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To: County Birth to 3 Program Coordinators
County Department of Human Services Directors
County Department of Social Services Directors
County Department of Community Programs Directors
Long-Term Support Supervisors and Leads

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System, Fiscal, and Operational Management

County Allocation Methodology for Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program

Summary

This memo explains the methodology used by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to allocate federal and state funding to county Birth to 3 Programs. The methodology accounts for county Birth to 3 Program enrollment rates and population size of children age birth to 3 residing in each county to proportionately fund county Birth to 3 Programs.

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is operationalized at a local level through the state and county grant. Each of Wisconsin's 72 counties are responsible for providing Birth to 3 Program services as outlined in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Background

The allocation to local Birth to 3 Programs is a combination of federal and state funds.

Federal portion of the local allocation

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) authorized by IDEA provides formula grants annually to support early-intervention services via the Part C formula grant for infants and toddlers, ages birth through two, and their families.

OSEP's allocations to states and territories are based on the number of children in the general population aged birth through two years in each state. The Department of Education uses data provided by the United States Census Bureau in making this calculation.

DHS uses the annual OSEP Part C grant funding for administrative and operational costs associated with the Birth to 3 Program. A significant proportion of the Part C allocation is distributed to local programs for direct service.

State portion of the local allocation

Per Wis. Stat. § [20.435\(7\)\(bt\)](#), the Wisconsin Legislature allocates a portion of the General Purpose Revenue (GPR) to DHS for early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Allocation Methodology

Wisconsin's allocation to county Birth to 3 Programs uses three primary data elements:

- A base rate per county/consortium agency
- An agency-specific percent make-up rate that is calculated using the average of the most recent three years of data available by combining:
 - the IFSP rate (enrolled population) and
 - the 0-3 population rate (census data)
- An historical minimum allocation (CY2019 threshold)

Base Rate Per County/Consortium Agency

Wisconsin distributes 15% of the total annual funding evenly across each agency as a base allocation. The base allocation recognizes that there are costs to operationalizing Child Find and Birth to 3 Program services in every county regardless of size. The distribution of the base allocation ensures each county receives the same minimum base allocation to support program costs.

Agency-Specific Percent Make-up Rate

To calculate the agency-specific allocation, the state creates a percent make-up for each Birth to 3 county/consortium agency in relation to the Birth to 3 Program as a whole and then distributes the individual agency allocations according to the percent make-up. The agency-specific percent make-up is calculated by combining the IFSP rate (enrolled population) and the 0-3 population rate (census data) using an average of the most recent three years of data available.

The agency-specific percent make-up is recalculated every two years to align with population and enrollment changes.

Historical Minimum Allocation (CY2019 Threshold)

In working with county partners in 2018 and 2019 to update Wisconsin's Birth to 3 Program allocation methodology, it was recognized that the historical allocations received by each county/consortium were built upon multiple iterations of rate methods. Applying the updated agreed upon methodology would in some cases result in local programs having their allocations reduced. Recognizing the risk of disruptions in current operations if allocations were reduced, the methodology was adjusted so that no local program allocation will be reduced below the CY2019 allocation.

Final Distribution of Allocations

Final allocations are calculated by combining the base allocation and the agency-specific allocation. The calendar year (CY) county allocations are distributed on January 1. Counties can view annual county allocations [here](#) and access funds through their individual GEARS (formally CARS) account.

Assistance

County Birth to 3 Programs should direct questions regarding their allocation to the [Birth to 3 fiscal inbox](#).