IEEE Standards Interpretation for IEEE Std 1003.1™-1990 IEEE Standard for Information Technology--Portable Operating System Interfaces (POSIX®)

Interpretation Request #47
Topic: CHILD_MAX system limit **Relevant Sections:** 2.8.4

Can a conforming POSIX.1 implementation have a system-wide limit on the total number of processes that is equal to {CHILD_MAX}? Note: If the system-wide limit is the same as {CHILD_MAX}, then when more than one user is logged-in, or if system processes are counted against the system-wide limit, no user will be able to obtain {CHILD_MAX} processes. A closely related question was addressed in an interpretation request submitted on 18 October 1991 by Chuck Karish. The interpretation in response to that request, dated June 29, 1992, states:

IEEE Std. 1003.1-1990 defines {CHILD_MAX} as a limit which shall be enforced by the implementation. It does not require the implementation to guarantee the resources needed to reach that limit. Thus a given system's limit may be less than, equal to, or greater than {CHILD_MAX}, and may vary on processes' consumption of resources.

An issue has arisen concerning the meaning of that interpretation, giving rise to the current interpretation request.

Interpretation Response
See interpretation #65.

Rationale for Interpretation
None.