RANDOM MOMENT STUDY (RMS) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ'S)

This is an evolving document and is intended as a reference guide for questions and answers for workers who use the RMS system.

- Question-Why did we change from the Random Moment Time Study (RMTS) process over to the Random Moment Study (RMS) system?
 Answer-The new RMS system replaced the current Random Moment Time Study (RMTS) paper process with a more efficient automated email and web solution.
- 2) Question-What is the purpose of the RMS System? Answer-The state and federal governments share the costs to administer public assistance programs. Three federal programs provide funding to the Division for the administration of Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Alaska Temporary Assistance. Federal regulations require states carefully determine shared administrative costs for each program. The purpose of the Random Moment Sample (RMS) is to aide the Division in accounting for the use of staff time when claiming federal funds for support costs. The collective total of all RMS observations determines the percentage of funds charged to each federal and state program for administrative costs, such as, staff salaries, travel, contractual support, and supplies.

The accuracy of the system is critically dependent on the willingness and ability of each staff person included in the study to accurately report the program and activity performed at the randomly selected moment.

- 3) Question-How does the RMS system select what workers will be sampled?

 Answer- RMS is based on a federal quarterly reporting system, July-Sept, Oct-Dec, Jan-Mar, and April-June. Prior to the beginning of a quarter the RMS system scans its database of all staff to be sampled and creates a randomly selected "sample set" for the upcoming quarter. Once the "sample set" is run no changes to whom and when an observation is emailed can be made.
- 4) Question-How do we receive the RMS Observation forms?

 Answer-From the "sample set" RMS sends an email at the specified date and time an observation is scheduled. The email contains a link to the RMS web page. The web page contains an observation form to identify what case, program and activity engaged in at the randomly chosen moment. The information entered is submitted and stored in a central database.
- 5) Question-Where can I find more information about the RMS?
 Answer-There is additional information located on the RMS website which is: http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/node/view/279
- 6) Question-How long do we have to complete the RMS Observation form?

 Answer-You have 24-hours from the date and time that the RMS email notification was emailed to respond. For example, if you received your RMS email notification on Wednesday, July 21st at 1:15 p.m. this means that you have until 1:14 p.m. Thursday, July 22nd.

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<u>Note:</u> RMS email notifications received on Fridays will need to be completed before the close of business (COB) on Friday. RMS email notifications received on Fridays that are not completed within 24 hours will result in the expiration of the observation form. In this case, the worker will need to send an email message to the RMS "Inbox" and provide the necessary information to complete the observation form.

- 7) Question-I attempted to "SAVE" my response (Administrative Activities) and the system would not allow me to "save" it. What should I do?

 Answer-Look to be sure that you have completed <u>all</u> of the fields. In this case, the worker only selected an activity from the "Activities" drop-down list and did not select any "Program" from the "Program" drop-down list as required. This generates an error edit resulting in the inability to "save" the data.
- 8) Question-What should I do if I do not receive an edit stating that my information is "saved"? Answer-If the information you entered is still displayed; check to ensure that you have completed ALL of the required fields. Otherwise, you can use the "back" button of your browser located at the upper left hand corner of your screen to review what you entered. If you continue to experience a problem contact the RMS Administrator.
- 9) Question-Is there a list somewhere of the activities listed on the survey and the definition of the scope and involvement of each listed activity? Answer-Yes, you can find this information in the "Instructions" located on the RMS Website. This link will take you directly to the "Instructions". http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/RMS/RMS_IM_Instructions-6-8-04.pdf
- 10) Question-As a supervisor what responsibility do I have for monitoring completion of RMS Observations?
 Answer-The RMS Administrator will contact any worker who has not responded to their RMS email notification. At that point, the RMS Administrator will complete the RMS observation form based on the information obtained directly from the worker. However, if we notice a trend from the reports we receive that any one worker consistently does not complete their RMS observations; their Supervisor will be notified so it can be addressed
- 11) Question-Is there any way that the RMS email notification can be sent first thing in the morning for the day. If we miss getting the e-mail right away, sometimes it is hard to go back and figure out what we were doing at that time. Also if we get them first thing in the a.m. we could put them on our calendar to pop up with reminders just before it is time to complete the RMS.

with that specific employee.

Answer- The RMS system has to meet federal requirements. Unfortunately, the word "random" is a big part of the federally required sample. However, if you open your Outlook application (email) first thing in the morning and keep it running by minimizing it, you actually DO receive a notification at the bottom right hand side of our screen for all email messages received throughout the day. Outlook displays a picture of an envelope when a new email message is received.

At that time, you can check your Outlook "Inbox" to see if it is an RMS email notification that you need to respond to or not. It only takes a minute to complete the RMS Observation form. If you are away from your desk then do the best you can do to remember what you were working on at the time.

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12) Question-What should I do if I work a flex schedule and I receive a RMS email notifications on my Regular Day Off (RDO)?

Answer-A work schedule survey was sent to all ET's, WDS's, and SW's job classes to obtain information regarding each workers normal work schedule. If you receive a RMS email notification on your RDO, send an email message to the RMS Administrator providing the correct work schedule information. The change will take effect during the next quarter's RMS Sample as no changes can be made to a current RMS Sample period once it's started.

13) Question-What should I do about RMS email notifications that arrive in my email "Inbox" while I am out of the office for a day or more?

Answer-It is recommended that you use your "Out of Office Assistant" (wizard) in the Outlook email system. This generates an "Out of Office Reply" message to the RMS Administrator. The RMS Administrator enters the information into the RMS database on the workers behalf. The worker will continue to get future RMS Email notifications as scheduled. A worker who has been out of the office and used the "Out of Office Assistance" can disregard all expired RMS Email Notifications. If you did not activate your "Out of Office Assistant" and you have expired RMS Email notifications provide the information via email to the RMS Administrator for "each" RMS observation you received during the time that you were out of the office. The SD&T website has step-by-step instructions listed under "Computer Tips" on how to use the "Out of Office Assistant".

http://dpaweb.hss.state.ak.us/training/outlook/officeassistant.pdf

14) Question-What should I do if I receive a RMS email notification and clicked on the RMS Web Link and nothing happens?

Answer-If your question is not answered above, it may be a technical issue. Since technical issues and solutions might vary on a case-by-case basis, forward your RMS email to the DPA Network Services Helpdesk with a brief explanation of the problem. Please copy the DPA RMS Administrator with emails that are sent to the DPA Network Services Helpdesk to alert the RMS Administrator of the issue. This will alert the IT staff what the issue pertains to and that it is time sensitive along with the observation number.

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