Wisconsin Self-Verification Guide: Detecting Possible Misuse of Benefits and Services in Your Name (Parents & Caregivers)

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Wisconsin Self-Verification Guide

Detecting Possible Misuse of Benefits and Services in Your Name (Parents, Caregivers, and Guardians)

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Purpose: This document provides a Wisconsin-specific, legally safe pathway for parents, caregivers, and guardians to verify whether public benefits or services were billed, paid, or claimed using their own identity or that of a dependent, and outlines official steps to take when discrepancies are identified.

Introduction

Wisconsin does not publish a single public, name-searchable clearinghouse that aggregates all benefit payments, child care subsidies, and health claims. Records are maintained by specific agencies and contractors under state and federal confidentiality rules. The recommended approach is **self-verification**: obtain and review official records you are legally entitled to access, document discrepancies, then use formal dispute and fraud-reporting channels if warranted.

This guide is intended for **parents, caregivers, and guardians**. It does not allege wrongdoing by any person or provider. Use only official government resources and official reporting channels.

Section 1 — Licensed / Regulated Child Care Verification (Wisconsin DCF)

Child care licensing and regulation in Wisconsin are administered by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF). Use the official search tool below to verify whether a provider is regulated and to review public-facing provider details.

1.1 Official provider search (public)

Wisconsin DCF — Child Care Finder (official state search tool): https://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov/ **[1]**

1.2 Quality ratings (YoungStar) reference

Wisconsin DCF — YoungStar (provider quality rating program): https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar **[2]**

Section 2 — Child Care Subsidy / Voucher Program (Wisconsin Shares)

Wisconsin's child care subsidy program is Wisconsin Shares, administered by DCF. Payments may be made to eligible providers on behalf of qualifying families. If you suspect Wisconsin Shares was used in your name or your child's name, use official program materials and official benefits portals to review your case status and request clarification.

2.1 Official program information

Wisconsin DCF — Wisconsin Shares (program overview):
https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares **[3]**

2.2 Apply / manage benefits (official pathways)

Wisconsin DCF — Apply for Wisconsin Shares (step-by-step):
https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/apply **[4]**

ACCESS Wisconsin (apply/manage state benefits online):
https://access.wi.gov/s/?language=en_US **[5]**

2.3 What parents/guardians should review

- Eligibility/authorization notices (approved dates, provider name, and child identifiers).
- Provider identity and regulatory status using Child Care Finder (Section 1.1). **[1]**
- Dates of care/attendance versus your own records (calendar, messages, receipts, or other documentation you possess).
- Whether subsidy activity appears to continue after withdrawal, provider change, or non-attendance.

Section 3 — Medicaid / Health Claims Verification (Wisconsin Medicaid / BadgerCare Plus) and Fraud Reporting

Health services billed under Wisconsin Medicaid / BadgerCare Plus generate claims records. If you suspect services were billed in your name or your child's name, request and review claims-related history through official channels available to you, then report suspected fraud through official reporting pathways.

3.1 Member account access and benefit/coverage management (official)

Wisconsin DHS — MyACCESS (manage benefits on the go; includes references to ForwardHealth Member Services):
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/myaccess.htm **[6]**

ACCESS Wisconsin — account login (view and manage program information):
https://access.wi.gov/s/?language=en_US **[5]**

3.2 Reporting suspected waste, fraud, and abuse (ForwardHealth / DHS OIG)

ForwardHealth — Reporting Suspected Waste, Fraud, and Abuse (official guidance):
https://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/WIPortal/Subsystem/KW/Print.aspx?c=2&ia=1&nt=Reporting+Suspected+Waste%2C+Fraud%2C+and+Abuse&p=1&s=1&sa=46 **[7]**

3.3 Public assistance fraud reporting (Wisconsin DHS)

Wisconsin DHS — Report Public Assistance Fraud (hotline and online portal):
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/fraud/index.htm **[8]**

Wisconsin DHS — Office of Inspector General (fraud hotline and reporting options):
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/oig/index.htm **[9]**

Section 4 — Public Records Requests (Wisconsin Public Records Law)

Wisconsin public records access is governed by Wisconsin's Public Records Law (Wis. Stat. §§ 19.31–19.39). Records involving minors, individual benefit cases, and protected health information may be exempt or restricted; however, parents/guardians can request records they are legally entitled to receive and request written explanations for denials/redactions.

4.1 Statutory references (Wisconsin Legislature)

Wis. Stat. § 19.31 (Public policy and legislative declaration): https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/19/II/31 **[10]**

Wis. Stat. § 19.35 (Access to records; fees): https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/19.35 **[11]**

4.2 Attorney General / DOJ open government guidance

Wisconsin DOJ — Office of Open Government (public records law resources): https://www.wisdoj.gov/Pages/AboutUs/office-of-open-government.aspx **[12]**

Wisconsin DOJ — Public Records request information (DOJ custodian process): https://www.wisdoj.gov/Pages/AboutUs/public-records.aspx **[13]**

Wisconsin DOJ — Public Records Law Compliance Guide (PDF): https://www.wisdoj.gov/Open%20Government/PRL_guide.pdf **[14]**

Section 5 — Reporting Suspected Benefit Fraud (Official Channels Only)

If you suspect misuse of benefits or services, preserve documentation first (letters, notices, provider names, dates, and any case identifiers you lawfully possess), then report through official channels. Avoid public accusations. If you are uncertain which program is involved, request written confirmation of what is on file for your household through the appropriate agency.

5.1 Public assistance fraud reporting (Wisconsin DHS / OIG)

Wisconsin DHS — Report Public Assistance Fraud:
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/fraud/index.htm **[8]**

Wisconsin DHS — Office of Inspector General:
https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/oig/index.htm **[9]**

5.2 Medicaid-related reporting (ForwardHealth official guidance)

ForwardHealth — Reporting Suspected Waste, Fraud, and Abuse:
https://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/WIPortal/Subsystem/KW/Print.aspx?c=2&ia=1&nt=Reporting+Suspected+Waste%2C+Fraud%2C+and+Abuse&p=1&s=1&sa=46 **[7]**

Section 6 — Public "Red Flag" Patterns (For Awareness Only)

The following markers do not prove misconduct, but they can indicate when additional verification is warranted:

- **Date mismatch:** payments/claims on days the child was not in care or not receiving the service.
- **Provider mismatch:** provider listed that the family never used.
- **Duration mismatch:** billing continues after termination/withdrawal.
- **Authorization mismatch:** billed hours exceed authorized scope.
- **Identity mismatch:** records referencing a child/dependent you do not recognize.

Appendix A — Official Wisconsin Resources

1. DCF Child Care Finder (provider search) — https://childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov/ **[1]**
2. DCF YoungStar (quality ratings) — https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar **[2]**
3. DCF Wisconsin Shares (program overview) — https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares **[3]**
4. DCF Apply for Wisconsin Shares — https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/apply **[4]**
5. ACCESS Wisconsin (benefits portal) — https://access.wi.gov/s/?language=en_US **[5]**
6. Wisconsin DHS MyACCESS (member benefit management) — https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/myaccess.htm **[6]**
7. ForwardHealth — Reporting Suspected Waste, Fraud, and Abuse — https://www.forwardhealth.wi.gov/WIPortal/Subsystem/KW/Print.aspx?c=2&ia=1&nt=Reporting+Suspected+Waste%2C+Fraud%2C+and+Abuse&p=1&s=1&sa=46 **[7]**
8. WI DHS — Report Public Assistance Fraud — https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/fraud/index.htm **[8]**
9. WI DHS — Office of Inspector General — https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/oig/index.htm **[9]**
10. WI Legislature — Wis. Stat. § 19.31 — https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/19/II/31 **[10]**
11. WI Legislature — Wis. Stat. § 19.35 — https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/19.35 **[11]**
12. WI DOJ — Office of Open Government — https://www.wisdoj.gov/Pages/AboutUs/office-of-open-government.aspx **[12]**
13. WI DOJ — Public Records (request info) — https://www.wisdoj.gov/Pages/AboutUs/public-records.aspx **[13]**
14. WI DOJ — Public Records Law Compliance Guide (PDF) — https://www.wisdoj.gov/Open%20Government/PRL_guide.pdf **[14]**

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This document is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Tocsin Data does not make allegations about any specific person, provider, or agency in this document. Verification outcomes depend on program rules, record accuracy, and case-specific facts. If you believe you have identified misuse or fraud, use the official reporting channels listed and/or consult qualified counsel.

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