

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

From the Office of Children, Youth and Families
Department of Human Services

SWAN Rates Workgroup

In May 2017, the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) released OCYF Bulletin 3350-17-01, SWAN Unit of Service Payment Rates and Programmatic Changes. Upon the release, SWAN affiliates voiced questions and concerns to OCYF regarding these rate and programmatic changes. Subsequently a SWAN Rates meeting was held on July 12, 2017 with SWAN affiliate agencies. During this meeting it was decided to convene a time limited SWAN Rates Workgroup.

The SWAN Rates Workgroup is comprised of more than 40 participants representing SWAN affiliates, the SWAN prime contractor, Diakon-SWAN, LLC, the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth and Family Services, Pennsylvania's Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association and OCYF. Members have participated in monthly meetings since August 2017 in an attempt to inform and make recommendations to OCYF on how best to determine the rates to complete SWAN services. The primary focus has been to consider ways to ensure that all affiliates are reimbursed for actual costs as well as ensuring equity of service provision and payment to sustain a healthy affiliate network.

The workgroup analyzed current tools used to gather affiliate time and costs in an effort to ensure that the data collected provides reliable documentation of affiliate time and cost to complete SWAN services. With SWAN affiliate participation, a new tracking utility is being developed by the SWAN prime contractor. A pilot of the new utility is projected to begin in March 2018 with implementation projected to occur in April 2018. The SWAN prime contractor is currently preparing web-based and portal based trainings for instruction to all affiliates on how to use the new time/cost utility.

Additionally, the workgroup developed a comprehensive cost analysis survey that will be used to obtain the administrative costs (indirect, overhead and caseworker rates) associated with completed SWAN services, and to assess other economic and business challenges of affiliate providers.

The SWAN Rates Workgroup is scheduled to meet through March 2018. The network will be notified as additional progress is accomplished. SWAN affiliate agencies need to continue using the current utility until the new one is released. Affiliate agencies should contact their SWAN regional technical assistant for questions or concerns regarding the current tracking utility.

OCYF remains committed to reimbursing SWAN affiliates for the actual costs incurred to deliver permanency services to children and families served through Pennsylvania's child welfare system.

Chafee Education and Training Grant Programs

The Pennsylvania Chafee Education and Training Grant (ETG) application for the 2017-18 school year and directions for applying are available online at: www.pheaa.org/funding-opportunities/other-educational-aid/chafee-program.shtml. The 2017-18 maximum ETG award is tentatively set at \$5,000 per student, not to exceed their cost of attendance. Applications for the 2018-19 school year will be available after April 1, 2018.

All current ETG award recipients will be automatically enrolled for the next academic year and do not need to complete the ETG application.

Please contact the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency at 1-800-831-0797 with questions about current Chafee applications or a youth's status. If you have questions regarding the ETG program, contact Joe Warrick at jwarrick@pa.gov or at 717-214-6765.

National Youth In Transition Database

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) implementation is ongoing with the baseline population (every youth in foster care who reaches age 17), 21 year-old follow up population from Cohort 2, and the served population (any youth receiving independent living services regardless of age) collection period, which began October 1, 2017. NYTD questions can be directed to Joe Warrick at jwarrick@pa.gov or 717-214-6765.

Independent Living (IL) Site Visits

Site visits are underway for IL programs for 2017–18 across the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center (CWRC) practice improvement specialist assigned to your county will be contacting IL coordinators directly to set up the site visit.

In order to continue to strengthen services and outcomes for IL youth and to build partnerships, it is strongly recommended that counties select and invite the appropriate persons to participate in the site visit. If you have any questions or need additional information about IL site visits, please contact your CWRC practice improvement specialist or Meghan O'Hare at meo43@pitt.edu or 717-795-9048. Questions regarding IL funding should be directed to Joe Warrick, Office of Children, Youth and Families, at jwarrick@pa.gov or 717-214-6765.

Mandated Reporters

Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) details the requirements for mandated reporters to report suspected child abuse and defines what constitutes child abuse in Pennsylvania. Mandated reporters making an oral report do so by calling ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313. They must also complete a CY47 and forward to the county children and youth agency, within 48 hours after making the report. This form can be obtained at <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/resources/forms/index.htm> or from the children and youth agency. When a mandated reporter makes a report electronically, they do so at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis and then are not required to complete the CY47. It is the mandated reporters responsibility under statute to make the report, when they suspect a child is a victim of abuse. Additional information regarding who is required to report suspected child abuse, and when, can be found at <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>.

SWAN/IL Google Groups

There are currently over 775 members of the SWAN/IL ListServ through Google Groups. This is a wonderful way to share confidential information across the network to assist in sharing waiting children, asking colleagues for advice, and announcing upcoming events. Anyone wishing to join this group must be an employee of a county children and youth agency, SWAN affiliate agency, or IL provider. If interested, please contact Joe Warrick by email (jwarrick@pa.gov).

National Adoption Center Matching Events

The National Adoption Center and SWAN will co-sponsor three Older Youth Matching Events this year! These events bring together older youth in need of an adoptive family with families who are approved to adopt. They are geared towards youth ages 12 and older. The dates and locations for the three events are as follows:

- Saturday, March 17, 2018 – Citizens Bank Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Saturday, June 9, 2018 – Camp Agawam, New Castle, Pennsylvania
- Saturday, October 6, 2018 – Camp Mt. Lou San, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Family and youth registration is open at www.adopt.org for the March 17th event.

For more information about these events, please contact Julie Marks, National Adoption Center, at 267-443-1875 or pateen@adopt.org.

We'd love to see your kids, your families and YOU there!

Accurint®

Accurint provides the opportunity to search for people in various ways. OCYF has added advanced features to our contract to allow you more opportunities to find absent parents, relatives, kinship resources, confirm addresses, etc. Some of the advanced features are the Virtual Identity Report and Advanced Phone Search. Both are separate reports and must be done in addition to the Comprehensive Search. For more information about Accurint, contact Desiree Weisser at dweisser@pa.gov or 717-705-2911.

FBI Background Checks

The Commonwealth has transitioned to a new FBI Criminal Background Checks vendor, IDEMIA, effective November 28, 2017. Appointments to be fingerprinted are not required, but pre-registration is required. Once registered, you may walk-in during a location's posted hours of operation, but scheduling an appointment may lead to lesser/no wait times. In order to pre-register for a FBI background check and/or find a fingerprinting location, applicants should access the IDEMIA website.

IDEMIA uses service codes when identifying the authorized purpose for why an applicant is being fingerprinted. This ensures applicants are processed for the correct purpose and agency.

Below are the service codes available for applicants applying under the DHS:

Service Code	Applicant Type
1KG6ZJ	DHS Volunteer
1KG71B	Foster Parent
1KG72V	Prospective Adoptive Parent
1KG738	Child Care Services/Program Employee or Contractor
1KG74S	Family Child Care Home Provider
1KG756	Employee >=14 Years Contact w/ Children
1KG76Q	Individual >=18 Years in Foster Home
1KG774	Individual >=18 Years in Prospective Adoptive Home
1KG78K	Individual >=18 Years in Licensed Child Care Home
1KG8TG	Individual >=18 Years in Family Living, Community, or Host Home

To find an Identogo fingerprint site, please visit www.identogo.com/locations.

IDEMIA also offers employers the option to pay for services using a No Charge Authorization Code (NCAC), which is backed by a credit card provided

during the account setup. To use this method for payment, the employer must complete and submit the IDEMIA NCAC Agreement which will be available on the IDEMIA website at www.identogo.com/locations/pennsylvania.

The account must be established prior to sending applicants to the fingerprint site.

For additional information, contact IDEMIA at 844-321-2101 or visit their website www.identogo.com.

Adoption Assistance

Adoption Assistance supports permanency for special needs children in foster care by providing the families who adopt these children with the resources they need to care for these children. Public county Children and Youth agencies (CYA) are the only agencies that can determine whether a child is eligible for Adoption Assistance. Due to an OCYF staff change, please direct any questions regarding adoption assistance to TaWonda Jones-Williams (tjoneswill@pa.gov) and Danielle Rhodes (danierhode@pa.gov).

#MeetTheKids Media Campaign

The third round of the media campaign, #MeetTheKids, will begin airing January through March as television commercials featuring waiting youth and adoptive families (#MeetTheFamilies). Waiting child segments designed to find adoptive families for older youth in need of families (aired on KDKA TV 2, a Pittsburgh CBS affiliate, Val's Kids is aired on WHTM ABC 27 in the Harrisburg area; and A Little Love is aired on WBRE TV 28, a Wilkes-Barre NBC affiliate) will continue throughout 2018.

While this media campaign airs, agencies should be prepared to promptly respond to phone calls from prospective foster and adoptive families. Please contact Joe Warrick for additional information at jwarrick@pa.gov or 717-214-6765.

Office of Children, Youth and Families

P.O. Box 2675
 Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675
 717-787-3984
www.dhs.pa.gov

From the SWAN Prime Contract

Diakon-SWAN, LLC/Family Design Resources, Inc.

Continuing Gains in the Finalization Unit of Service

According to finalization data from the SWAN Portal, 342 children, including 35 youth age 13 and older, completed the SWAN finalization unit of service during the first quarter of state fiscal year (SFY) 2017/18 (July-September 2017). There were 423 referrals for finalization during this same time period; 42 referrals (10 percent) were for older youth.

SWAN and Independent Living serve the same youth in foster care. Both programs work to increase permanency for older youth in foster care and to better prepare youth in danger of aging out of the system without a permanency resource.

Over the past five state fiscal years, 821 youth have been adopted. In SFY 2012/2013, 140 youth were adopted, and in state fiscal year 2016/17, 176 youth were adopted through the SWAN portal. This is a 26% increase in youth adopted through the SWAN portal and demonstrates the collaborative efforts between the SWAN and IL programs.

We would like to thank the network for their continuing efforts in achieving these considerable gains in permanency for older youth.

Resource Families for Pennsylvania's Waiting Children

In calendar year 2017, in an effort to ensure the Resource Family Registry (RFR) accurately reflects available families, the network submitted closures for nearly 5,000 families who were no longer actively working with agencies. Closing families who are no longer active is just as important as registering families with the RFR. According to Act 160 of 2004, all families (foster, adoption and kinship) who apply to be a resource parent for children through Pennsylvania's child welfare system must be registered in the RFR. Public and private children and youth agencies that approve resource parents are required to register them and are responsible for keeping the records updated until the families are no longer working with the agency.

All agencies have the ability to review a list of their families as well as look at any information submitted on those families. We encourage all agencies to review their families collectively and individually. Agencies should update information if needed; some of the most important fields include the caseworker listed on the individual record, the family email address and any characteristics the adoptive family is willing to consider. Updates can be made quickly via the Resource Family Registration and Update Form (CY131) in the SWAN portal.

Pennsylvania relies on the information in the RFR to understand the relationship between children in care and the families available to care for them. In December 2017, there were 22,000 active families, the bulk of whom are families providing foster care. However, the number of kinship caregivers continues to increase at a fast pace. As of December, the number of approved and active kinship families was over 7,000, which represents an increase of 3,000 over the last ten years.

If you have any questions about the registration status of your families, reports can be obtained online through the SWAN portal. To verify if your agency is current with all families, contact your SWAN regional technical assistant.

Formal Kinship and the SWAN Helpline

Did you know that the SWAN Helpline assists formal kinship families as well?

Helpline technical specialists:

- Assist eligible formal kinship families with the referral process for SWAN Post-permanency services;
- Are knowledgeable about benefits such as Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and can guide families in applying for those benefits;
- Can help troubleshoot issues formal kinship families may be having with their benefits;
- Are aware of other state and local programs and resources where they can refer formal kinship families; and,
- Will continue to support formal kinship families for as long and as often as they like through follow-up phone contact.

OCMI Referrals

Older Child Matching Initiative (OCMI) referrals can now be made through the SWAN portal. County agencies can make OCMI referrals for children who meet eligibility requirements. To be eligible, a child must be over 10 years old or have a sibling who is over 10 years old; have a primary goal of adoption; have a PAE status of either active, hold or temp hold; and be legally free unless the court that determines dependency will not terminate parental rights until an adoptive resource has been identified.

The following are some of the important points to know about OCMI as you consider making referrals:

- This is a state-funded grant that focuses on matching older youth with an adoptive family.
- OCMI is intensive recruitment and can be done in conjunction with Child Specific Recruitment (CSR) so long as the youth meets the requirements listed here. Combining OCMI with CSR enables two recruiters to work in tandem, dividing and conquering tasks to help the youth obtain permanency.
- Referrals are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and there is often a waiting list. We strongly recommend submitting your referral immediately upon identification of a child or sibling group who can benefit from this service.

Before a referral can be accepted, an agency must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Monthly reports are then emailed to the agency point of contact identified in the MOU.

Please contact your PAE coordinator or SWAN regional technical assistant if you need assistance navigating this new portal feature.

SWAN Units of Service Meetings

The 2018 winter/spring SWAN Units of Service meetings will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the dates listed below. These meetings offer an opportunity for affiliates who are providing services to come together to discuss recent issues in practice and learn about upcoming changes to policies and procedures connected to SWAN. An invitation with more details about each event will be sent out through the SWAN prime contractor as we get closer to the date.

Units of Service Post-permanency Meetings:

Feb. 16, 2018

Central Region - Diakon/FDR, Large Conference Room

Western Region - Family Pathways, Chimney Hall

Feb. 23, 2018

Southeast Region - Church on the Mall

Northeast Region - Thomas P. Saxton, Auditorium

Units of Service Programming Meetings:

March 9, 2018

Central Region - Diakon/FDR, Large Conference Room

Southeast Region - Church on the Mall

Western Region - Family Pathways, Chimney Hall

Northeast Region - Thomas P. Saxton, Auditorium

April 13, 2018

Central Region - Diakon/FDR, Large Conference Room

Southeast Region - Church on the Mall

Western Region - Family Pathways, Chimney Hall

Northeast Region - Thomas P. Saxton, Auditorium

All times: 9:30am - 12:30pm

Important Changes to Family and Child Profile Addendums

In May 2017, OCYF issued Bulletin 3350-17-01 (SWAN Unit of Service Payment Rates and Programmatic Changes). This bulletin changed the payment structure and timing of referrals for family profile addendums. According to the bulletin, effective July 1, 2017, the price paid for a family profile does not include any addendums. An affiliate or county children and youth agency must request an addendum by making a referral to the SWAN prime contractor for a family profile addendum at a unit cost of \$500. Affiliate and county agencies may only request one addendum per family profile per year up to a total of two addendums. Therefore, addendums for family profiles referred after July 1, 2017 may not be referred before July 1, 2018.

Concerning child profile addendums, effective July 1, 2017, the price paid for a child profile does not include any additional addendums. County children and youth agencies must request an addendum by making a referral to the SWAN prime contractor for a child profile addendum at a unit cost of \$500. County agencies may only request one addendum per child profile per year. Addendums may not be referred before July 1, 2018.

Information about completing child and family profile addendums can be found in the SWAN Permanency Toolkit (<http://swantoolkit.org/>) within the Family or Child Profile Addendum Protocols located in Section 8 - SWAN Benchmarks & Templates. Information about payment rates and time frames for all units of service can be found in the OCYF Bulletin #3350-17-01 referenced in the SWAN Permanency Toolkit in Section 7 - Acts, Laws and Bulletins. If you have additional questions, contact your SWAN regional technical assistant.

Tracking Cost and Time for Withdrawn Services

The SWAN Rates Workgroup has recently discussed the need to factor the cost and time for withdrawn services into the SWAN service rates. To help inform this review, we encourage affiliates to track the cost and time to deliver services that later become withdrawn in addition to tracking the cost and time to deliver SWAN services to completion. While this is not a requirement, providing this information will assist in determining how to account for the efforts applied that currently go unreimbursed.

Cost and time for withdrawn services is entered through the benchmark just as the cost and time for non-withdrawn services is entered. Benchmarks can be accessed using the *Benchmark Search* and *Service Search* mechanisms located on the SWAN Portal menu.

For support on accessing the benchmarks for withdrawn services, contact your SWAN regional technical assistant.



www.adoptpakids.org

SWAN Prime Contract

P.O. Box 4560

471 JPL Wick Drive

Harrisburg, PA 17111-0560

Ph: 717-236-8490 | Fax: 717-236-8510

www.diakon-swan.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

2018 SWAN/IL Spring Quarterly Meetings

March 28, Scranton

April 4, Clarion

April 5, Monroeville

April 18, Lansdale

April 19, Philadelphia

April 24, Enola

2018 SWAN/IL Summer Statewide meeting

June 12-13

26th Annual Pennsylvania Permanency Conference

June 13– 15

Kalahari Resorts and Conventions
250 Kalahari Drive
Pocono Manor, Pennsylvania 18349

www.diakon-swan.org/swan/events/upcoming/

**From the PA Child Welfare Resource Center
Independent Living Project**
University of Pittsburgh

YAB Blast Youth Submissions

At CWRC we are on the lookout for youth submissions for the next YAB Blast and content for social media including Facebook posts. We hope to get updates about any holiday activities you participated in or spring activities you may have planned. We also want to encourage updates on regional/local YAB specific activities in each edition of the Blast. If IL programs are doing cool and exciting things we'd love to hear about them! Submissions can be sent to Marvin Butts at MDB122@pitt.edu.

YAB Regional Coordinators

Currently, we are looking for Regional Coordinators for the North Central and Northeast regions. Coordinators support the regional YAB activities, schedule meetings and support youth projects. This is a paid, part time, position that generally requires a few hours of work a month. If you are interested in additional information, please contact Cindy Gore at lcg7@pitt.edu.

Foster Care Welcome Booklet

The PA Youth Advisory has developed a Foster Care Welcome Book (see link below). The goal of the project is for peers to provide words of support and encouragement to children and youth who enter the foster care system. This is just one way the YAB hopes to improve the experiences of their peers. You can view an electronic version at <http://independentlivingpa.pitt.edu/files/FosterCareWelcomeBooklet.pdf>.

Save the Date

**2018
Older Youth
Retreat**

PCVA
PITT
pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

August 6-10, 2018
University of Pittsburgh's Johnstown Campus

For more information, please visit:
www.independentlivingpa.org
Or email Lisa Kessler at:
lkk20@pitt.edu

PA Child Welfare Resource Center
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717-795-9048
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