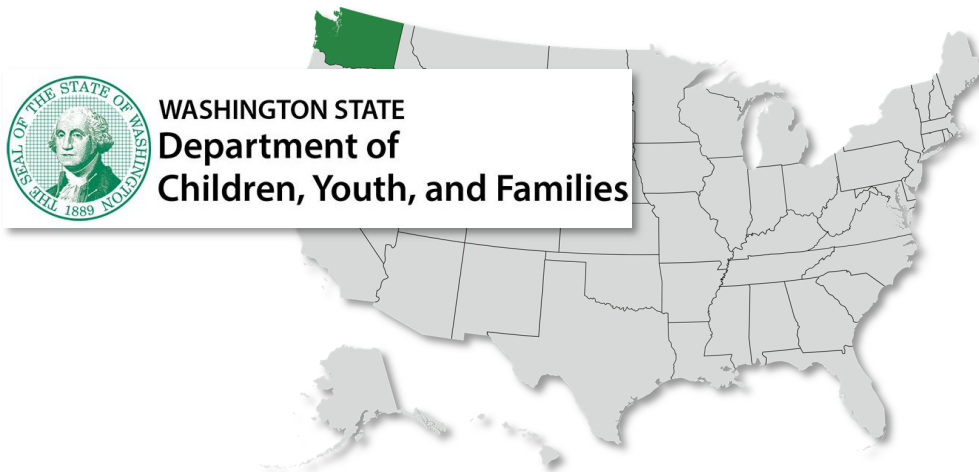


## Site Profile

### WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

#### Intervention: Telework



### QIC-WD Overview

The Quality Improvement Center for Workforce Development (QIC-WD) is dedicated to understanding how to improve child welfare workforce outcomes. The QIC-WD partnered with eight child welfare agencies to evaluate evidence-informed workforce interventions and how they are related to outcomes for children.

### Site Overview

The Field Operations Division of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) employs about 1,700 people who are responsible for the direct service to children and families with active child welfare cases. The goal of the QIC-WD project is to implement and evaluate the use of telework for Field Operations staff.

### Workforce Challenge

The QIC-WD completed a comprehensive needs assessment process that included review of administrative data; organizational culture and climate surveys completed by workers; and a root cause analysis that involved agency workers, supervisors, and leadership. The results of that process showed that staff have a high interest in being able to work from home or an alternate location closer to their home.

### Theory of Change

By implementing telework more broadly and consistently within the Field Operations division, it is expected that supervisors will support staff participating in telework and fairly and consistently implement telework policies and procedures. Therefore, staff who telework will have improved choices and sense of control over work environment; an increased ability to focus with fewer interruptions; reduced travel time; fewer hassles and discomforts with parking and uncomfortable office spaces; and/or increased ability to accommodate/attend to personal demands. In turn, it is expected that staff will have increased levels of commitment; greater work-life balance and efficiency; less



stress and burnout; improved performance and retention; and increased continuity of effective case practice and engagement with families, which leads to improved safety, permanency, and well-being for children.



## Intervention

Telework is defined as the ability for an employee to be able to work from his/her home or an alternate location. Telework best practice shows that 2–3 days per week are optimal for employees to maintain staff engagement and co-worker connections. For the purposes of this telework project, staff will be allowed to telework 2 days per week once they become eligible. Introducing telework into the public child welfare workforce is seen as innovative, because it appears to be a relatively unused strategy in this sector with even fewer studies documenting the impacts on the workforce.

## Evaluation and Expected Results

The QIC-WD is dedicated to generating new knowledge about effective strategies to improve child welfare workforce outcomes and the possible relationship to child and family outcomes. This will be accomplished through a site-specific evaluation and a cross-site evaluation. Through an evaluation of DCYF telework practices, the impact of telework will be studied to better understand if telework results in:

- increased levels of work-life balance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction;
- decreases in staff turnover; and
- improvements in child safety, permanency, and well-being.

For more information about this project, contact:

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