

Insight into Ohio's Child Support Program



Affects
a CHILD'S
abilities

Affects
a CHILD'S
activities



ONE MILLION
CHILDREN
AFFECTED



Affects
A CHILD'S
esteem



Affects
a CHILD'S
relationships



Affects
a CHILD'S
milestones

Affects
a CHILD'S
quality of
life



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Programs



MEDICAL SUPPORT

HB119 included provisions changing the medical support components of Ohio's Child Support Program. The changes included revisions to the definition of "reasonable cost" and the creation of a cash payment in cases where health insurance is not available at a reasonable cost.

Implementation efforts are extensive. Those areas impacted are the automated system - SETS; county efforts in establishing orders, monitoring changes in circumstances and instituting appropriate changes; educating courts and private attorneys on the new Guidelines Worksheets and how the changes impact the parties.

Benefits. There is a potential to reimburse Ohio's Medicaid program by \$30 to \$50 million dollars during the third year of implementation and ongoing. The new reasonable cost criteria is needed.

Challenges. Extensive modifications to current automation, insurance vendor data matching assistance, training of those internal & external to our system, and the staff time required by CSEA's to implement and administer the new program.

OPTIONAL "FAMILY FRIENDLY" CHANGES TO DISTRIBUTION OF PAYMENTS

Congressional Legislation mandates certain changes to the distribution of payments and accumulated arrears for those families entering the OWF system. Beginning in October 2009, families will always retain the arrearages accrued while they were not receiving TANF benefits, but arrearages accrued while receiving benefits are always owing to the State. Ohio also has the option to pass through child support paid to families that are currently receiving TANF benefits up to \$100 per month for one child and \$200 per month for two or more children. There are other changes that can be made to distribution that are optional.

Benefits. Provides the opportunity for more cash to go into the hands of families that are struggling to attain and maintain self sufficiency. Congress also agreed to share in the costs of this initiative and is set to forego their share of the reimbursements that the child support payments have provided to the TANF program.

Challenges. Providing the additional funds to the families comes at a cost to the State. Implementing all of the options may cost approximately \$16 million dollars a year that had been previously used towards the State's Maintenance of Effort for TANF. There are also administrative considerations of other programs regarding identification of the resources going to the families and how they affect other benefits that the family may be receiving. There will be required automation enhancements to computer systems in ODJFS.

UTILIZATION OF MODERN AUTOMATION/TECHNOLOGY

A key to improving effectiveness and efficiencies of Ohio's CSEA staff is through modernizing and updating our statewide automated computer system (SETS).

We must pursue enhanced technology. One example of this is a current project in Clermont County which creates a paperless process management system between the CSEA, Courts and other County Providers of service.



Utilize automated dialer technology to remind families of appointments, hearings, payments received, payments missed, etc.

Develop web based technology for families to gather information about their case and to update us with new addresses, new employers, etc. Modernize our communications with partners such as employers that would prefer a paperless system.

Implement a paperless management system in agencies that utilizes a more efficient routing of information through all the components of case management activities.

Current Regulations make it difficult for us to share data with other social programs that would permit us to provide better services to Ohioans. At the same time, some Federal Regulations punish us for having information in one program that they deem known to another program which isn't easily able to be accessed. An effort is needed to persuade the federal government to change these regulations.

Collaboration Efforts

Department of Rehabilitation & Corrections - A collaboration has begun and is addressing issues such as exchanging information, understanding how both systems work, working with the incarcerated and those preparing to re-enter communities, what to do with an incarcerated obligor's order during and after incarceration as well as any existing arrearages. A report will be issued this summer.

Work Force Development – Better collaboration in this area is essential to assisting obligors in improving their skills and obtaining employment. Crossing county lines can be a problem. Some counties have developed excellent collaboration programs among the CSEA, Workforce Agency and the local Courts. We would like to promote these best practices across the state.



Efforts to work with other County Partners – OCDA has held three partnership conferences aimed at working on issues that link us with the Courts, Prosecutors, Sheriffs, Clerks of Court, Recorders, Commissioners, Children Services, Family Stability and other local programs. Additionally, there is a current collaboration between child support and members of the Ohio Judicial Conference to address issues related to caretaker/non legal custody cases, appeal time frames, jurisdiction and effective enforcement of cases.

Fatherhood Efforts – Many local CSEA's are collaborating with local organizations to assist fathers in meeting all of the expectations and challenges of fatherhood.

Ohio Department of Job & Family Services – We are working with ODJFS in many areas to improve services to Ohio Families, to be innovative and also to be mindful of compliance requirements, but not driven by them.

Congress & Ohio's General Assembly – We work to educate our delegations and to share information about Ohio's program. We are available to answer any questions, work on developing legislation, and budget initiatives at any time.

Education and Training

OCDA is embarking on a Public Education campaign which will enhance current publications and develop a uniform voice and sharing of information across Ohio.

OCDA has developed extensive training opportunities and programs for Administrative Hearing Officers, CSEA Attorneys, Directors, Child Support Staff, Courts, Private Attorneys and others important to implementing our program. Annually over 750 persons participate in our trainings.

OCDA Website www.ocda.us contains many fact sheets regarding many facets of our program, a calculator for employer use in calculating the support payment amount to remit, county and program data and contact information. It serves as an immediate resource to our county agencies.



Did You Know?

Child support is the second largest source of *income* for single parent families, making up 31% of their total income.



The Ohio *child support* program touches more children than any other public program in Ohio, *except* public education.

For every dollar *expended*, we collected \$6.27 in support payments. This *exceeds* the national average by over 36%.



OVER 2 BILLION
DOLLARS
COLLECTED PER
YEAR



Over *\$7 million* was collected through *bank account seizures*.



Over \$575,000 was collected to *release* 144 passports.



13% of Ohio's *child support* caseload includes parents currently participating in traditional public assistance, or Ohio Works First (OWF). Nearly 40% *have received* OWF in the past. 47% of the cases have *never received* OWF.



Ohio's caseload is over 956,000 and serves over *one million* children, which makes us the *third* largest caseload in the nation.

Ohio established paternity for over *62,000* children born to unmarried parents.

