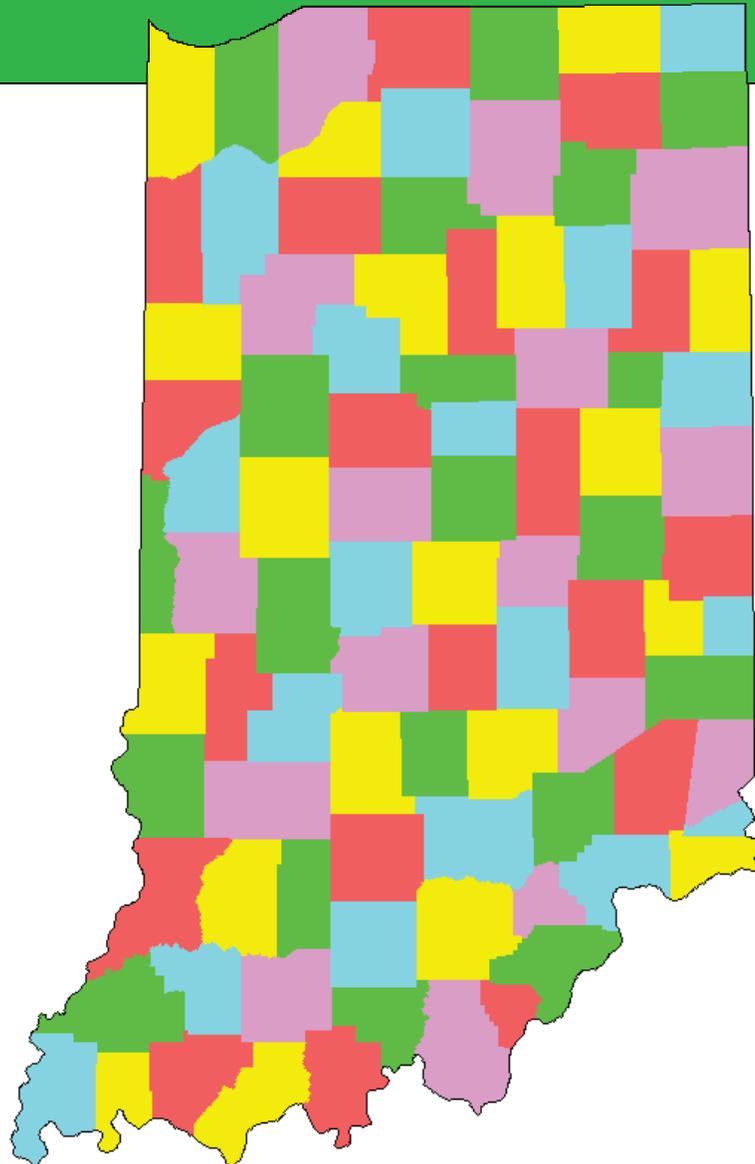


Indiana Child Support Enforcement Program County Best Practices 2011-2012



Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council





Introduction

During the Summer and Fall of 2011, the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council (IPAC) coordinated a series of *Best Practice* workshops throughout the state for the purpose of identifying and sharing county *Best Practices* for improving child support services to families, in the following areas: *paternity establishment, order establishment, current support collected, cases paying on arrears* and *cost effectiveness*.

This Book is a compilation of the *Best Practices* identified and shared by the participating Prosecutor Offices. There are one hundred and seven (107) *Best Practices* included herein.

At the workshops, Prosecutor child support staff shared a number of *family-centered* programs they have established to connect families with resources to address barriers to providing financial support for their children. These *family-centered* programs are focused on addressing such challenges as unemployment, underemployment, lack of a high school diploma, lack of job skills and training, incarceration, ex-offender status, and parenting time disputes. These *family-centered* programs/practices (also referred to as federal “*Bubble Chart*” programs) are highlighted throughout this Book.

Special thanks go to all of the counties who participated in the project, the Indiana Child Support Bureau (CSB) for providing review and support and to the following counties that provided staff and resources for the project: St. Joseph, Kosciusko, Porter, Marion, Allen and Greene.



For more information on the OCSE “*Promoting Child Well-Being & Family Self Sufficiency*” Series go to: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/

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Paternity Establishment



Greene County

Monthly Paternity Reports: We work the monthly paternity reports provided in the daily prosecutor's reports queue (REPORTSPA) at the beginning of each month.

Although some parts of this report are duplicative, it is a good way to find new cases that you didn't know existed and cases you can close because the child may already be associated with a case with an order. This report is also helpful in identifying cases where the BOW indicator should be changed to "P" based on a *paternity affidavit*.



BOW Indicator of "P" or "W" Report: By using a report of cases where the BOW indicator is "P" or "W" and there is no cause number, you can identify cases where a support order is needed. We start this process by scheduling the custodial parent (CP) for an appointment. When available, we print the paternity affidavit from the *Panoptic* application, and attach a copy to the *Petition to Establish Support Order*.

Research BMV Records for Non-Custodial Parent/Alleged Father Information: We review each case for identifiers on the *NCP/alleged father* record, check for a social security number, date of birth, height, weight, hair and eye color. When identifiers are found, we update the *absent parent supplemental screen* with his/her driver's license number and make a note in ISETS if the license is expired, suspended, or valid.



We also use the BMV access to look up the NCP/alleged parent's information as provided on the paternity affidavit to obtain additional information, including last known address. Once that step is complete, we confirm there are no duplicate records for this person state-wide and if a duplicate is found we make the appropriate corrections. If the case is a public assistance referral, we ensure the ICES

records exactly match the information in ISETS so the case will interface properly. We also send out an address verification (postal) request for the non-custodial parent (NCP) and an employment verification request to the most recent open employer(s). When appropriate, we also take action to end-date old employer records.

The above practices have been made a part of our routine work practices for years. As a result, Greene County's *paternity establishment* rate has been consistently above the state and national average.

Johnson County

AP Unknown Case Report: We search statewide in ISETS under the child's name to look for a father listed for the same child in another county. We then use the *Panoptic* application to try to find a paternity affidavit for the child. This helps us to increase our *paternity establishment* rate and also to close duplicate cases created in our county.

Lake County

Paternity Establishment Conferences: Due to limited court time, the office began using *Initial Status Conferences* for the first court setting. At the conferences, the NCP meets with the Deputy Prosecutor and if DNA testing is desired, the test arrangements are made. Once the DNA test results are received, an *Agreed Order* is prepared, signed by the parties and filed with the court for approval.



LaPorte County

Outreach to High Schools and Women's Shelter: Our Executive



Liaison was asked to assist in facilitating an outreach program at the *Bridge and Stepping Stone Shelter for Women*. The purpose of the program is to provide young, soon-to-be-parents, with information to educate them about the importance of establishing paternity and support, and to connect them with Title IV-D Services. Sessions are conducted monthly.

This type of outreach is also done through the *Open Door Adolescent Health Center, Teen Pregnancy Group*, where our Executive Liaison speaks every three (3) months. Through this program, the expectant mother and father can obtain a better understanding of why it is important to have paternity and support legally established, and what to expect when they execute an *In-Hospital Paternity Affidavit*. By providing the IV-D contact information, the program paves the way for the young parents to contact the IV-D office early for services.



The following information is provided to attendees: 1) Title IV-D Office contact information; 2) Child Support Services brochure (DCS Pam 003 R 7/4-08); 3) an application for Title IV-D child support services; 4) a paternity intake questionnaire with an intake coordinator's business card attached; 5) a pamphlet on establishing paternity entitled "What is Paternity"; 6) a copy of the Indiana Parenting Time Guidelines; and 7) a poem entitled "A memorandum from your child re: "ME."

The Open Door training covers Title IV-D services, including establishment of paternity and a support order, enforcement of the order, instructions on how to apply for services, the connection between TANF and Medicaid and the IV-D Program. The training also covers the parenting time guidelines and miscellaneous information regarding single parenting, education, and other available programs.

Participants are engaged in an interactive discussion and share their experiences. Participants are advised that all information is confidential, and that they are welcome to contact the Prosecutor's Office directly with questions, even prior to the birth of the child. Guest speakers are invited to attend and present at the sessions. The meeting concludes with a question and answer session and presenter evaluations.

The program has the greatest impact on the high school students because these are young soon-to-be-parents with many unanswered questions about paternity and support. The participants who have attended this program are typically more cooperative in working with our office to establish paternity and support orders.

Porter County

"Mommy Days": This technique is used when the Prosecutor's Office is having difficulty getting the information needed from the custodial parent "CP" to establish paternity. The CPs are ordered to appear before the court for a *Status Hearing*, only after all other attempts to seek the information have been found by the deputy prosecutor to be unsuccessful. The Court sets aside a few days each year to address these cases. The CP, in many cases, agrees to cooperate and a hearing before the court is not needed.



Order Establishment



Allen County

Daily Review of Jail Records: Every morning the Sheriff's Office provides the criminal division of the Prosecutor's Office with a log of everyone arrested the previous day. Copies are made and distributed to all of the IV-D caseworkers so they can review the list for any NCPs they have been attempting to locate for service of process, etc. If service of process is needed on someone, a service packet is immediately prepared and served on the NCP at the jail.



Establishment of Realistic Orders:



Allen County applies the revised *Indiana Child Support Guidelines* and no longer uses an automatic default to minimum wage when completing a child support obligation worksheet. This practice results in a child support order that the NCP is has the ability to pay and is more likely to pay.

Example: An NCP who works at a fast-food restaurant and only works twenty-five (25) hours a week, but has steadily held the job and pays a portion of his child support each week because that is all he can afford.

Example: The CP who holds a steady job, but the company does not hire anyone full-time to avoid having to provide benefits. The CP's actual salary would be used in the child support worksheet.

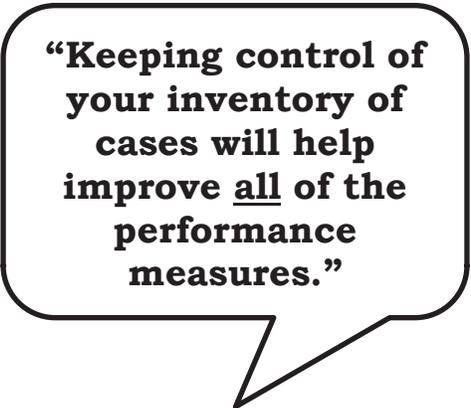
Agreed Orders: If there is no *paternity affidavit* on file with the Department of Health, we offer the parties an opportunity to sign an *Agreed Order* for genetic testing. This helps expedite the paternity

establishment process by eliminating the need for a hearing for the sole purpose of requesting an order for genetic tests.

Case Closure for Non-Cooperation on New Cases: When we determine information on a nonmandatory referral case, is needed from the CP because we cannot obtain it elsewhere in order to provide services (i.e. filing a petition) and the information is sought but not provided we initiate a *Notice of Intent to Close*. We document the request for information and the noncooperation in our file and in ISETS. (See 45 CFR 303.11(b)(11)).

Brown County

Work the Weekly Report of New Cases: Our office regularly works the *Weekly Report of New Cases* that identifies all new cases opened in ISETS, and appropriate action is taken. For example, duplicate cases are closed, duplicate MPIs are consolidated and inactivated, and action is taken to obtain any missing information, as well as to correct any incorrect information. Action is then taken to establish support orders, paternity orders, or enforce cases with existing orders. A high ISETS case number indicates a newer case.



“Keeping control of your inventory of cases will help improve all of the performance measures.”

We work this report every week, as *order establishment* is a high priority. Review of the inventory allows us to manage and control our caseload. The report allows us to proceed with establishment action immediately upon receipt of the case, thus allowing us to establish an order as early in the process as possible. Keeping control of your inventory of cases will help improve all of the performance measures.

Decatur County

Meet with Local Child Welfare Office: In Decatur County, we arranged a meeting with the local child welfare office to meet with

their caseworkers. The meeting was a basic *question and answer* session to help both offices understand why and when things are filed. The Administrator also provided each caseworker with a “*Top 10 List*” to use as a reference when a child is removed from the home. This has improved our communication with the DCS local office resulting in an increase in orders and collections on the IV-E cases.

Delaware County

Administrative Hearings: In May of 2011, we held our first *administrative hearings*. We previously visited the St. Joseph and Johnson County Prosecutor Offices to learn about their use of similar proceedings.

When we schedule the case for an *administrative hearing*, we send the *Petition to Establish Support*, and a *Subpoena Duces Tecum* to each party. The parties are required to provide the following documentation:

- Employment-related salary stubs or wage statements for the past six (6) months
- Copies of their three (3) most recent state and federal income tax returns, including W-2 forms, and supporting schedules
- Copies of all documents indicating income earned during the past year from any source, including, but not limited to: interest income, income from real or personal property, income from stocks or bonds, income from gift or inheritance, and income from settlement or satisfaction of any legal debt or judgment
- Proof of other child support orders the party is required to pay in Indiana or any other state
- Proof of daycare expenses paid for the child(ren) in the case at hand
- Proof of the cost of medical insurance to cover the child(ren) in the case at hand
- Social Security Benefit statement

The *administrative hearings* are held in the IV-D office by a IV-D deputy prosecutor. The parties are advised that the Prosecutor represents the State of Indiana. When the parties reach an agreement, the *Agreed Order* contains an acknowledgment they are not entering into an attorney-client relationship with the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office and that they voluntarily choose to represent themselves. When an agreement is reached, an *Agreed Order* and a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW) are prepared, executed by the parties and filed with the court for approval. If the parties do not agree to the calculated support amount and they desire to have a hearing before the court, they are given a notice of the hearing date before the court. If the parties fail to appear, and they were properly served, citation notices are prepared and filed with the IV-D Court.

We are not setting any cases that need paternity established for *administrative hearings*. The Master Commissioner reviews pro se petitions and schedules them for an *administrative hearing*, if he deems it appropriate. Some *Petitions to Modify* are being scheduled for *administrative hearings*.

We have found that in fifty-four percent (54%) of the *administrative hearing* cases, the parties have reached an agreement, and in twenty-three percent (23%) of the cases, either one or both of the parties fail to appear.

Grant County

Working the "IV-A/IV-D Interface Error Report" and Use of E-mail for Communication With the Local DFR Office: There are many things that will cause a case to appear on the *IV-A/IV-D Interface Error Report*, which may result in a case failing to "flip" to *MANG* or *TANF*, cause a case to "error off" and not be created in ISETS, or to be created in ISETS in error due to the existence of a duplicate case. Our office has established an efficient and effective method of communication with the local Division of Family Resources (DFR) when working this report by using email. When



we find incorrect information that has merged from ICES into ISETS, for example, incorrect or missing information on the *absent parent* screen, we send a detailed email to our two contact persons in the local DFR. The email includes the case number in need of correction and sets forth exactly what needs to be fixed, such as an incorrect date of birth or social security number. In our county, the DFR contact will take corrective action and send an email back to the IV-D office indicating the corrections have been made. This process works well in our county because we have a good working relationship with the DFR staff.

Greene County

Work the “Cases with No Cause Number” and “Cases With a Cause Number But No Subaccount” Reports: We work the *Cases With No Cause Number*, and the *Cases With a Cause Number But No Subaccounts* Reports to identify cases in need of support order establishment. The staff checks statewide for possible duplicate cases, using the *Child Multi-Case* Report, or by looking via host on a case-by-case basis. We also investigate cases with a cause number and no subaccount to determine the status of the court case. Duplicate cases are closed, duplicate participants are merged, and action is taken to establish the child support order as soon as possible. Our *order establishment* ratio is above the state and national averages as a result of these efforts.

Send “Master Interview Letter” to Custodial Parent: When we get a new case referral or application for services indicating there may be a child support order in another state, prior to scheduling a CP for an appointment, we send the CP a *Master Interview Letter*. The letter is intended to seek enough information that we can determine whether there is an existing order, and if so, the state and county in which the order was established. This action is only taken when we are unable to find an existing order, and we have reason to believe an order exists.



We follow-up to ensure the interview form is returned by using a tickler system. The CP is notified on the form that it must be returned within a specific number of days to avoid a sanction. However, we would schedule the CP for an intake appointment, prior to actually initiating a sanction. We frequently find an order in another state exists and payments are being received from that state, or that a provisional order may have been entered in our county but the order has not been provided to the Clerk for entry into ISETS. Once we receive the necessary information, appropriate action is taken based on the circumstances.

Hamilton County

Settlement Conference Approach: When court time is limited, our staff uses settlement conferences for order establishment cases so that court time can be used for the enforcement hearings. The presence of the judge is not required. Most new establishment cases are set for a pre-trial conference at 9:00 a.m. This allows the parties to meet with the deputy prosecutor to try to reach an agreement. If an agreement is not reached, the cases are already set for hearing at 10:30 a.m. on the same day, before the judge. If an agreement is reached an *Agreed Order* and a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW) are prepared, executed and filed with the Court for approval. Our experience shows that many cases are resolved by agreement at these settlement conferences, thus allowing the court time to be used for enforcement proceedings.

Kosciusko County:

Foster Care Solutions: We have appointed one (1) caseworker to liaison with the local Department of Child Services (DCS) Office in order to receive all information from DCS and the Court regarding foster care cases. This has resulted in multiple efficiencies including having one caseworker who is specifically trained to understand the separate language and difficulties of foster care cases. It also provides one point of contact for both the Court and DCS to ensure that cases are being appropriately worked. Designating one person for these cases has improved efficiency and resulted in more orders and collections on these cases.

LaPorte County

Work the “Monthly Report of New Cases” and the Urban 17 Reports for Order Establishment--“Cases Without Orders” and “Cases with a Cause Number and Hearing Date and No Order”:

We work the *Monthly Report of New Cases* every month. The Report identifies all new cases added to our case load during the prior month. We send out a letter to the CP to get the process started to establish an order as early as possible.

We also regularly work the *Urban 17 Reports* entitled *Cases Without Orders* and *Cases With a Cause Number and Hearing Date and No Order*. These Reports help us to identify cases in need of additional action to keep the case moving toward establishment of the order, for example, locate action for service of process or review to determine whether additional action is needed in the judicial process. The *Urban 17 Reports* are in the *Data Warehouse* on the *CSB Shared Resources Site (CSR)*.

Orange County

Referral of Parenting Time and Custody Disputes:



When issues such as parenting time and custody disputes are identified, we refer the parents to the local Indiana Legal Services Organization or direct them to other resources for assistance with these matters. Resolution of these issues early in the case can improve compliance with the support order.

Porter County

Mediation Referral: We refer cases where the parties have unresolved disputes regarding custody, parenting time, and/or child support to a mediator provided through our family court. Through a grant, three (3) juvenile probation officers were trained as mediators are available by appointment, and are often on-call, to mediate child support, parenting time, custody, and related issues. We also refer parties who cannot agree to issues such as parenting



time once an order for support has been established. This service is free of charge and either the Court or the IV-D Office can make the referral. The goal of early conflict resolution is to improve compliance with the support order.

Settlement Conference in Place of Scheduled Hearings: Both parties are ordered to appear for court on initial paternity and support establishment cases. They are ordered to bring income information and other related documents necessary to complete a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW). The parties first meet with the deputy prosecutor and attempt to reach an agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Court usually has time for a short hearing (the court schedules other cases on these days) or the hearing is continued. If the parties reach an agreement, an *Agreed Order* and a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW) are prepared by the Deputy Prosecutor for signature by the parties and filed with the Court for approval. About ninety-nine percent (99%) of the cases scheduled for settlement conferences are resolved by agreement without the need for Court time. Warrants are issued for failure to appear.

“About 99% of the cases scheduled for settlement conferences are resolved by agreement without the need for Court time.”

We have found that when the parties are “*ordered to appear*” it results in greater compliance than a letter directing parties to come to the office. If the NCP fails to appear for the conference, we request a failure to appear warrant. If the CP fails to cooperate, we request a sanction of benefits. This procedure does not negatively affect the court’s schedule, and the court staff provides us with an office and waiting area. The *Agreed Orders* typically include provisions addressing custody, parenting time, medical support, and tax dependency issues. If the parties do not agree, they are referred to mediation or a hearing is scheduled to address unresolved issues.

St. Joseph County

Mediation Referral Program:



A mediation referral program was established through Notre Dame Law School and is used to assist the parties in resolving parenting time disputes in establishment cases. We establish a *Temporary Support Order*, then refer the parties to mediation, and request an amendment to the order, if necessary. The *Notre Dame Mediation Program* is free of charge.

Work the “Cases with No Order” and “Case Change” Reports:

We have found these two (2) reports are helpful in finding cases where support orders need to be established. A case may have previously been a IV-D case, was changed to non-IV-D (NIVD) for some reason, and has flipped back to being a IV-D case, due to the receipt of public assistance. The case may also have been a NIVD case with an order pending when a public assistance referral occurred and there is only a cause number and no subaccounts. These reports are found in the Data Warehouse.

Medicaid Cases: If the parties notify us the NCP provides *direct or in-kind* support we enter a zero dollar (\$0.00) support order, along with an order to provide health insurance. In this situation, the case can be kept open, and the CP can remain on Medicaid. We can modify the order at a later date, if needed or requested.

Review of Medicaid Referral Cases: We review all new Medicaid case referrals to make sure they are appropriate referrals. If we find a case was referred to us and only the child is receiving Medicaid, the case is closed in ISETS using the reason code “CERR.”

Agreed Orders on Paternity and Support Order Establishment for Cases with Paternity Affidavits: Our county has found that when paternity and support order establishment can be accomplished by agreement of the parties, through the filing of an *Agreed Order* and a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet (CSOW)*, the parties are happier with the outcome of the case, and are more likely to comply with the terms of the agreement, than if the matter has to be settled through a court hearing.

Vanderburgh County

Use of “CLEAR” for Locate Purposes: Our office uses “CLEAR,” a nationwide internet based tool with unlimited usage that has helped tremendously with locate issues. Our investigator uses this service on a daily basis. She can research the person we are trying to locate by finding relatives, property and more. There is a fee of approximately one hundred thirty dollars (\$130.00) per month for unlimited access. The tool allows searchers to find possible matches for people based on very limited information.

Lots of Court Time: This is more a luxury than a best practice, but there is a downside to having a lot of court time, as it causes an increased number of cases needing arrearage calculations, and other court preparations for caseworkers and subsequent preparation of entries. Our county is fortunate to have a sufficient amount of court time, as in many



situations, administrative enforcement action isn't enough.

Division of Work: We have one employee who handles the new MANG/TANF/FC referrals. This has increased our efficiency by allowing us to begin the establishment and enforcement actions on new cases earlier. Having an employee dedicated to the new cases also allows us to more effectively filter out some of the cases that have opened in error and the duplicate cases. This is also an area where we could stand to devote more resources if possible, which is typical in many large counties.

Warrick County

Settlement Conferences: Our office has implemented settlement conference dates for the establishment of child support orders and paternity. The child support staff and Deputy Prosecutor meet with both parties to explain the process and determine whether the parties are interested in resolution by agreement. We advise the parties in writing that the Prosecutor's Office represents the State of Indiana and not either of the parties. When the parties agree to the terms, an *Agreed Entry/Order* with the completed *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW) is executed and filed with the Court for approval. The settlement conferences are proving to be very successful. The process conserves staff and court time allowing us to redirect resources to other case actions. Our *order establishment* ratio is improving with the incorporation of these conferences into our work process.

Enforcement



Current Support Collections

Allen County

Outreach to Incarcerated Parents: Allen County implemented an outreach program for incarcerated NCPs with child support orders. When an incarcerated NCP is identified, the process begins with sending the NCP a *Request for Modification of Child Support Order*, and an *Affidavit in Support of Request to Modify Child Support*. The incarcerated NCP is asked to complete these forms and return them to our office. Once the forms are returned we send the CP a letter requesting he/she make contact with our

office. We serve all parties with the *Petition to Modify*. This process has resulted in numerous orders being modified to zero dollars (\$0.00) or a reduced amount based upon the circumstances using the *Indiana Child Support Guidelines*. This has improved our *current support collected* ratio and has kept the arrearage balances owed on these cases from increasing to the point where the NCP feels it is impossible to pay when released.

Brown County

Work One Program: Work One is a partner agency of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and its core function is to help Indiana citizens improve their skills and find a job to match those skills. The Brown County *Title IV-D Work One Program* was adapted from a similar program started in St. Joseph County, CSIP. Our program was initially utilized as a remedy for a finding of contempt when unemployment or under-

employment was identified as a barrier to compliance with a support order for the NCP.



When the decision was made to establish a Work One program similar to the St. Joseph County model, we met with the Work One Agency to learn about the opportunities and services provided to unemployed/underemployed individuals. We established mutual objectives and a set of conditions for referrals. We also worked together to prepare a *Participant Packet*. The conditions for the program are court-ordered. Specifically, the unemployed or underemployed NCP is ordered to enroll in the *Track One Program* (this allows the Title IV-D office to call the local office and verify participation), and is also required to participate in career development workshops and apply for at least three (3) jobs each week. The success of this program as a contempt remedy resulted in our expanded use of the program at establishment hearings as a voluntary referral source for unemployed NCPs and CPs.

Work the Urban 17 “Case Type Change” Report: The *Urban 17 “Case Type Change” Report* is reviewed for case type changes. The report shows IV-D cases that changed to MANG and TANF. Collections on these cases count as double for federal performance and funding purposes and therefore, help improve overall state performance. We work this Report to ensure we are focusing our collection efforts on all case types.

Managing Collections by Using the ISETS Worklist: Improving collections requires attention to *Worklist* information that may reflect changed circumstances requiring further review of the case and action. When we review our *Worklist* and find an indication of



a possible increase of income for the NCP, we send the employer an *Employment Verification Form*, which provides us with the information necessary to determine if an order should be modified. When the *Worklist* provides us with information that indicates the NCP may be incarcerated, the information is verified and a *Modification Packet* is sent to the NCP.

The CP is notified if the information is returned and a *Petition to Modify Support* is prepared and filed. The CP and NCP are both served with the *Petition to Modify Support*. When the parties are cohabitating, orders are modified to zero (\$0.00) with a provision that the prior support order amount is reinstated by the filing of an affidavit with the Court indicating the circumstances have changed.

Work the “Cases with Orders Not Paying Full Support” Report:

In Brown County, we created a merge application that allows us to mass print letters to NCPs appearing on the *Cases with Orders Not Paying Full Support* Report. We convert the Report to an Excel spreadsheet and sort it by the *last payment made* field. Then we merge the names to the *Delinquency Letter* and all of the letters for the NCPs on the list are printed at once. The letter provides a date by which the NCP must contact our office to make payment arrangements. If the NCP fails to contact our office, we begin appropriate enforcement action. We run this program periodically and also use it to identify cases with new orders that are not paying as an *early intervention* tool.

Decatur County

Structured Enforcement: Every case file is reviewed every four (4) to eight (8) weeks with the use of a *Tickle System* using index cards. The review process keeps the caseworker familiar with each case.

Cases are reviewed for:



- new employers
- undistributed collections as a result of the arrearage being paid in full
- income withholding order amendment, when appropriate

We have consistently maintained high performance in the federal performance measures because we use tools like the *Tickle System* to keep us aware of changes in our cases.

Delaware County

Work One Program:



A Work One program, similar to the St. Joseph County CSIP Program has been implemented in our county, but not all delinquent NCPs are sent to the program. The Court only orders NCPs into the program that it determines will make an effort to comply with the Work One recommendations.

Greene County

Department of Corrections Modifications: Our office is very proactive in sending out the Department of Correction (DOC) *Modification Packet* when we become aware a NCP is incarcerated. We obtained the *DOC Modification Packet* for pro se use from the Indiana Legal Services Organization in Bloomington. Use of the packet has proven to be very effective in improving our *current support collections* and *cases paying on arrears* ratios. We use custom documents to notify the CP of the



filing of a pro se modification along with a *Notice* and a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet (CSOW)* filed with the Court after the CP has been given seven (7) days to respond. The *Notice* to the Court includes the completed CSOW, and provides the State does not object to the modification. We prepare a draft *Order* filed with the *Notice* that includes the child support

“Use of the DOC Modification Packet has proven to be very effective in improving our current support collections and cases paying on arrears ratios.”

arrears amount and directs the NCP to pay at least \$1.00 per week towards the arrears. The *Order* provides the prior support obligation shall be restored without further order of the Court, effective the first Friday following the NCP's release from incarceration. The entire process is accomplished without anyone having to appear at a hearing, and an income withholding order is sent to the inmate account records' contact for the DOC facility. Use of the DOC Modification Packet has proven to be very effective in improving our current support collections and cases paying on arrears ratios.

Keep Employer Records Up-To-Date and Send "Employment Verification" Letters: We have established a work practice that requires caseworkers to check the NCP's employment screen for multiple open employers and "*end date*" any obviously old records using "TOTH" (terminated other) with a note "OLD" anytime any action is taken on the case.

We also send out *Employment Verification Letters* to the employer if an income withholding order (IWO) was sent out more than thirty (30) days prior and no payment has been received. If an income withholding order has not been sent to the most recent employer, we send one immediately. By keeping old employer records closed, income withholding orders are automatically generated when a new employer is added.

Administrative Process Prior to the Filing of Contempt Proceedings: Prior to filing contempt proceedings (*Petition for Rule to Show Cause*), we send the NCP a *Request for Employment Status* letter, especially if he/she had previously been making payments. The letter can be used to obtain new employer information, and is also helpful in discovering that the NCP may be unable to work due to a disability or illness. This letter is also helpful in determining whether the NCP is either receiving or expecting to start receiving unemployment benefits, especially if he/she is drawing unemployment from another state.

If no response is received to the *Request for Employment Status* letter, we follow-up with the *Delinquency Notice* which includes the current child support arrearage on the case. When these measures are unsuccessful in obtaining compliance with the support order, we schedule the NCP for a *Delinquency Appointment* with the deputy prosecutor. When the NCP shows up for the appointment, we are often made aware of changed circumstances and information that assist us in determining the appropriate follow-up action(s) on the case. For example, at these appointments it is common for us to learn the NCP has a pending social security or worker's compensation claim, is receiving SSI, TANF or worker's compensation benefits, or the children have been living with the NCP for a period of time. Sometimes the NCP actually notifies us he/she has a job and we initiate an income withholding order and avoid using valuable court time. If the NCP does not come to the delinquency appointment, and we have a verified address, we proceed with appropriate enforcement action, including the initiation of the civil contempt process.

Harrison County

Temporary Modification of Child Support for Incarcerated



NCPs: At the beginning of each month, we obtain an inmate list from our local jail. We divide the list according to our case load and research to find out how long the NCP will be incarcerated. The CP is notified that the circumstances warrant the filing of the *Petition* and the CP is served with the *Petition*. We serve the CP with a copy of the *Motion*. We file a *Motion to Temporarily Modify Child Support* and

include the current support order, the amount of arrears, and the date the NCP was incarcerated. We also attach a proposed *Order* for the Judge to sign. When the CP does not object, a hearing is not requested. The proposed *Order* provides the NCP's child support order is temporarily modified to zero dollars (\$0.00), effective on the date of the filing of the motion. (Since the local jail has no

employment opportunities for inmates, the incarcerated NCP's income is imputed as zero dollars (\$0.00)). We also use this process to seek an adjudicated arrearage, when appropriate.

The proposed *Order* directs the NCP to notify the Prosecutor's office within ten (10) days of release from incarceration and provides the previous child support order will be reinstated thirty (30) days after the release date.

Huntington County

Hallway Program: Our *Hallway Program* is a modified version of a program utilized in both Adams and Wells Counties. When the Court holds an NCP in contempt he/she is ordered to report to the IV-D office to sit in our hallway, every day, for six (6) months or until he/she finds a job. The *Order* provides the NCP may leave to look for work, attend GED classes, or participate in a vocational rehabilitation program when documentation of those activities is provided to the Court. We are able to closely monitor the NCP's efforts to find employment and many have found work because they are so bored just sitting there, staring at the wall.

Incarcerated Outreach and Education: We currently send out *Modification Packets* to inmates at the Department of Corrections (DOC). We have also recently added a part-time employee to our staff to assist with the prison outreach at the local facility. The program will include a short presentation to incarcerated NCPs explaining their rights while they are incarcerated and assistance with completion of the *Modification Packet*. Our part-time



employee is also going to work with unemployed NCPs to direct them to job assistance programs to avoid contempt of court. We are still working on this program, including the maintaining of a list of employers who will hire ex-offenders.

Use of “Job Search Form” in Contempt Proceedings:

We designed a *Job Search Form* for use in our contempt proceedings. The NCP is ordered to take the form with him/her to potential employers to verify the contact to seek employment was made. Our magistrate requires five (5) to ten (10) job applications per week from the NCP in order to avoid jail. After hearing of job openings at our local factories, the magistrate will specifically order the NCPs to apply at those particular places.



Financial Literacy Program Ordered in Contempt Proceedings:



Our magistrate orders many of the NCPs who are seasonal workers or self-employed to take a financial literacy program focused on budgeting through the Purdue Extension Office. We have had good feedback from those who have taken this class.

Kosciusko County

Contemptapaloosa: Also known as *Kosciusko County Project to Avoid Increasing Delinquencies* (KCPAID). We undertook this project, with the cooperation of our Judges and the County Clerk’s Office to do a mass contempt filing. A review was made of all child support cases in which child support was not currently being paid and for which no current enforcement action was underway. Each case was set for a *Rule to Show Cause* hearing and the Respondent was ordered to appear before the Court on a specific day and time. This program was tremendously successful in that we achieved our highest ever *current support collected* ratio following the completion of the program (almost 70%) as well as a five (5) point increase on

our *cases paying on arrears* ratio. Another phase of the KCPAID is in the works for *arrears only* cases.

LaPorte County

Work the Urban 17 Reports “Youngest Child Over 18 and No Payments” and “Cases with the Youngest Child Over 18 with No Order Extensions” and File “Agreed Orders” for Emancipation: Our county handles emancipation of a child prior to the statutory age by agreements when appropriate, using the *Urban 17 Reports --Youngest Child Over Eighteen (18) with No Payments and Cases with the Youngest Child Over 18 with No Order Extensions*. We send both parents a letter requesting they provide our office with the status of the child. When the parties agree emancipation is appropriate, an *Agreed Order* is prepared, executed and filed with the Court for approval. If there is no response to the letter, we continue to monitor the case and take enforcement action as deemed appropriate.

Regularly Work “Cases With Orders and No Payments” and “Arrears Only Cases With No Payments” Reports: We proactively work the *Cases With Orders and No Payments* and *Arrears Only Cases With No Payments* Reports to identify cases for needed action to increase collections of current support. For the *Arrears Only Cases With No Payments* Report, the time period for no payments can be adjusted, for example, *no payments in:* three (3), six (6) or twelve (12) months. When cases are identified, we take the appropriate follow up action, including, locate, administrative and/or judicial enforcement action.

Marion County

Fatherhood Re-entry Grant: Our office partnered with a number



of agencies and entities and applied for a federal grant from the United States Department of Labor. We received the grant and began implementation of a reentry/fatherhood project which helps newly released inmates as they leave prison. Recently released NCPs are placed in transitional jobs with Recycle Force, Inc. Recycle Force Inc. provides transitional jobs for up to six (6) months

upon release from incarceration. During the period of transitional employment, NCPs are provided with a variety of services to assist them with reinstating their license, child support compliance, obtaining a GED, interviewing skills and job search services. NCPs participating in the program earn wages and pay support via income withholding while employed with Recycle Force, Inc.

Amnesty Program: In August 2011, the Marion County Prosecutor's Office (MCPO) launched a six-week child support amnesty initiative we called *Stop*

"This project had an overall positive impact on collections."

Delaying – Start Paying. The goal of *Stop Delaying – Start Paying* was to postpone or forego prosecution and extend other considerations to NCPs who begin making their child support

payments. NCPs were also offered the job assistance services of the MCPO's *Parents That Work* initiative. This free, ongoing resource is used to help parents find a job, or through mentoring, maintain their employment. During the amnesty initiative, contacts with *Parents That Work* increased by seventy-seven percent (77%).

At the conclusion of the *Stop Delaying – Start Paying* Program, the MCPO filed felony charges against six (6) NCPs for not paying their child support obligations. The NCPs, who were all charged with *Nonsupport of a Dependent Child*, stemmed from the MCPO's *Stop Delaying – Start Paying* child support amnesty initiative. The NCPs

with the most egregious outstanding balances who did not seek amnesty were charged. The parents collectively owed more than \$400,000 for a total of thirteen (13) children. This project had an overall positive impact on collections.

Orange County

Communication with Custodial Parties on Cases Where Payments are Not Being Received and/or Location of NCP is Unknown: We have found that communication is our best tool in collections. We advise our case participants to stay in contact with us and to call us if they are not receiving their child support payments. When the CP contacts us to report there has been no payment, we explore any information the CP may have regarding the reason for the non-payment, explain the action our office will take to enforce the order and provide a date for the CP to check back with our office for further follow-up. Good communication with the CP allows us to take action to determine the reason for non-payment soon after payments have stopped.

When we have a NCP that appears to have “fallen off the face of the earth,” the CP is asked to call the office every few months or when he/she becomes aware of information that will assist our office in enforcement action. The CPs and NCPs are encouraged to stay in touch with our office as circumstances affecting their cases change. All information provided and case actions are documented and notes are made on the case in ISETS.

We have found that maintaining open lines of communications with CPs and NCPs eliminates frustration that can build when parties are uninformed about the process and status of their cases. We only have two (2) people in our office, one of which is part-time, so the office relies heavily on getting communication from both parents regarding case action, letters they have received regarding review and adjust notices, and various other questions. Having limited staff can present customer service challenges when unhappy parents are calling. Proactive communication and engagement with

parents can actually reduce the amount and length of time spent on calls with unhappy and frustrated parents.

Porter County

Work One Referral Program: We have partnered with Work One to create an intensive, case manager-based, referral program similar to the St. Joseph County CSIP program. When unemployment/underemployment are identified as barriers to compliance with the support order, the Court orders delinquent NCPs to participate in our recently established Work Referral Program, *Support for Kids Improvement Program* (SKIP). The NCP visits the local



Work One Office where he/she is given a case manager who explores his/her obstacles in obtaining employment. Depending upon the NCP's unique circumstances, the *SKIP* Program recommends and provides, at no cost to the NCP, classes and other appropriate resources. Following its implementation in August 2011, the Porter County IV-D *SKIP* Program has been modified as needed.

St. Joseph County

Work One "CSIP" Collaboration: We worked with the Court and the Department of Workforce Development, Work One Program to establish a program we call our *Child Support Improvement Program* (CSIP). Delinquent NCPs appearing before the Court for a hearing on a contempt petition or appearing at an informal administrative review with the deputy prosecutor are ordered or referred to the *CSIP* program when employment-related barriers are identified as a factor in the nonpayment of support.

NCPs are required to report to the Work One Office for an initial evaluation and recommendations which may include GED classes, interviewing and resume preparation assistance and training, job training, and job search assistance. The Work One Office worked with our office and the Court to establish a reporting form for the purpose of documenting the NCP's compliance with the program when he/she reports back to the Court or prosecutor at a status hearing. NCPs who comply with the ordered participation avoid negative enforcement action such as jail time for civil contempt and driver's license suspension. Numerous other counties have visited St. Joseph County to learn more about our CSIP program and have established similar programs.

Early Intervention: We have a caseworker that meets with all new case participants after the court hearing, or in-office stipulation, to explain the order and refer the NCP to a work program, if appropriate. We set expectations for the case, and this caseworker "owns" the case for the first three months and is responsible for making collection calls and sending out letters if no payments are being received. This caseworker also schedules the case for administrative hearings with the Deputy Prosecutor if the calls and letters fail to result in payments. This *early intervention* worker also reviews the report of *NCP/CP With Same Address Report*, and contacts the parties to see if they are cohabitating and if they want a zero dollar (\$0.00) support order or case closure.

Court Alternative: We have implemented administrative hearings which are held in our office with a deputy prosecutor. The NCP is sent notification of the hearing by issuance of an administrative subpoena to the NCP. During this hearing the deputy prosecutor addresses non-payment issues with the NCP prior to the initiation of a *Rule to Show Cause*. We have enjoyed great results by using this process and have also accomplished some case clean up due to cohabitation, modifications, SSI/SSD status, referrals to jobs programs, and income withholding orders to employers.

Goodwill 2nd Chance: Our County has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Goodwill Industries to provide job training and work experience through Goodwill. The 2nd Chance Program is a transitional job training program for felony ex-offenders only. Our office also worked with Goodwill to establish a process for referral of NCP ex-offenders with child support orders from other re-entry programs to our child support program for modification reviews.



Currently, the program can accept no more than five (5) participants every two (2) weeks. The NCP receives four (4) weeks of free training, and is then moved into a paid position within Goodwill Industries. After five (5) to six (6) months of successful work experience, Goodwill case managers work with the NCP to find permanent employment with community employers. This relationship has led to our membership in a community organization of re-entry service providers and employers willing to hire our ex-offenders.

Our MOU with Goodwill Industries provides we will not take judicial enforcement action while the NCP is actively participating in this program, and that each case will be reviewed for modification (this includes all program participants, not just referrals from the Court and prosecutor). An additional benefit is that Goodwill’s other six hundred (600) employees are receiving educational information about the IV-D program and making referrals to the St. Joseph Prosecutor IV-D Office.

“Petition to Modify Support” and “Waiver of Hearing”: Our office files a *Petition to Modify Support* and a *Waiver of Hearing* on SSI and incarcerated parent cases, which conserves our court time and deputy prosecutor resources. All parties are served with the pleadings.

Head Start Outreach Program: We are in the process of



evaluating an outreach program for parents at the local Head Start Program for the purpose of assisting them with child support education and compliance. Our office participated in a Head Start *Open House* for local agencies through which we provided information regarding the Title IV-D Program and the services we provide.

Coordination of Sentencing Orders: Our office established a process for coordination between the Felony Division and the Child Support Division to share information on sentencing orders when there is a NCP sentenced to serve time in jail/DOC. When the IV- D staff become aware an NCP has been sentenced, outreach and communication efforts are undertaken early in the sentence to provide information to the NCP about child support generally and his/her rights and obligations while incarcerated, including modification of the support order. As a result of these efforts *Petitions for Modification of Support* are filed earlier resulting in the prevention of the accumulation of arrears during incarceration. These efforts also positively impact our *current support collected ratio*.

“These efforts also positively impact our current support collected ratio.”

In-Office Modification Review and Modification Stipulations: Upon the request of any party, including us, or as a result of an administrative hearing, or caseworker review, our office will review a case for modification by stipulation, using a subpoena process. Subpoenaing parties to the office has resulted in better, more timely information for modifications as we had found that mailing requests had low, low rates of return. *Petitions for Modification of Support* are filed when appropriate.

Jail School for Incarcerated NCPs:



Every other week one of our Deputy Prosecutors visits the local jail to do an educational presentation to inmates regarding child support issues. The early intervention caseworker is also present to record case specific information for follow-up action.

SVES Reports Reviewed for Modification and Enforcement:

Our office implemented a practice for routine reviews of the *SVES Reports* from the Child Support Resources (CSR) website. When appropriate, we seek modifications of support orders on cases where the NCP is receiving SSI or SSD, and also monitor cases with pending claims for further action.

Vanderburgh County

Early Intervention: Early intervention cannot be emphasized enough. On nearly every new paternity establishment and support order establishment case, the court orders a six (6) month review hearing date for the purpose of insuring support payments are being made. In some cases, we reschedule earlier than six (6) months, but six (6) months is typical. If payments are being made, the parties go on their merry way. If not, we start the judicial enforcement process.

In the last year or so, we have made a greater effort to give NCPs and CPs more specific information on how child support works at the beginning of the case. A deputy prosecutor in our division designed separate pamphlets for CPs and NCPs which we hand out at the time support and/or paternity is established. These pamphlets contain some child support basics, for example: *where to pay?* and *how to pay?* The pamphlets emphasize the importance of filing for support order modification if circumstances change and

the requirements to keep the prosecutor and court advised of changes of address, employment and other general information parents should know. We have found the pamphlets make the judicial process less adversarial and more understandable for the parties.

Expedited IWO implementation. We try to get our non-electronic auto-print income withholding orders (IWOs) out in the mail the same day they are printed. We have two (2) full-time employees who do nothing but review, process and mail IWOs. The assignment of this task to a specialized unit has increased collections by ensuring no time is lost between the identification of an employer and income source and the activation of the IWO. The establishment of the unit has streamlined operations, improved efficiency and allowed the workers to develop expertise in this process. The IWO team approach has resulted in a very focused effort on timely issuance of IWOs so the payment of support begins to flow. Also, we request IWOs be included in every court order on all new cases at the time the order is established.



Collections on Arrears

Allen County:

Entry of Temporary Order for Zero Dollars (\$0.00) in Lieu of a Default Order: If we obtain personal service on a NCP and he/she fails to appear at the hearing, the Court will enter a temporary zero dollar (\$0.00) support order, establish a new court date and issue a *Body Attachment Order* for the NCP. This practice increases our *support order establishment* ratio, but does not negatively impact our *current support collected* ratio, as compliance with default orders is typically low. When the *Body Attachment Order* is executed and the NCP appears before the Court, the order is modified to establish the appropriate dollar amount pursuant to the *Indiana Child Support Guidelines*.

Schedule Status Hearings on Arrearage Cases: We schedule our *arrears only* cases for a “status hearing” so a court-determined arrearage can be established, and to ensure the arrearage on the case is not lost pursuant to the statute of limitations.

Brown County

Use of Indiana Unclaimed Property Website and Administrative License Suspension Process: We recently started two projects we use each year to increase our performance on the *cases with payments on arrears* performance ratio. We utilize these enforcement tools on all appropriate cases throughout the year, with an emphasis on *arrears only* cases in the fourth quarter. Last year, in one quarter, we increased collections on arrearage only cases by six percent (6%).

Project 1- Unclaimed Property - Search for unclaimed property on the Indiana Attorney General’s Unclaimed Property website: IndianaUnclaimed.com. When unclaimed income is identified, we follow the income withholding process.

Project 2 – Administrative License Suspension – We use the administrative license suspension process for *arrears only* cases. Use of this tool has been successful in the establishment of payment plans with an initial lump sum collected and the payment in full of the arrears balance.



“Last year, in one quarter, we increased collections on arrears only cases by 6%.”

Dearborn/Ohio Counties

Felony Non-Support Cases: Our office files felony non-support charges when the statutory requirements are met. These filings reinforce that intentional disregard of support orders by NCPs with the means to comply will not be tolerated.

Greene County

Verify Child Support Arrearage in ISETS: Our office takes action to ensure the arrearage balance in ISETS is accurate before any enforcement actions (automated or manual) are taken, to ensure the amount of the delinquency is accurate and can be substantiated in the event an NCP (or CP) disputes the figure. Every time the arrearage balance is updated on our manual calculation sheet we enter a verification code of “GCV” on the UPDATE CASE SCREEN in ISETS. The Code stands for “Greene County Verified.” To change the verified date, we simply blank out the code used, then PF9, then go back to that screen using the PF3 key, re-enter the code, then PF9 and the date will be updated. By using this technique, any person looking at the case will know at what point the arrearage amount was verified by a caseworker.

Jefferson County

Monthly Delinquency Report: We used the monthly *Delinquency Report* in the REPORTSPA in ISETS and initiated a project to target cases with an arrearage over one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00). We had a relatively small number of cases with arrears over one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00). We focused all available resources on *locate* and *enforcement*. By the end of the focused project, we were able to get every one of the NCPs to make regular payments. The NCPs were also advised that when they start receiving social security retirement benefits, the maximum amount allowed under the law would be withheld on their case.

St. Joseph County

Remedies for arrearage only cases: In lieu of seeking jail time in civil contempt proceedings, we request the court order NCPs to perform community service at local agencies, programs, and faith-based organizations. When the Court orders community service, the NCP must provide the prosecutor and Court with a letter on agency letterhead when they have completed their required hours.

Tippecanoe County

Use of Paid Interns to Calculate Arrearages: We use our paid interns, often college students with advanced math skills, for the time-consuming task of calculating arrearages on our cases. This has allowed the caseworkers to use the time that would have otherwise been spent on these calculations toward opening, processing and filing cases for establishment of orders and initiation of enforcement action on cases. In accordance with the IRS rules and our *Cooperative Agreements*, interns with access to federal tax information (FTI) must be **paid** for their services.

Customer Service



Allen County

Customer Service and Title IV-D Perception: Allen County is trying to reinforce the message that the IV-D Program and our office represent the State of Indiana and the best interest of the child/children rather than either parent. We emphasize this point at the time a case is opened and throughout the life of the case. We accept requests for review and modification from both CPs and NCPs.

When a timely request is received from either party, we gather the required income information from the parents and prepare a *Child Support Obligation Worksheet* (CSOW). If the statutory requirements are met and the worksheet reflects the order should increase or decrease, we file the petition with the court. When we receive a request for a modification from a CP we advise that once he or she has requested a modification, the case will go forward even if it means lowering the support order. Similarly, upon receipt of a request from a NCP, we advise once the request is made, we will proceed even if the information reflects the support order will increase.

We have also implemented a proactive outreach program for incarcerated NCPs and assist with the filing of petitions to modify support when appropriate.

Daviess County

Emphasis on Customer Service: We have learned from experience that good customer service and support not only improve our relationship with our constituents, but also indirectly improve our performance in all of the federal performance measures. In our county we always ensure a caseworker is present at our front office desk. We do so by rotating our staff to fill in at the front desk each week. When a case participant, or new applicant comes in to the office seeking assistance, we have someone right there with the experience and background to provide immediate assistance.

Similarly, when we have an unhappy CP or NCP who comes into the office with a concern about a particular action on the case, we are able to give the parent our immediate attention, thus eliminating any additional frustration that can build with a delay or from being referred to multiple staff. We have found investing in good customer service practices on the front end promotes efficiency and streamlines operations for the caseworkers handling the establishment and enforcement tasks by reducing the interruption to their work flow.

Dearborn/Ohio Counties

Website: Our office has developed a website that includes a child support link that leads the participants to the office contact information, the services we provide, and the Child Support Bureau/IN.gov website. The website saves time as both parties can access general information 24/7 without having to contact the office directly.



Elkhart County

Website: Our office created a website that provides an overview of the Title IV-D program. The website also provides several forms which can be downloaded including the *Title IV-D Application for Services*, a *Status Request* inquiry form, which also includes information that may be needed by our office if the parties are seeking a modification of the support order, and questionnaires for paternity and UIFSA establishment and enforcement.

We also have a link on the website that allows the parties to email the office directly from the website, which saves them time and money. There are links to the State Child Support Bureau website and the Attorney General's Unclaimed Property website. We average about three (3) to five (5) emails per day with questions as to how to go about receiving child support services, questions concerning case status, or tips on where a NCP can be found. We

have also received numerous “*thank you*” emails for having the forms available on the website.

Gibson County

Customer Service: In Gibson County, we have established an *Open Door* practice that places an emphasis on good customer service. Our office is open Monday through Thursday to all parents in need of assistance and no appointment is required to see a IV-D caseworker. We also take all calls from parents on those days. On Fridays, our office is open to walk-ins without appointments, but we established a process for screening calls on Fridays that allows us to focus more heavily on case processing and enforcement.

We also created and use a *IV-D Information Sheet* in our front office. The *IV-D Information Sheet* is provided to the NCP when order is established. The *IV-D Information Sheet* provides some basic information to parents about child support enforcement, including the consequences of noncompliance with the support order, the ISETS case number and cause number. The *IV-D Information Sheet* also includes information on how to mail in payments to the Indiana State Central Collections Unit (INSCCU).

Greene County

Customer Service: Our staff is responsive to case participant inquiries during office hours, both by taking phone calls, and by meeting with individuals who appear at the office needing assistance. We have found this practice is very effective and improves collections because the case managers are getting information immediately, including new employers for the NCP, updated addresses, and reports of non-payment. Many times the NCP will call to report a new job, or a change of status and appropriate action is then taken promptly. We have found the CPs are usually an excellent source of



information as they generally know what the other parent is doing, long before our office can find out.

Harrison County

Packets in the Lobby: Our office has trays in the lobby that are filled with *Mother Packets*, *Father Packets*, and *Non-Parent Packets*. The public can take the packets home, fill them out, get all required documents (court orders, birth certificates, social security cards, etc.) and then call for an appointment. There is also a *Request Form* for those who want to leave a request in writing. This practice saves time for us when we meet with the parent requesting or referred for services. Having all of the required information to prepare the petition reduces delay in establishment of orders.



Jefferson County

Communications and Customer Service: Our Prosecutor's Office is open daily for calls and walk-ins without appointments. Case participants are the best source of information necessary for unbiased enforcement actions. The parties are advised our office does not represent either side, but is dedicated to the mission of ensuring the financial support of the dependents. Regular and effective communication with the families we serve not only helps us to better understand the unique circumstances of the particular family, but also allows the timely receipt of important information, like new employers, workplace accidents and worker's compensation or SSD claims, changes in custody, changes of address, and new assets—homes, cars, boats, estates, among others.

Porter County

Informational Materials for Other Family-Centered Services.



We have compiled local resource information for family-centered services and resources to address barriers to financial support for children. These services include legal service organizations that provide assistance with disagreements over parenting-time, custody issues, job programs and other services and resources we believe our case participants may need.

Efficiency Measures



Daviess County

Paperless Office: In Daviess County, our case file documents are digitized which cuts down on the amount of time needed to look for files and to put them away. Only our case files are paperless.

Teamwork: We have two teams, consisting of two workers each and the case load is divided between them to work cases.



Dearborn/Ohio Counties

Paperless Office: We have a paperless office which is a more efficient process and saves time.

Decatur County

Luncheon for Local Bar Association: Our elected prosecutor periodically schedules brown bag lunches at the courthouse and invites the local Bar Association Family Law attorneys. In preparation for these sessions, we put together a packet with any recent statute or federal or state policy changes regarding child support enforcement. The attorneys discuss any concerns regarding process and procedure, for example, income withholding order (IWO) changes and provisions in standard court orders issued in our county.



This practice is very well-received by the local attorneys. When we explained the IV-D requirements and answered questions, the attorneys adjusted their proposed orders to include the appropriate provisions including immediate income withholding and payments via the INSCCU.

Elkhart County

Paperless Office Conversion: In 2008, we began the implementation of a document imaging program called *Docuware* as we were quickly outgrowing our filing space for both active and inactive files. We wanted a program that could be used as storage and also as a working filing cabinet. When we met with the vendor, we made it clear that we needed the program to work for current and past files. First, all inactive files were scanned and indexed, and then we began scanning the active files. The office is structured so that the cases are divided into six (6) units by the alphabetically and the last name of the NCP. We decided to bring each unit up separately to allow for a smooth transition thus allowing staff to learn the program one unit at a time.

It took almost a year and a half to get the entire office up and running. Since then, productivity has almost tripled. Everything you need to know about a case when responding to a call or preparing a letter or pleading, is at your fingertips. If a party calls about his/her case, there is no putting the party on hold, as you can look everything up immediately. The staff is trained to make notes on the *ledger* sheet



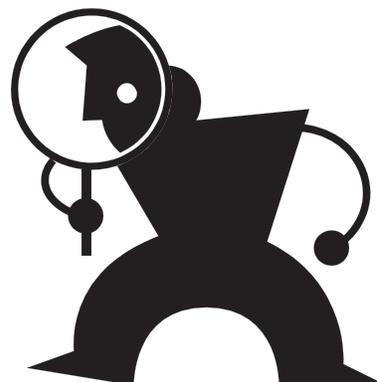
and also in ISETS. The intake staff at the front desk also uses the paperless system and as a result, fewer calls are being transferred back to the caseworkers, which frees up more of their time to work on establishment and enforcement work.

We have also hired one (1) full-time and two (2) part-time staff members to scan and assist with the daily mail. This has allowed the staff to focus more on the case work. Legal Assistants have been provided two (2) wide monitors at their desks which allow them to view ISETS, ICES, JTS, *Docuware* and other programs simultaneously.

Docuware is set up in the IV-D Court so there is no longer a need to lug boxes of files to the Court, three times a week. There is a

computer available at the back of the courtroom for the staff assisting the deputy in Court and there is also a computer at the bench that allows the deputy to make notes on the cases in *Docuware*. The staff also handles dispositions in Court instead of waiting for the files to come back from Court. This frees up more time after Court to focus on delegated tasks. As each unit was brought up, their computers were upgraded.

IV-D Investigator Position: Our Prosecutor's Office employs four (4) full-time investigators. One of them is assigned to IV-D and is paid with IV-D funds. His primary mission is to locate and arrest people with outstanding IV-D warrants and body attachments. He also helps with service of process. Our investigator is a former Elkhart police officer. He has developed good working relationships with area police agencies. Since he was assigned to IV-D, he has been arresting an average of twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) people per month. When it is safe, our investigator allows people to make arrangements to get their bond posted right away, so they are released and the bond goes toward the unpaid support arrearage. A locate service (CBC) and a good smart phone are useful tools.



Huntington County

Working Good Reports: In Huntington County, we focus on working certain reports to keep our case information up to date.

These reports include:

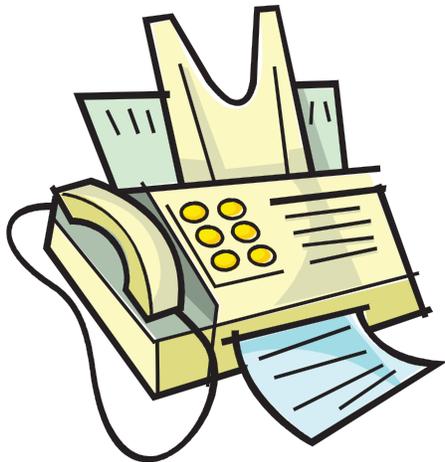
- **UNDISTRIBUTED COLLECTIONS:** Each caseworker will work this monthly
- **ESTABLISHING SUPPORT ORDERS:** Two (2) people work this report quarterly
- **ESTABLISHING PATERNITY:** Two (2) people work this report quarterly

- **REPORT OF FOSTER CARE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENT CASES:** The Report is printed every six (6) months; caseworkers are responsible for their own cases
- **DUPLICATE MPI AND PARTICIPANTS:** One (1) person works this report quarterly
- **ESTABLISHING MEDICAL SUPPORT ORDERS:** One (1) person works this report quarterly
- **CASES NOT PAYING FULL CURRENT SUPPORT:** Each caseworker will work this report bi-monthly
- **CASES NOT PAYING IV-D ARREARS:** Each caseworker will work this report bi-monthly
- **SOCIAL SECURITY CASES:** Each caseworker will monitor this report on at least a quarterly basis
- **ISETS ERROR REPORTS:** One (1) person works this report daily
- **ISETS INTERFACE REPORTS:** One (1) person works this report whenever there is a report provided in the reports queue

Incorporating these reports into our routine work process has resulted in improvement in all performance measures.

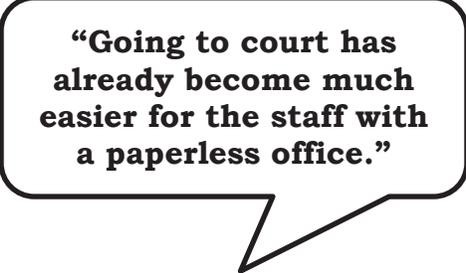
Porter County

Faxing Sanction Requests: Our office was initially faxing *Sanction Requests* to the DFR/FSSA call center 800 number. We have changed this process and are now faxing the *Sanction Requests* directly to our local office in Peru. We also fax the *Request to Lift*



Sanction directly to the local office. We keep the files of the cases where a sanction has been requested in a specific area in the office and check them about thirty (30) days after the sanction is requested. We also make a note on our calendar to check on the status of the sanctions, and if no action has been taken we contact the local FSSA/DFR Office to find out why the request has not been implemented.

Paperless: We began a paperless office conversion in July 2011, by scanning all new files and new mail into our paperless system, *Docuware*. Since July 2011, we have been slowly scanning in the existing files. All files that go to court are paperless. We are still in a transition phase, but confident that once the project is completed, there will be less time spent on wasteful activities such as searching for and through files. Going to court has already become much easier for the staff.



“Going to court has already become much easier for the staff with a paperless office.”

No Appointments: We do not make an intake appointment for the CP. Mandatory cooperation participants are sent a letter requesting they provide any information needed to process the case. The participant is given a deadline to provide the information to our office. A worklist item is set for follow-up. Upon receipt of the information, it is reviewed at the front desk to make sure everything is filled out completely. The case and information are then reviewed by the intake staff. If there is any other missing information or questions, the participant is contacted.

St. Joseph County

Paperless Files: We have initiated a paperless project which includes all areas, especially customer service and working mail. The paperless project has improved efficiency and saved time.

“Faxage”: Our county uses “Faxage”, which costs us sixty-five dollars (\$65.00) per month. This is the best cost-saver we have implemented. It is easy to use and now anything that was previously faxed can now be sent electronically.

Report Review: We perform a weekly review of four (4) of the five (5) federal performance measures (*paternity establishment, order establishment, current support collected, and cases paying on arrears*) using a spreadsheet. Our review allows us to allocate resources to areas where they are most needed.

VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol): We are exploring the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) as a replacement to our current expensive and inflexible telephone system. This system allows flexibility for staff, better customer service through call trees,

“VOIP also improves efficiency which frees staff time that is redirected to establishment and enforcement actions on our cases”.

general information, call queuing, and automatic processing to the appropriate worker or section. This tool also improves efficiency which frees staff time that is redirected to establishment and enforcement actions on our cases.

Staff Efficiency: Ten percent (10%) of our staff is dedicated exclusively to working reports and worklists. We have three (3) full-time and one (1) part-time experienced staff members who work on the majority of the reports, and the remainder are less experienced workers who manage the worklists. This allows the caseworkers to process cases more efficiently.

Tippecanoe County

Paperless Files: We have found that going paperless has saved time so caseworkers can focus on processing cases, rather than filing and searching for files.

Implemented Communication Procedures for Participants: We implemented a communication procedure to improve efficiency and streamline our work processes. Our caseworkers do not take phone calls from CPs or NCPs. All requests for assistance are done in writing. One day per week, CPs and NCPs may walk in without an appointment and speak with a customer service representative;

however, the parents are asked to complete a form to provide the details of their request. The customer service representatives make notes in ISETS documenting the request and resolution. These procedures allow staff to stay on task and work more efficiently.

Warrick County

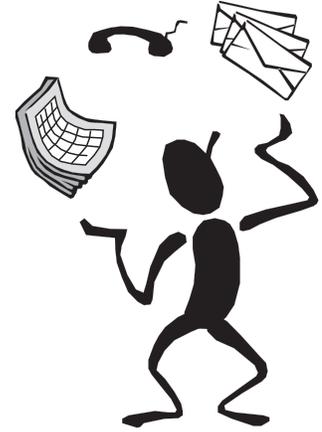
Greater Focus on Administrative Enforcement Tools: We have implemented a schedule that promotes the use of administrative enforcement remedies first, prior to the use of judicial remedies. Our week is very structured and we have specific times of the day to work on specific types of cases. This enables all types of cases to be worked every week. The breakdown for the enforcement is as follows:

- AE1 – Administrative Enforcement Work List
- AE2 – Administrative Enforcement Reports assigned by Prosecutor
- CE1 – Court Enforcement including Case Initiation of PA/CS/Incoming UIFSA
- CE2 – Court Enforcement including Case Initiation/Processing of IC/PTM and outgoing UIFSA

In addition to the above, we review and process mail twice a day, and one (1) hour every day is dedicated to returning phone calls and emails.

Court Schedule Streamlining: Our Prosecutor has taken action to reduce the number of days that we have court hearings scheduled so we can focus more on administrative enforcement efforts. It seemed that all we were doing was preparing for Court. This process seems to allow more focus on the cases that really need to be in front of the judge.

Phone Tree: In our county, the IV-D staff does not answer the phones, however calls are returned once a day. The phone tree provides a lot of information to the caller and directs them to other sources of information without having to talk to a caseworker. The phone tree provides our office hours as well as our walk-in hours. The phone tree also directs the caller to the Warrick County website, to the Clerk's Office, and to the Kid's Line. It also provides information on where to seek answers to application questions, employment questions, docket fees, involuntary payments, court dates, payment questions, changing the address of the custodial parent, and how to obtain copies of court orders. This practice increases efficiency in the use of staff time by eliminating interruption in the administrative enforcement and routine case work. The parents are notified of the timeframe within which their call will be returned and we follow through with participant contact during those hours.



Customer Service and Efficiency: In Warrick County, we established a phased-approach to customer service whereby CP and NCP inquiries are handled by the first line of contact within the office which we have designated as: *Desk 1* and *Desk 2*. The staff at Desks 1 & 2 has ISETS and *Letter Genie* access. The staff processes all of the incoming mail with the following duties:

- Open, date stamp and place ISETS Case Number on document received
- Review and make ISETS note about what was received
- “*End Date*” employment in ISETS from termination notifications
- Make addresses old from returned mail
- Review new applications for complete information
- Return application if incomplete
- Sort alphabetically and distribute to Caseworker



Phone calls and walk-in questions are completed as follows:

- Update address or employment of NCP
- Answer basic procedural questions (how long, court date, etc.)
- Copy documents for CP when providing information requested
- Send postal verifications, when CP provides new address for NCP

This phased-approach to customer service and distribution of work improves efficiency by freeing staff to focus on enforcement and establishment tasks.

Cross-training of Customer Service Staff: We have been able to offer overtime to non-child support staff from our Criminal Division to help in the child support office. The staff is trained to prepare pleadings for establishment of paternity and support and for enforcement of orders. The staff has also been trained to organize, scan and purge old child support files.

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