who may pose a danger to children. Reunification of children and youth is likely delayed if their parents are homeless.

For youth exiting the child welfare system, housing is often the most pressing life challenge they face. Youth slip through the cracks and may become homeless or similarly choose housing that may place them in danger. The housing system is not a system itself but rather made up of many types of private or public housing varying from private property owner owned, federally subsidized, county owned or administered, or state funded. This complex “system” is difficult to navigate, particularly, for parents or youth impacted by trauma, and many parents or youth may fall into homelessness or unstable housing.

Certified Chemical Dependency Counselors: Many parents involved with DCYF have either active or prior chemical dependency (C/D) challenges. C/D challenges can cause significant delays in reunification efforts. C/D professionals located within DCYF offices will help parents get access to services. These contracted positions existed in DCYF previously and are frequently referenced by the field as being a missing resource.

Parenting Assessments: Parenting assessments review parent and children interactions and assess the parent’s skills based on the developmental, emotional, cognitive, and safety needs of their child. Assessments include meeting with parents and observing parents and children time spent together. DCYF cannot offer parenting assessments statewide and the service is not available to all parents.

Other services may provide a proxy for a parenting assessment; however, DCYF would prefer to use a standardized, evidence-based parenting assessment easily accessible by all parents. Scarcity of the assessment causes parents to wait weeks or to travel to other locations to get their assessment done or use a proxy service that may not pertain to parental strengths and challenges.

Parenting assessment entails transporting the assessment provider to the parent and child in areas where provider is not available locally, and developing an assessment tool.

Comprehensive Service Response: A comprehensive service response allows DCYF to respond to all the parent’s service needs identified in the DCYF process. Currently, parents needing services may receive referrals from two or more providers in different locations, this causes transportation and time burdens on the parent. This also affects service provision and case plan progress, delaying permanency for

children and families. Parents living in rural or remote areas may not have access to all DCYF services. The comprehensive service permits DCYF to deliver services to all referred families within a geographical area.

DCYF would contract with one provider in each region who can deliver all in-home services, minimizing the number of professionals involved in the family’s life. The contractors would coordinate the family’s need for legal, insurance, travel, and other various requirements as well as monitoring progress and providing oversight. In addition to reducing duplicated services, comprehensive service enables DCYF to collaborate with providers to develop and maintain resources to reach underserved areas such as housing and legal aid needs.

Base Budget:

This is a new request.

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions, calculations and details:

Projected expenditures and assumptions:

Legal Aid, \$400,000

Estimated number of cases; 250 cases per year at \$1,600 per case

Housing Navigators, \$880,000

DCYF will pilot housing navigation in 20 percent of its offices statewide.

Families who received in-home services	11,251
% of families experiencing housing challenges	30.00%
Number of families experiencing housing challenges	3,375
Average per service episode cost	\$ 1,200
	<u>4,050,000</u>
Youth in Extended Foster Care (EFC)	582
% of youth in EFC experiencing housing challenges	50.00%
Number of youth experiencing housing challenges	291
Average per service episode cost	\$ 1,200
	<u>349,200</u>
Total Cost	\$ 4,399,200
Pilot housing navigation in 20% of offices statewide	<u>20%</u>
Cost of housing navigation pilot project-FY2019	<u>\$ 879,840</u>

Certified Chemical Dependency, \$480,000

DCYF will pilot chemical dependency counselor services statewide by contracting for six chemical dependency counselors. The six chemical dependency counselors will be allocated based on statewide need. DCYF estimates the cost of a chemical dependency counselor to be \$80,000 per year.

6 x \$80,000 = \$480,000 per year.

Parenting Assessment, \$397,000 first year, \$322,000 future years

Provider travel and training time: \$65 per hour (standard rate) x 3,800 travel hours	\$ 247,000
Hire contractor to develop assessment tool and deliver training (one time)	75,000
Cost of providers to attend training	75,000
	\$ 397,000

Comprehensive Service Pilot, \$750,000 first year, \$450,000 future years

Based on experience with similar piloted programs and discussions with providers, comprehensive services cost \$250,000 per year per site in the first year, and \$150,000 in future years.

	First Year:	Future Years:
Three locations \$	\$750,000	\$450,000

Decision Package Justification and Impacts

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

Performance Measure detail:

Reduce the family child reunification time by 25%.

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served.

What are other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

Impact(s) To:		Identify / Explanation
Regional/County impacts?	No	Identify:
Other local gov't impacts?	No	Identify:
Tribal gov't impacts?	No	Identify:
Other state agency impacts?	No	Identify:

Responds to specific task force, report, mandate or exec order?	No	Identify:
Does request contain a compensation change?	No	Identify:
Does request require a change to a collective bargaining agreement?	No	Identify:
Facility/workplace needs or impacts?	No	Identify:
Capital Budget Impacts?	No	Identify:
Is change required to existing statutes, rules or contracts?	No	Identify:
Is the request related to or a result of litigation?	No	Identify lawsuit (please consult with Attorney General's Office):
Is the request related to Puget Sound recovery?	No	If yes, see budget instructions Section 14.4 for additional instructions
Identify other important connections		

Please provide a detailed discussion of connections/impacts identified above.

What alternatives were explored by the agency and why was this option chosen?

Due to a lack of funding, DCYF has not been able to initiate any of these options. Several years ago, DCYF did contract for Certified Chemical Dependency professionals in many of the offices. The program was successful but eliminated in budget reductions.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

Children and families would not get the services they need. DCYF has been experiencing an increasing length of stay and growing caseload in foster care. These types of services will assist in reunify parents and children more quickly or possibly prevent placement all together.

How has or can the agency address the issue or need in its current appropriation level?

These costs cannot be absorbed within existing resources without reducing programs or services.

Other supporting materials:

Information technology:

No

Yes