



AB 1058

Timekeeping

Handbook



Judicial Council of California

Judicial Council of California
Center for Families, Children & the Courts
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1. Overview

The AB 1058 Child Support Commissioner (CSC) and Family Law Facilitator (FLF) Program is administered by the Judicial Council of California (JCC). A cooperative agreement between the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and the JCC provides statewide program funding for the courts in exchange for the provision of specified court services that support the state child support program. In addition to providing required training for commissioners, facilitators, and other court staff, the JCC oversees budget administration of the program.

As some AB 1058 court staff work within other court programs, it is important to have a clear understanding of what work activities can and cannot be billed to the AB 1058 grant. To ensure that eligible activities are appropriately billed to the AB 1058 grant, court staff must document their time consistent with the federal and state regulations governing the AB 1058 program and federal grant programs generally.

This handbook is intended to provide guidance on how to document one's work to ensure that AB 1058 activities can be billed appropriately. Section 2 will explain how to determine whether a particular activity is reimbursable or not to the AB 1058 grant. Section 3 will review the general guidelines for timekeeping within the AB 1058 program. Section 4 will cover the two acceptable timekeeping methodologies: the traditional timekeeping method (i.e., 100% reporting), which has been utilized by court staff for several years, and the rolling time study method, an alternative timekeeping methodology that courts can elect to use for either the CSC Program or FLF Program or for both.

2. Reimbursable IV-D Services

Generally, AB 1058 funds are to be used for court activities related to the establishment of parentage and child support orders, modification of child support orders, and enforcement of those orders for cases that are currently receiving services from the local child support agency. In the FLF Program, AB 1058 funds also can be used for designated outreach activities and other specified activities that further the aims of the state child support program, as described below. All other activities are not reimbursable to the AB 1058 grant.

General Reimbursability Requirements

The following are the general requirements for a reimbursable IV-D activity:

- Reported staff time is work done on a case that is currently receiving services from a local child support agency, AND
- The work is limited only to issues of parentage, child support (establishment, modification or enforcement), companion spousal support, or health insurance in that case (i.e., Title IV-D issues).

Be advised that if a service involves both IV-D issues and non-IV-D issues, only the time spent on IV-D issues may be billed to the AB 1058 grant. For instance, if a CSC hears a motion to modify child support and to modify custody in a case enforced by the local child support agency, the commissioner must track the time spent on each issue and bill only the time spent on the child support issue (i.e., the Title IV-D issue) to the AB 1058 grant. Similarly, if an FLF helps a customer with IV-D issues in a child support case

enforced by the local child support agency as well as with non-IV-D issues in a divorce case, only the time spent on the IV-D issues in the child support case can be billed to the AB 1058 grant.

In addition to activities that meet the general requirements noted above, approved staff trainings which are limited to Title IV-D issues only also are billable to the grant (see AB 1058 [Grant Accounting Manual](#) for details on limitations).

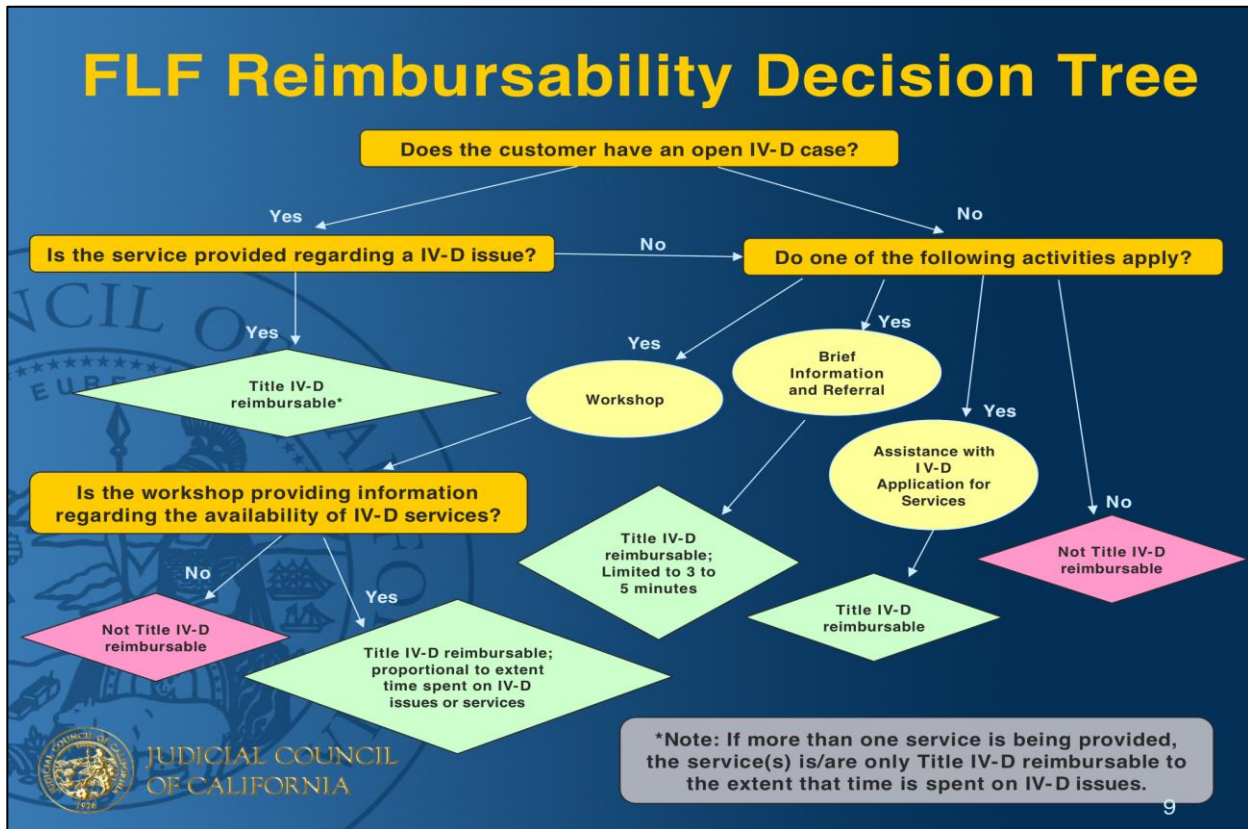
Reimbursability Requirements for Designated FLF Activities

In its May 23, 2003 letter, the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) authorized charging services to the AB 1058 grant, which are “[g]eneral education and outreach activities such as provision of program information, distribution of forms, referral to non-Title IV-D resources in the community, etc., provided under circumstances where these services are incidental and support the purposes of the program.” Consistent with this guidance, FLFs may bill the following additional services to the AB 1058 grant, whether or not the customer has an existing Title IV-D case at the time of service:

- Very brief (i.e., 5 minutes or less per customer) FLF services such as providing basic information on court processes, distributing court forms, making a referral, or conducting customer triage (screening the customer to determine eligibility for services and type of service needed).
 - Note that there is no requirement that the brief services relate to AB 1058 Title IV-D issues.
- Workshops
 - To be reimbursable, the workshop must provide information on Title IV-D issues AND must provide information about the availability of Title IV-D services.
 - Note that if the workshop provides information on other legal issues the time billed to the grant must be limited only to the time spent on Title IV-D issues and on the availability of the Title IV-D services.
- Assistance to customers in completing the Child Support Case Registry Form (FL-191) to have the customer’s information properly submitted to the State Disbursement Unit.
- Assistance provided to customers in completing an application with the Local Child Support Agency for Title IV-D services.

FLF Reimbursability Decision Tree

To assist in determining the reimbursability of an FLF activity, please refer to the decision tree below.



3. AB 1058 Timekeeping Guidelines

The purpose of timekeeping is to ensure and document that Title IV-D funds are used solely for staff activities that directly benefit the Title IV-D program as determined by federal and state legal requirements. Proper timekeeping ensures that courts will not have to return funds disallowed in an audit. Accurate timekeeping also ensures that Title IV-D funding will continue to be available to the judicial branch.

All court staff paid by the AB 1058 grant funds for personal services rendered in support of the grant must track their time. This includes both court employees (W-2 staff) and contract staff. This includes those who work 100% of their time on grant and those who split time with other activities paid by other funding sources (other grants, trial court trust funds, etc.).

All court staff paid by the AB 1058 grant funds must do the following:

- Comply with basic federal timekeeping requirements:
 - Base charges for salary/wages on records that accurately reflect the work performed;
 - Be supported by a system of internal controls which provides reasonable assurance that the charges are accurate, allowable, and properly allocated;

- Certify that an employee’s timesheet reasonably reflects all activities for which they are compensated regardless of whether they are reimbursable by the grant;
 - Comply with established accounting policies and practices;
 - Support the distribution of the employee’s salary or wages among specific activities or cost objectives if the employee works in more than one federal award or a federal award and non-federal award;
 - Ensure that if an expense benefits more than one program, the cost is shared proportionally to the benefit of each program; and,
 - Be aware that budget estimates alone do not qualify as support for charges to federal awards.
- For courts using the traditional time-keeping methodology, complete a timesheet or contractor activity log that:
 - Accounts for 100% of the time spent on all activities, separately tracking actual time spent on IV-D and non-IV-D activities;
 - Reports staff time on the mandatory grant timesheet that follows Judicial Council instructions, policies and procedures, including those contained in the AB 1058 [Grant Accounting Manual](#); and,
 - Tracks actual time spent on the activity.
 - Have their timesheets reviewed and approved by supervisory staff to ensure their accuracy before submitting for reimbursement.
 - Maintain back-up documentation to support the information reflected on the timesheet in the event of an audit for a minimum of 4 years, 4 months. For example: Prior audits have verified the timesheets of CSCs and their staff by pulling court calendars, matching party names with the DCSS database to ensure all cases were active Title IV-D cases and checking minute orders to confirm no non-reimbursable issues were heard without being properly documented on the timesheet.

4. Approved AB 1058 Timekeeping Methodologies

Courts can elect to use one of two timekeeping methodologies: the traditional timekeeping method or the rolling time study method. Prior to each fiscal year, courts must complete an election form as part of their contract with the Judicial Council on which they indicate which method they would like to use. If the court does not complete the election form by the beginning of the fiscal year, by default the court elects to use the traditional timekeeping method. Once the fiscal year begins, a court cannot change its timekeeping method for that fiscal year. Courts can elect to use one methodology for one program and another for the other program (e.g., the CSC program uses the traditional timekeeping method whereas the FLF program uses the rolling time study method). All AB 1058 court staff must abide by the requirements of the method elected for their respective program.

Traditional Timekeeping Method

Using the traditional timekeeping method, court staff must track 100% of their time worked. This includes both IV-D and non-IV-D work. Courts should provide guidance on acceptable systems for tracking one's time, as there is no standardized statewide form or other system for documenting time. For instance, courts should provide guidance on how specific staff must be regarding the type of service provided (e.g., whether staff should note the type of IV-D issue addressed). A sample weekly time tracking tool is available on the [AB 1058 Grant Accounting Resources & Forms webpage](#). Whatever system is chosen must clearly differentiate IV-D time from non-IV-D time.

Overtime hours works also must be tracked, separating the IV-D hours from the non-IV-D hours. (Note that courts should seek prior approval of the JCC AB 1058 Program Manager before authorizing staff to work IV-D overtime hours).

On a monthly basis (or more frequently if court policy dictates), staff must transfer the hours worked per day onto the mandatory timesheet (Form JC-4) or the mandatory contractor activity log (Form JC-6), in case of contracted staff. Thereafter, accounting staff will transfer these balances to the Payroll Summary Sheet and the other required JCC Grant Accounting forms. (See AB 1058 [Grant Accounting Manual](#) for further details.)

Rolling Time Study Method

Background

In December 2014, the Office of Management and Budget issued new rules and regulations regarding what used to be known as "Time and Effort Reporting" for agencies that receive funding from federal grants. This grant reform consisted of two major components: 1) prior standards for reporting time and effort were somewhat relaxed and 2) the development of alternate methods for capturing time billed to a grant was encouraged. Specifically, the new regulations state:

[S]ubstitute processes or systems for allocating salaries and wages to Federal awards may be used in place of or in addition to the [traditional method] if approved by the cognizant agency... Such systems may include, but are not limited to, random moment sampling, "rolling" time studies, case counts, or other quantifiable measures of work performed. (2 CFR §200.430(i)(5).)

The JCC reviewed various alternative timekeeping methodologies and determined that a rolling time study method would best meet the needs of the JCC and the courts. In a rolling time study, staff would continue to track their time in a "traditional manner" (e.g., using timesheets), but instead of being required to report every day, a time study is conducted for a set amount of time (e.g., four weeks per quarter.) The data is then extrapolated out for the entire quarter in order to calculate how much time can be billed to the grant.

Timekeeping Tool

In order to allow staff to track time during the designated weeks (i.e., the reporting period), an Excel spreadsheet has been created for court staff to indicate, in 15-minute increments, the type of task completed and if the work is IV-D reimbursable. Additionally, staff can indicate if they took paid time off or if any of the time worked was overtime. Court staff must then verify that the information inputted is true and correct by electronically signing the form, which is then also verified and signed electronically by supervisory staff. Alternatively, court staff may print out the form and sign the hard copy along with their supervisor. Due to the differences in court staff and type of work conducted by the CSC program and the FLF program, a separate tool has been created for each program.

The spreadsheet also contains additional tabs with detailed instructions and charts regarding how to insert the data specific to each program, as well as a summary page with weekly totals for each time category that can be used by courts to transfer the figures to the Payroll Summary Sheet and other required JCC Grant Accounting forms. The timesheet is designed to be completed and submitted electronically but also has been formatted so it will fit onto one page if printed.

Basic Information

On the timesheet, court staff must enter certain basic information: the first date of the reporting period, their name, the county where they work, their job classification, and work frequency (i.e., part time or full time). Additionally, staff must enter their start time and end time for the day and the start time and end time for their lunch break; by entering this data, the timesheet automatically updates to only show workday hours and grays out the lunch break. Note that if time is reported on a day that includes overtime hours the employee’s work hours as reflected on the timekeeping tool must be adjusted to include the overtime hours in that workday.

Entering Time

To enter time, staff must locate the row corresponding to the start of the 15-minute block of time (e.g., 9:00 AM, for 9:00 to 9:15) and then choose the appropriate column to match the type of service provided to the customer and insert “15” if the entire 15 minutes was spent on that task. If during one of the 15-minute periods, more than one task type is completed, time should be reported accordingly. For example, if FLF staff spent 8 minutes helping with a motion to modify child support in a case with LCSA involvement and 7 minutes discussing custody and visitation issues, they would enter “8” under Title IV-D Services, One-on-One and “7” under “Non-IV-D Services” as shown below.

TIME	Title IV-D Services								Non-IV-D Services
	1-on-1	W	F	L	Tr	A	T	O	
10:00 AM	8								7

Categories

Because job classifications and tasks performed differ in the CSC and FLF programs, a separate timesheet has been created for each program. Both timesheets contain the following columns for time and effort information to be entered by court staff: Non-IV-D Services, General Administration, Paid Time Off, Sick Time Off, Voluntary Time Off, Breaks, Overtime, and Notes. However, under the heading of Title IV-D Services, different tasks are listed for each program. The CSC timesheet contains the following categories: IV-D Pre-Hearing, IV-D Hearing, IV-D Post Hearing, IV-D Admin, and Training. The FLF timesheet has the following options: One-on-One Assistance, Workshop, Form FL-191, LCSA Application, Triage/Brief Info, IV-D Admin, Training, and Other. (If “Other” is selected, the notes field becomes automatically highlighted in yellow, cueing the user to state the type of work; the instructions further indicate that failure to do so will result in the time being counted as non-IV-D time.) The only other difference between the two timesheets are the Job Classifications in the general information section at the top of the spreadsheet. On both timesheets, several job types are listed in a drop-down menu, including an “Other” category. If “Other” is selected the field directly below becomes highlighted in order to cue the user to free-type their job title into that cell.

Overtime and All-Day Activity

As stated above, one of the columns is for Overtime and contains a checkbox. If this box is checked, the entire row becomes highlighted in green. However, the instructions do note that any overtime billed to the grant must be approved by the AB 1058 Program Manager, so staff should make sure to seek this approval

prior to working overtime hours on IV-D activities. Note that if time is reported on a day that includes overtime hours the employee's work hours as reflected on the timekeeping tool must be adjusted to include the overtime hours in that workday.

Depending on the court and division of work, at times staff may spend an entire day working on non-IV-D activities, or maybe staff is on vacation or sick for an entire day. In those situations, staff can simply check the All-Day box in the ribbon and make the appropriate selection from the drop-down menu and 8 hours will automatically be inputted for the category for that day, saving staff the time of making entries for every 15-minute increment for that day. (Note: This option is only available for Non-IV-D Services and Time Off.)

Verification

Each employee that completes the RTS must verify that the information listed is accurate and then must sign the form under the penalty of perjury. This can be done electronically, by staff typing their name and entering the date at the bottom of each time sheet; their manager or supervisor must also electronically sign the time study.

Built-In Safeguards

Apart from the cells that require court staff to enter data, all of the other fields on the timesheet will be locked. Additionally, once staff enters the basic information (date, name, county, etc.) on the first timesheet for the Monday of the reporting period, this data will automatically carry over to the four remaining timesheets for that week. If staff enters more than 15 minutes into a cell or row, an error message is generated indicating that the value entered is too large and this error must be corrected before the user can proceed. Finally, the timesheet contains the following message at the top of the page bolded in red text, that disappears once all work hours have been entered into the timesheet for that day "NOTE: You must track the entire time in each 15-minute increment of your workday, excluding any lunch breaks."

Weekly Summary

The final tab of the spreadsheet is a weekly summary that contains weekly overall totals (i.e., Title IV-D Services, Non-IV-D Services, overtime, etc.), as well as detailed breakdowns per category. Court accounting staff will be able to easily transfer this data onto the Payroll Summary Sheet and other required grant accounting forms, prior to submission to the JCC Grant Accounting Unit. Additionally, JCC staff can analyze data contained on the summary page of all the spreadsheets submitted by a court by running a query in Excel that can combine data from multiple documents. These totals can then be crosschecked for accuracy against the Payroll Summary Sheet and other Grant Accounting forms submitted by the court.

Naming Convention

It is important that courts all use the same format and scheme when saving employee timesheets so that they can easily be organized and searched by court accounting departments and the JCC. Timesheets shall be saved with the following information: county name, employee name, and date. For example, the timesheet of an employee from the San Mateo County Superior Court named John Doe, for the reporting period commencing on July 22, 2019, would be saved as follows: sanmateo.jdoe.072219. If there is more than one employee with the same first letter of their first name and same last name, employees must add additional identifying information like more than one letter of their first name or a middle initial, to eliminate any confusion.

Selection of Weeks

JCC staff will select four weeks per quarter to conduct the time study.

AB 1058 Conference Week

Every year the JCC organizes and hosts an annual child support training conference attended by various court staff from across the state that bill to the grant. Attendance at this training is a 100% reimbursable IV-D activity. There is normally a one-day preconference, followed by a two-and-a-half-day conference. This means that, with travel time, the conference constitutes three to four days of IV-D reimbursable hours per attendee. If this week were to be randomly chosen as one of the reporting periods, it would skew the results for some court staff by over reporting their IV-D time. However, to completely exclude this week would also skew the results by not including three to four 100% reimbursable work days from the quarter that would normally be captured using the traditional timekeeping method, thereby under reporting their IV-D time. Therefore, JCC staff will check for any attendees at the conference from courts utilizing the alternative methodology, so that this 100% reimbursable time can be taken into account for that quarter.

Notification and Data Collection

JCC staff will inform the courts of the selection of the reporting week no later than 12:00 PM on the Wednesday prior to the reporting period that the study will be implemented in the following week. Courts that participate in RTS must submit two contact names for each program to the JCC (e.g., FLF manager and supervisor) so their names can be placed on an email list. The email that is sent from the JCC to the courts will contain a copy of RTS as well as some brief instructions and links to online training materials; this email can then be forwarded by the court contacts to the rest of their staff. It is each court's responsibility to ensure that they have informed staff that the study will take place. Courts must then collect all of the spreadsheets, transfer the data to the required Grant Accounting forms, and submit all of the documents electronically to the JCC no sooner than the conclusion of the final reporting period of the quarter and no later than 30 days after the quarter ends. Courts can send the forms to JCC via email or by using the CFCC FTP server. For more information on the process of completing the Grant Accounting forms and submitting them to the JCC, please consult the AB 1058 [Grant Accounting Manual](#).

Analysis and Reimbursement

After submission of the Grant Accounting forms and timekeeping spreadsheets, courts will be reimbursed by the JCC. This will be done, by taking the time reported by court staff during each of the randomly selected reporting periods and then extrapolating those figures out per employee for the entire quarter. JCC Grant Accounting staff will analyze the timesheets submitted by the courts to make sure that data was correctly transferred to the other required Grant Accounting forms. As is the current practice, courts will be notified via email if any discrepancies are found, with instructions on how to correct the issue.