



**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE MD 21201**

DATE: July 17, 2017

POLICY DIRECTIVE: SSA-CW #18-1

TO: Directors, Local Department of Social Services
Assistant Directors of Social Services
Chiefs of Foster Care
Fiscal Officers

FROM: Rebecca Jones Gaston, MSW 
Executive Director
Social Services Administration

Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer 
Budget & Finance

RE: Utilization of Caseworker Visitation with Foster Children
Funding

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Out-of-Home Placement Services

ACTION REQUIRED OF: All Local Departments of Social Services

ACTION DUE DATE: July 31, 2017

CONTACT PERSON: Helene Hornum, Program Analyst
410-767-7247
helene.hornum@maryland.gov

Brandi Stocksdales, Director
Placement and Permanency
410-767-7561
brandi.stocksdales@maryland.gov

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide guidance to the Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) on the utilization of Caseworker Visitation funds. Caseworker Visitation funds are a portion of Maryland's allocation of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds. DHR's budget and finance office annually provides each LDSS an allocation.

ACTION:

Caseworker Visitation with Foster Children funds are used to improve the quality of caseworker visitation visits with an emphasis on improving caseworker decision-making on the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster children and/or on caseworker recruitment, retention, and training.

Training for caseworkers should be offered on a regional basis. Please note that these funds cannot be used to procure a consultation or provide staff training that is available through the Child Welfare Training Academy. LDSS should also think about their technology needs in order to enhance the quality of visits. For example, these funds can be used to purchase equipment to allow for the video-taping of visits so that the caseworker's supervisor could assess the visits and help the caseworker enhance his/her skills.

Reimbursement for mileage or airfare, hotel accommodations, or meals cannot be charged to caseworker visitation when visiting foster children.

Requirements

Annually, the LDSS must submit a detailed "action plan" outlining how the LDSS plans to utilize the caseworker visitation funds. The plan must be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, by **August 18**. Failure to submit a plan by the established deadline will result in the total allocation for the LDSS being withheld and redirected by the Social Services Administration (SSA) to another LDSS.

Each quarter, the LDSS must submit to SSA a quarterly report (Attachment A) outlining the expenditures for Caseworker Visitation. SSA will be closely monitoring the expenditures of each LDSS at the end of each quarter. The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled with R*STARS to insure that reported data is consistent. If one-half (1/2) of the LDSS allocation is not spent by January 3, 2018, the remaining funds may be reallocated to another LDSS that is spending their Caseworker Visitation funds. The quarterly report is to be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, Social Services Administration.

SUBMISSION DATES

PERIODS COVERED

October 15, 2017
January 15, 2018
April 15, 2018
July 15, 2018

July 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017
October 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017
January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018
April 1, 2018 – June 30, 2018

Charge Codes for PSSF Visitation Funds

PSSF Funds **cannot** be combined with other grants or added to flex fund accounts. The local department is required to maintain separate accounting for its PSSF monthly visitation funds including the amount of funds spent on each service using these PSSF funds. **These funds must be spent on specific services and activities related to caseworker visitation funds.** The allocation for each SFY and all expenditures for services rendered between July 1 and June 30 must be liquidated (services provided and paid for) by June 30 of each year.

In order to track PSSF funds used for caseworker visitation, please use charge code PCA GC990, Project/Subproject number 0304.91, within the local Child Welfare Services (n00g0003) program.

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
CASEWORKER VISITATION
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT—SFY 2018 FUNDS**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: _____

July 1, 2017 – September 30, 2017 _____ October 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017 _____ January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018 _____
 April 1, 2018 – June 30, 2018 _____

Account Name	Account Number/ Project/Subproj ect/ Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Please describe services, activities, or purchases made during the quarter. Please be specific. For example, if trainings for workers was offered, please provide type of training and number of workers who attended.
CASEWORKER VISITATION	GC990 0304.91				
Allocation					
Year-to-Date Expenditures					
Remaining Balance					

Mail or Fax the Report to:
 Helene Hornum
 Social Services Administration
 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5th Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 Fax #: 410-333-6556