



**OFFICE OF FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
Families and Children Letter FCL #133**

TO: Directors and Administrators, Public and Private Agencies

FROM: Jeffery Van Deusen, Deputy Director Office of Families and Children

DATE: September 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Best Practice Incentives

Background

On July 3, 2023, Governor DeWine signed Amended Substitute House Bill Number 33 (HB 33) of the 135th General Assembly. Within the Bill, the state appropriated funding for strengthening best practices to help achieve better outcomes for children, youth, and families. The Office of Families and Children will continue the Best Practice Incentive Program; utilizing \$5 million per State Fiscal Year (SFY) to incentivize best practice measures. A portion of SFY 2024 funds will be utilized to award the final Best Practice Incentive measures outlined in [Families and Children Letter \(FCL\) #016](#). The aim is to incentivize agencies making marked improvements in achieving compliance with visitation and timely assessment/investigation measures. Advancements in these areas are critical to our state's success in making transformative change for families served by our child protection system.

Best Practice Incentives

The Best Practice Funds will continue to focus on two measures fundamental to the Children Services mission:

- Timely Assessments/Investigations
- A composite visitation score of all required face-to-face visits with children and parents.

The two Children Services Best Practice Incentive Program categories will remain the same: **Most Improved** and those **Achieving 95% Compliance**.

There will be a Bonus Incentive awarded at the end of the final cycle. This bonus funding will be awarded to counties achieving 95% compliance in both Timely Assessments/Investigations and Composite Visitation Score throughout all three evaluation periods.

Achieving 95% Compliance

Every six months, incentive dollars will be provided to counties achieving 95% compliance in either of the two prioritized measures. Incentive funding in this category will be evenly distributed to all counties achieving 95%.

Best Practice Incentive Program Category – Achieving 95% Compliance			
Evaluation Period	Duration	Data Entry to be Completed by EOB on:	Award Date
1	10/01/2023-03/31/2024	04/30/2024	June, 2024
2	04/01/2024-09/30/2024	10/31/2024	January, 2025
3	10/01/2024-03/31/2025	04/30/2025	June, 2025

Most Improved

A one-time incentive fund will be awarded to the Most Improved County in three county size categories: small, medium, and large. These groups correspond to the CPOE county size categories as follows: Major Metro, Metro, and Large are grouped and reported under “Large” group; Medium are reported under “Medium” group; and Medium Small and Small are grouped and reported under “Small” group. The baseline for this incentive will be the current 10/01/2022-09/30/2023 Best Practice Incentive Cycle.

Best Practice Incentive Program Category – Most Improved		
Duration	Data Entry to be Completed by EOB on:	Award Date
10/01/2023-03/31/2025	04/30/2025	June, 2025

Children Services Best Practice Incentive Amounts and Timelines

The chart below provides a breakdown of the incentive amounts available and the measurement timeframes:

Achieving 95% Compliance Evaluation period: October 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024	Distributed evenly among all counties achieving 95%		
Timely Assessment/Investigations	\$1,025,000		
Composite Visitation Score	\$1,025,000		
Achieving 95% Compliance Evaluation period: April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024	Distributed evenly among all counties achieving 95%		
Timely Assessment/Investigations	\$1,025,000		
Composite Visitation Score	\$1,025,000		
Achieving 95% Compliance Evaluation period: October 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025	Distributed evenly among all counties achieving 95%		
Timely Assessment/Investigations	\$1,025,000		
Composite Visitation Score	\$1,025,000		
Most Improved Evaluation Period: October 2023 - March 2025	Small	Medium	Large
Timely Assessment/Investigation			

1st	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Composite Visitation Score			
1st	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
Bonus Incentive Evaluation Period: October 2023 – March 2025	Distributed evenly among all counties achieving 95% in both measure throughout all three evaluation periods		
Bonus Incentive Award	\$540,000		

Reporting

ODJFS will extract the data monthly, and reports will be emailed each month in the same manner the Comprehensive Visitation Report and the Snapshot Dashboards are emailed. These monthly interim data extracts will reflect the data entered in Ohio SACWIS as of the day before the data extraction.

For each evaluation period described above, all agencies should have all data entered by the end of the month following the end of the evaluation period. ODJFS will extract the data on the 1st day of the month following the end of the data entry period at the close of each evaluation period.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding the Best Practice Incentives, please reach out to your Technical Assistance Specialist.