

**DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES  
DSCYF BUDGET FORM PREPARATION GUIDE**

*General Budget Guidelines*

**Please read these guidelines thoroughly before beginning to complete the budget form.**

Depending on the type of contract, an agency may be required to complete a DSCYF Budget Form to demonstrate the appropriateness of agency costs allocated to a DSCYF contract, and to assist DSCYF in making cost comparisons among similar programs and services. A separate budget form may be required for each program or facility funded in this contract.

**TYPES OF COSTS**

The total cost of contracts is comprised of the allowable program costs, plus the allocable portion of agency administrative costs. Therefore, for purposes of the DSCYF Budget Form, contracted costs are categorized into those two separate and distinct types: Program Costs and Administrative Costs. Definitions of these costs are provided below. Certain costs incurred by contractors may be deemed unallowable for inclusion in DSCYF contracts and, therefore, should not be included in the proposed budget on the Budget Form. These are enumerated later in this document.

**Program Costs**

Program costs are defined as those costs incurred in the provision of services to clients (see Cost Category 7 for a further discussion of the difference between program costs and administrative costs). Examples of program costs are: direct service salaries and applicable other employment costs, travel, contractual services (such as telephone, postage, rent, and sub-contractors), and supplies.

One method of distinguishing administrative personnel from program service personnel is by their proximity to client services. For instance, direct service program workers would include staff working with clients and their supervisor. As appropriate, the next level of supervision/management may also be considered as part of the program staff if their job duties include accountability for direct service staff oversight. All levels of personnel above this level should be considered administrative staff. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions should be prorated if they spend time working in multiple programs. Administrative costs must be detailed in Cost Category 7, Administrative Costs.

Certain costs, such as those for space or utilities, can be either administrative or program-related, depending on what type of employee occupies the space.

**Administrative Costs**

Administrative costs are defined as those costs incurred to provide central support functions to the direct service components of the program. Administrative costs are those that have been incurred for the overall general executive and administrative offices of the organization and other expenses of a general nature that do not relate solely or directly to any major program area of the organization. In general, administrative costs cannot be readily identified to a specific program objective without effort disproportionate to the results. This category may also include the

allocable share of administrative personnel salaries and related fringe benefit costs, operation and maintenance expense, depreciation and use allowances, and interest costs. Examples of costs that fit in this category include central office functions, such as the director's office, the office of finance, business services, budget and planning, personnel, payroll, safety and risk management, general counsel, and management information systems. If a percentage is used to calculate the "Administrative Costs" it can only be calculated against the total "Direct Service Budget Subtotal" on the DSCYF Budget Form. The resulting total dollar amount is to be entered on expense line #7 a. of the DSCYF Budget Form. The total administrative salaries must be included in the amount entered on line #7.

## **UNALLOWABLE COSTS**

The department will not pay for the following costs:

1. Costs incurred before the effective date or after the termination date of any contract.
2. Costs incurred prior to the approval of the Purchase Order by the Delaware State Department of Finance.
3. Costs incurred in violation of any provision of the DSCYF contract or the DSCYF Direct Service Programs Operating Guidelines.
4. Costs of acquisition, renovation or improvement of facilities or land, unless specifically approved by the Cabinet Secretary of the department in writing and in advance of any work being performed. Ongoing costs of facility maintenance and repair are distinguished from improvement and are allowable.
5. Costs of political activities including: transportation of voters or prospective voters to the polls, activities in connection with an election or a voter registration effort, contributions to political organizations and expenses related to lobbying.
6. Costs of idle facilities. Idle facilities mean completely unused facilities that are excess to the organization's current needs. Unallowable costs related to the idle facility include: maintenance, repair, rent, property tax, insurance and depreciation or use allowances.
7. Interest payments, late payment fees and penalties charged by vendors or credit card vendors as a result of late payments.
8. Costs related to fines or penalties imposed on the agency or legal fees related to the defense of the agency or any of its employees in any civil or criminal action.

In determining which costs are unallowable, the department used the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Grant Guidance. A copy of this document is available at the following link:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/grants/resources/uniform-guidance>

## ***Definitions and Budget Narrative Justification Requirements***

The first 6 budgeting categories on the DSCYF Budget Form relate to the operation of the program or service. Administrative costs generated as a result of any of the first 5 budgeting categories (excludes Capital Outlay/Equipment costs) must be reported under Cost Category #7 Administrative Costs. For instance, a portion of the salary of the agency Executive Director would be recorded under Administrative Costs either by direct or indirect allocation (see the section entitled Cost Allocation Methodologies for appropriate methods of allocating costs).

### **Cost Category 1 - SALARIES**

**Definition:** Compensation paid to all regular and part-time employees of the organization (as opposed to contracted workers) who directly participate in the successful completion of program objectives. (See IRS **Pub. 15-A**, Employer's Supplemental Tax Guide, <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15a.pdf> for more information on how to determine whether an individual providing services is an independent contractor or an employee.)

The percentage of individual salary allocated to this contract for each position should be equal to the proportion of time that that position spends working in the contracted program. Salary costs may be allocated to DSCYF programs by either an indirect allocation methodology or a direct allocation methodology depending on which is most appropriate for each position (see the section entitled Cost Allocation Methodologies for a list of acceptable allocation methodologies). *DO NOT report the salaries of administrative staff in this section even if they are allocated to individual programs by a direct allocation methodology such as a time study. Salaries of administrative staff must only be reported in Cost Category 7, Administrative Costs.*

Salary increases, where they can be accommodated within DSCYF contracted budget resources, should be calculated in accordance with established agency personnel policies. For example, if a salary increase is not scheduled until April of the proposed program year, the budgeted salary should be calculated at the current salary rate through March of the proposed year, and at the new rate beginning in April for the remainder for the program year.

Salaries for new positions should initially be budgeted for the prorated number of months that the positions can reasonably be anticipated to be filled. The salary would be annualized on the next subsequent DSCYF Budget Form. The contractor should provide a written explanation if it anticipates that a new position will be filled for a period greater than ten months.

**JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:** If not already on file with the department or if new position categories are added or position requirements changed, the contractor shall provide a copy of job descriptions for each staff position that is necessary for the accomplishment of program objectives with the signed contract. The job description should state the major duties to be performed and the necessary qualifications of the individual hired to perform them. **A Salary Detail form must be completed with the information for all positions that are included in this cost category. Instructions for the Salary Detail Sheet are available as a separate document. The Salary Detail form serves as the Budget Narrative for this portion of the DSCYF Budget Form.**

## Cost Category 2 - OTHER EMPLOYMENT COSTS

**Definition:** Includes employee benefits and taxes related to direct service positions funded by the contract budget. Costs may include the following line items:

Unemployment Insurance, Pensions, Health Insurance, Worker's Compensation, FICA, Medicare Tax and other benefits

The percentage of "Other Employment Costs" for any position that is only partially allocated to this contract cannot exceed the percentage of salary charged in the contract for that position. For instance, if 25% of a salary is included on the Salary Detail form, no more than 25% of any applicable "Other Employment Cost" may be requested.

**BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:** Show computation for each employment cost item specified in the budget. Other employment costs should be calculated at CURRENT RATE, not at projected rates, unless the contractor has received notice of a mandated change in benefit rates. Specify the nature of "other benefits" and show relevant computation. This type of cost must be in accordance with written agency personnel policy. Include all calculations used.

## Cost Category 3 - TRAVEL

**Definition:** Cost of transportation, lodging, and related cost of travel for trips necessary for carrying out contract objectives. Overnight trips must be authorized by DSCYF. Travel, lodging and food may be subject to established Federal travel reimbursement rates.

- a. Mileage:** Reimbursement for miles traveled by agency employees/volunteers in private vehicles for the purpose of carrying out program plan objectives must be in accordance with established contractor agency policies. Mileage cost related to travel to and from an employee's principal place of business is not allowable.
- b. Common Carrier:** Bus, train, taxi, Uber, or airplane fares for staff travel.
- c. Meals:** Applies to staff out-of-state travel only and includes tips for meals. Alcoholic beverages may not be charged.
- d. Lodging:** Applies to staff overnight travel only.
- e. Other Travel:** Staff incurred tolls, parking fees, tips for service, baggage check fees. Does not include conference registration.

**BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:** The agency must indicate the reimbursement rate per mile and reimbursement per meal, etc. in their agency policy. Show computation of budgeted figures. Briefly describe the general purposes of travel along with any calculations used.

## Cost Category 4 - CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

Definition: Allowable services or costs include the following line items:

- a. **Other Professional Services:** Includes professional services such as legal, educational, or medical which are not specifically defined in other line items, and which assist in successful accomplishment of program objectives. This includes services provided by subcontractors.
- b. **Postage and Freight:** Includes the costs of postage and/or shipping of program-related correspondence and items when such expenses are not billed as part of the original cost of the item.
- c. **Telephone:** All telephone charges including landline and cell phones related to the operation of program functions. May also include wi-fi devices and hot spot devices.
- d. **Utilities:** Includes water and sewerage, electricity, gas for heating (natural and propane), heating fuels, cable TV, streaming services, online meeting platform subscription, etc.
- e. **Insurance:** Includes insurance for building, contents, motor vehicles and liability insurance for employees who work in the program (general liability insurance should be included under Administrative Costs).
- f. **Rental/Mortgage - Building/Office/Land (see line-item g for facility Use Allowance):** Includes rental on all space related to the operation of the program. Rental costs are allowable to the extent that costs are reasonable in light of such factors as: rental cost of comparable property, if any, current market value in the area, alternatives available, and the type, life expectancy, conditions, and the value of the property leased. Agencies may be asked to produce data that demonstrates that the cost per sq. ft. is reasonable for the area in question. Funds shall not be requested for rental of facilities that are not utilized for program objectives or that are in excess of the reasonable space necessary to carry out such objectives. In determining the reasonableness of the rent charged, the department will use U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Grant Guidance and local rental data. Where utilities are included in the rental amount they must be clearly identified. Mortgage costs are allowable to the extent that they are proportionate to the square footage used by the contracted program and to the value of the property. Space shared by multiple programs must be divided into proportional cost. Where an agency holds a clear title to a facility, one of the methods in line-item g should be used to charge for space costs. (see \* at end of this section)
- g. **Use Allowance and Depreciation:** This category is appropriately used to record space costs related to DSCYF contracted programs or services where the agency holds a clear title to a building or equipment.
  - i. In this case, the agency may use one of two methods but, once chosen, a methodology may not be changed without the approval of DSCYF in accordance with IRS guidelines. The two methods are:
    - i. Use allowance: when this method is followed, the use allowance for buildings and improvements, including land improvements, such as paved parking areas, fences, and sidewalks, will be computed at an annual rate not exceeding two percent of the acquisition cost. The use allowance for equipment will be computed at an annual rate not exceeding 6 2/3 percent of acquisition cost.

- ii. Depreciation: where this method is followed, the straight-line method shall be used in the absence of clear evidence indicating another method should be used. The contractor should provide a depreciation schedule.

In either case, the method chosen (in accordance with U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Grant Guidance) shall be documented and initiated by the independent CPA firm that prepares the contractor's annual financial statements and agency audit. Final methodology approval will be made by DSCYF.

Additional restrictions on the use of these two methodologies are as follows:

- i. The computation of depreciation or use allowance shall be based on the acquisition cost of the assets involved.
- ii. Any portion of the cost of buildings and equipment donated by the Federal, State or Local government including the land cost is disallowed.
- iii. Any portion of the cost of buildings and equipment contributed by the organization in satisfaction of a matching requirement is disallowed.  
(see \* at end of this section)

For additional guidance on how to depreciate property see IRS Publication 946 or form 4562 or visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p946.pdf>.

- d. Rental - Equipment:** Includes rental of all equipment necessary to carry out program objectives.
- i. Repair/Service/Maintenance:** Includes repair, servicing and maintenance of program facilities, motor vehicles, office equipment, and all other equipment that is necessary to carry out the program.
- j. Printing and Binding:** Includes printing and preparing for distribution of all program related printed matter, including brochures, flyers, etc. for the promotion of program objectives. This does not include office stationery (see Stationery and Office Supplies) or newspaper display ads (see Advertising).
- k. Association Dues and Conference Fees:** Includes all membership fees and registration/attendance fees at conference/workshops where such activity or membership is directly related to the accomplishment of program objectives.
- l. Advertising:** Includes advertising for bids for sub-contracted services, advertising for program positions or advertising for program activities in the public media, online media, social media, etc.
- m. Other Contractual Services:** Includes costs that cannot be classified under contractual services line items a through l above. Examples of such costs include proportional property taxes, stipends, temporary employment agency fees to provide direct services to clients, subscription services, etc.

\* BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: For items f & g above, the agency must specify the owner of the building in which the program will operate, the building address and the relationship of the building owner to the contracted organization. For all items above give general purpose and basis for each item requested in this cost category along with any calculations used.

## Cost Category 5 - SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

Definition: Supplies and materials are generally short-term, consumable items used for program operations generally, but not always, with a value of less than \$1,000 per unit.

- a. **Food:** Includes food purchased for human consumption as part of a service program.
- b. **Linens and Blankets:** Includes the purchase and repair of linens and blankets for use as part of a service program for residential services.
- c. **Stationery and Office Supplies:** Includes all office stationery and office supplies necessary for program activities.
- d. **Housekeeping Supplies:** Includes supplies necessary for building maintenance and youth personal hygiene as part of a site-based program or service.
- e. **Educational, Recreational, Cultural Supplies and Subscriptions:** Includes all such materials useful in the development of program activities or in the provision of direct services through educational means.
- f. **Motor Vehicles - Accessories, Tires, Parts, Motor Oil/Grease:** Includes expendable items, which are purchased and installed by contractor personnel. Such expenditures are limited to the repair and servicing of agency-owned or leased vehicles only. Motor vehicle repairs performed by garages, etc. should be budgeted under "Contractual Services" (see #4 i).
- g. **Gasoline:** Includes gasoline purchased for the necessary operation of agency-owned or leased motor vehicles used for program activities.
- h. **Other Supplies and Materials:** Includes all supplies and materials that cannot be properly classified above, that are necessary for program activities.

BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: Give purpose and basis for each category requested in this line item along with any calculations used.

## Cost Category 6 - CAPITAL OUTLAY/EQUIPMENT

Definition: Capital outlay items are non-expendable assets which have a cost **per unit** of \$1,000 or more **and** a useful life of more than one year. While these are considered costs to operate the program they are not included in the "Direct Service Budget Subtotal" against which the Administration Costs may be calculated.

BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: Itemize and give purpose for requested costs. DSCYF shall have the right to ownership of all capital purchases at the termination of the contract.

## Cost Category 7 – ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

A more detailed definition of Administrative Costs as distinguished from Program Costs was provided at the beginning of this document. Examples of costs that fit in this category include central office functions, such as the director's office, the office of finance, business services, budget and planning, personnel, payroll, safety and risk management, general counsel, and management information systems. The total on this line must include all calculated costs.

**BUDGET NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:** The allocation of this line-item cost must be supported by a valid methodology that fairly and equitably distributes costs to the program component of the contract in direct proportion to the benefit derived. The Salary Detail form must be completed with the information for all positions that are directly charged in this cost category. Agencies should include an organizational chart that identifies the relationship between the contracted program or service and the rest of the organization.

### **Additional General Budget Preparation Guidance**

**Start-up costs:** such proposed costs for new programs must be clearly identified separately from ongoing program costs.

**Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rates:** Some agencies may have an indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with one or more federal agencies. While the Department may choose to accept this rate as the administrative cost percentage for its contracts, nothing in state or federal law or regulation obligates the department to do so. Acceptance of this indirect cost rate must be negotiated with DSCYF.

***DSCYF advises agencies that it views an overall administrative cost of 12%-17% to be reasonable and competitive.***

## COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGIES

For each central administrative function, the agency will have to choose an allocation methodology, which will result in a fair and equitable assignment of organizational costs to each program or service. Where an agency operates only one program or service at a single location, administrative costs can most likely be wholly allocated to that program or service. Where an agency operates multiple programs or services, however, central administrative costs must be apportioned between those programs or services. Program costs may at times need an allocation methodology, such as when program staff split their time between two or more programs or locations. This will be addressed in paragraph five of this section.

*Cost allocation* is a process whereby the cost of maintaining the central administrative functions of an organization are distributed or apportioned to the specific programs or services operated by the organization. In cost allocation terminology, these programs or services are called *final cost objectives*, i.e. the final purpose for which both types of costs, program and administrative, are incurred. Within the department, examples of this “final purpose” are the provision of such services as: outpatient mental health services, family preservation services or residential rehabilitative services for juvenile offenders. These are just examples of the many services purchased via contract by the department. Administrative costs cannot usually be easily distributed or allocated to final cost objectives where multiple programs exist within an organization. For instance, most large organizations have a human service function that engages in such activities as recruitment, hiring, training, benefit administration and payroll. The cost of operating this function is incurred for the common purpose of the organization. Without keeping detailed records of activities performed and for which final cost objective of the organization those activities were performed (i.e. which distinct service or program benefited from the activity), however, it would be nearly impossible to assign the appropriate share of the cost of the human resources function to a particular program or service.

This is why an organization needs cost allocation. A sound cost allocation process allows an agency to allocate the cost of central functions like human resources to final cost objectives in a manner that approximates the workload expended on behalf of the final cost objectives. Using the human resource function as an example again, an easily obtainable piece of data that is commonly used to allocate central human resource costs to programs or services is the number of FTE’s who work in those programs or services. One can easily see the relationship between the number of positions employed with a program and the workload required to recruit, to hire and to administer benefits, etc. for those employees. The more people assigned to a particular area of the organization – the greater the workload of the human resources staff, generally speaking. Other representative units of work (like FTE’s in the previous example) or *allocation bases* that are commonly used in the cost allocation process are the number of dollars expended on the provision of a program or service at the client level (in the case of human service programs) or the amount of revenue that a program or service generates for the organization. This method of apportioning administrative costs to programs on the basis of the relative dollar amount spent on or generated by the program is commonly used to allocate multiple central agency administrative functions where no other easily obtainable, more accurate basis for cost distribution is available. Again, the key is that the basis chosen should allocate the cost of central functions to final cost objectives in a manner that

*reasonably approximates* the benefits that accrue to the final cost objective as a result of the central function being performed.

An allocation of central administrative costs to programs or services can be either by *direct or indirect* assignment. Where agencies can specifically identify a central service with a benefiting final cost objective, a direct method of allocation is generally preferred. For example, continuing with the example in the preceding paragraph of the human resources function, suppose that an organization operated three programs and the organization had assigned specific human resources staff to work exclusively with each of these programs. Given that the salary and fringe benefit costs for these positions can be easily identified, the agency may wish to assign those costs directly to each program. This would be known as a *direct allocation* of cost in cost allocation terminology. The alternative would be to use a representative *allocation basis*, such as the number of FTE positions or expenditures or revenue related to each program or service to allocate the cost of the human resource function to those programs or services. Using an *indirect* indicator of workload would be called an *indirect allocation* of costs. Indirect allocation methods result in a percentage being applied to the cost of the central function. For example, consider a scenario where the agency operates three programs: Program A has 2 staff, Program B has 3 staff and Program C has 5 staff. If the agency chose the number of employees in each program as its allocation basis to allocate its HR function, then the result would be that Program A would be assigned 20% of the HR costs, Program B would get 30% and Program C would get 50%. Note that in this example, the number of staff in each program is used as the determinant of cost allocation precisely because there is a direct connection between the number of people employed in a program and the amount of human resources work required to support that program. This would be an *indirect* allocation of the human resources costs. Regardless of which allocation methodology is chosen, the agency will have to justify in the narrative why it chose that particular methodology (either a *direct or indirect allocation* of cost) and why it chose a particular allocation basis if the allocation is an indirect one.

So far, we have only addressed administrative costs. However, when staff work directly with clients in multiple agency programs or services, it will be necessary to choose an allocation methodology for those costs as well. For example, an agency that operates several residential programs may have a nurse that rotates his or her time between those programs in some proportion. If, for example, the agency had 5 programs and the nurse spent one day a week at each program, then the agency could allocate .2 FTE or 20% of the nurse's cost to each program. This would constitute a direct allocation. Alternatively, the agency could use the number of clients served in each program (expressed as a percentage of total clients) to allocate the cost of nursing services across programs if that is a stable, more appropriate measure of workload.

Common acceptable allocation methodologies used to allocate shared costs (either administrative or program) that benefit more than one program or service include:

1. The percentage of agency revenue/expenditures by program
2. The percentage of total personnel costs
3. The number of FTE positions assigned to agency programs (If this method is used, the agency **MUST** identify all of the other programs or functions to which the person has been allocated and the proportion allocated to each which adds up to a single 1.0 FTE. Furthermore, the

agency must be prepared to explain the method it used to determine the proportion of the FTE that could be allocated to each function, program or contract.)

4. Square footage of shared building space allocated to a specific program
5. The number of client “slots” or clients served or expected to be served
6. Time and effort (by time study or on-going activity logs)

The essential consideration in selecting an allocation methodology (either direct or indirect) and an allocation basis (see examples in the preceding paragraph) is that it is the one best suited for assigning costs to programs or services. In choosing a basis upon which to allocate costs, it is usually best to start with those functions where a cause/effect or workload/benefit relationship can easily be identified. Certain types of costs, for instance, lend themselves to a more direct cause and effect relationship than others, like the relationship between the number of staff and the workload of the Human Resources function.

When the expenses in a cost grouping are more general in nature, however, such as the cost of the CEO or Executive Director of the organization, the allocation should be made through the use of an allocation base that produces results that are equitable to both the Department and the Contractor. For example, within DSCYF in our Medicaid rate setting process, the HR function is allocated by FTE’s, the accounting function by accounting transactions and the rest of the administrative functions, such as leadership at the department level, planning, and information systems support are combined into a single pool which is allocated based on prior year expenditures incurred by each of three operating divisions. If the contractor wishes to allocate administrative staff time as a direct cost to programs or services, it may be necessary to conduct time studies in order to substantiate this allocation.

In the final analysis, the methodology(ies) used to allocate costs to DSCYF contracted services must be fully explained and justified in the narrative.