

Child Support Program

SFY

2015

Provides services for the establishment of paternity, and the establishment, modification and enforcement of child support orders (financial and medical) to help families become or remain self-sufficient.

ESA Briefing
Book

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Child Support Program Overview

The Child Support program (Title IV-D) provides services for the establishment of paternity, and the establishment, modification and enforcement of child support orders to help families become or remain self-sufficient.

Three types of cases make up the Title IV-D child support program:

- **Current Assistance** (individuals receiving TANF or Title IV-E Foster Care)
- **Former Assistance** (individuals who previously received Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TANF/AFDC) or Title IV-E Foster Care)
- **Never Assistance** (individuals who have never received TANF/AFDC or Title IV-E Foster Care. Medicaid, child care only and State Only Foster Care are also Never Assistance cases)

The Child Support Performance and Incentive Act of 1998 awards incentives to states' child support programs based on their performance on five measures:

1. Paternity establishment
2. Order establishment
3. Current support collected
4. Cases paying toward arrears
5. Cost effectiveness

The Child Support Incentive Scorecard shows DCS outcomes on the five measures over the past two federal fiscal years. Information is presented in federal fiscal years because that is the time frame used for awarding incentives earned by the state's child support program.

Cost avoidance, one of the indirect benefits of the child support enforcement program, is referred to as reductions in public expenditures in cash assistance, food assistance and Medicaid for custodial families. Washington state studies have shown that a dependable stream of child support income for custodial parents and medical insurance coverage for children helps custodial families increase levels of financial stability and independence, and consequently, leads to less reliance on public safety net programs and greater family self-sufficiency.

TECHNICAL NOTES

DATA SOURCES: Data for this chapter was based on ESA Division of Child Support's Support Enforcement Management System (SEMS) - September 2015 load. Data for incentive payments are based on DCS Fiscal Office.

DATA NOTES: Percentages may not add up to expected totals due to rounding.

Child Support Program Highlights, SFY 2015

The average monthly child support caseload was 347,740 in SFY 2015, a 4.5% decrease¹ from 364,295 in SFY 2014. Within this caseload, average monthly Current Assistance cases decreased 12.1% from 41,179 in SFY 2014 to 36,207 in SFY 2015; Former Assistance cases decreased by 2.2% from 196,630 to 192,318; and Never Assistance cases decreased 5.7% from 126,486 to 119,215.

- The program collected a total of \$677.8 million in SFY 2015, nearly meeting the projected \$681.6 million.
- The total child support cost avoidance was \$138.9 million. Of the total, \$79.2 million (57.0%) was for the Medicaid program; \$44.2 million (31.8%) for the Basic Food program and \$15.6 million (11.2%) for the TANF program.
- The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) reported 28,129 births to unmarried mothers. Of these births, DOH reports that 21,584 (76.7%) of the unmarried parents collectively signed and filed Washington State Paternity Acknowledgment forms. The vast majority of these acknowledgments were signed at the hospital as a result of Washington State's Paternity Acknowledgment Program.

¹ Beginning in October 2013, DCS began to discontinue providing medical cases only services and acting on Medicaid referrals due to the process change in enrolling children in Medicaid as a result of the implementation of the Health Benefit Exchange and the Healthplanfinder. The Health Care Authority (HCA), the state agency administering Medicaid, is not able to provide a complete referral for reimbursement because there is no process to identify cases that contain good cause for not cooperating with the child support agency. DCS implemented final policy for this change effective March 13, 2014.

Child Support Incentive² Scorecard, FFY 2014³ and FFY 2015⁴

Measure	Goal Needed to Obtain 100% Funding	Actual Performance		Estimated Percentage of Maximum Incentive Reached	
		2014	2015	2014	2015
Paternity Establishment Percentage⁵	80%	97.2%	98.7%	100%	100%
Support Order Establishment	80%	93.2%	93.2%	100%	100%
Current Collections	80%	64.6%	65.6%	74%	75%
Arrearage Collections	80%	60.4%	61.6%	70%	71%
Cost Effectiveness	\$5.00	\$4.78	\$4.60	90%	90%

Incentive Measure Formulas Used by the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement

PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT PERCENTAGE: Number of Children in the Caseload in the FFY or as of the end of the FFY Who Were Born Out-of-Wedlock (BOW) with Paternity Established or Acknowledged divided by Number of Children BOW in the Caseload as of the End of the Preceding FFY.

SUPPORT ORDER ESTABLISHMENT: Number of IV-D Cases with Support Orders divided by Number of IV-D Cases.

CURRENT COLLECTIONS: Amount Collected for Current Support in IV-D Cases divided by Amount Owed for Current Support in IV-D Cases.

ARREARAGE COLLECTIONS: Number of IV-D Cases Paying Toward Arrears divided by Number of IV-D Cases with Arrears Due.

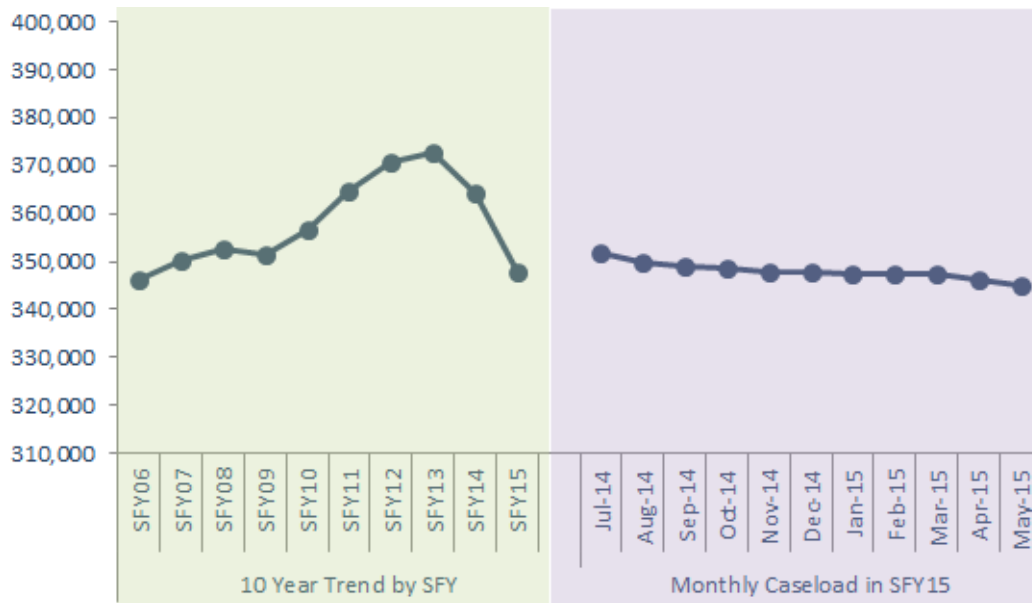
COST-EFFECTIVENESS: Total IV-D Dollars Collected divided by Total IV-D Dollars Expended.

² DCS incentive payments for FFY14 are based on DCS actual FFY14 performance and OCSE FFY14 preliminary performance results for all other states. DCS incentive payments for FFY15 are based on DCS actual FFY15 performance and OCSE FFY14 preliminary performance results for all other states. Data source: DCS Fiscal Office.

³ FFY 2014 data is from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) 2014 Preliminary Report.

⁴ FFY 2015 data is preliminary based on unaudited federal reports.

Child Support Caseload⁶, SFY 2006 through SFY 2015

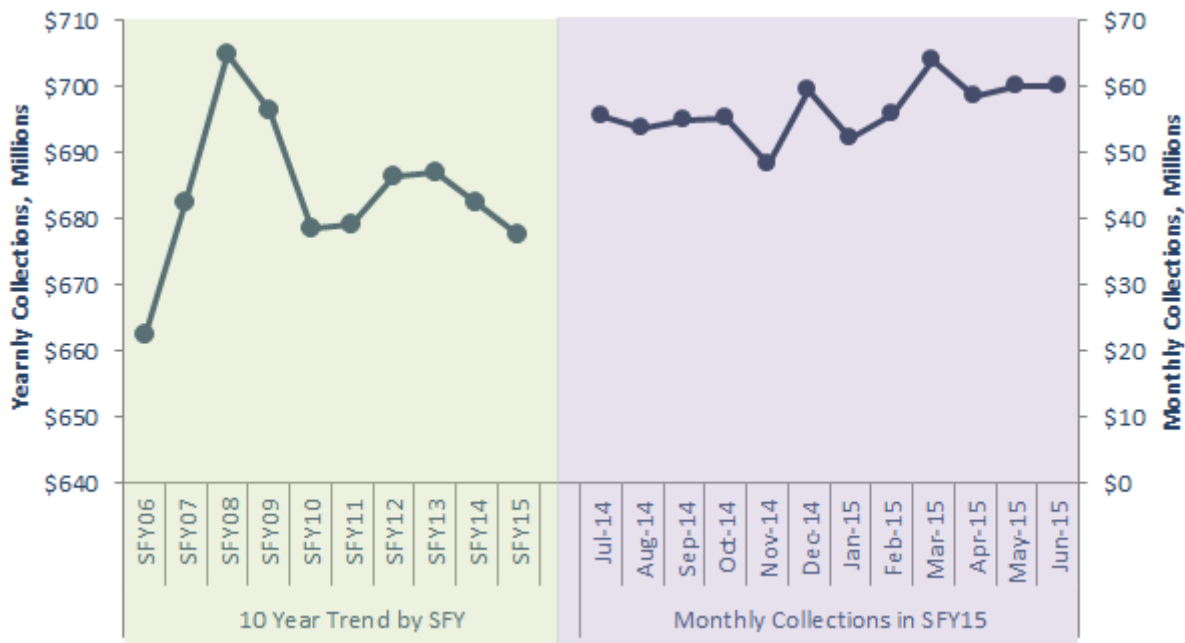


SFY	Cases	SFY	Cases
SFY06	346,184	SFY11	364,535
SFY07	350,206	SFY12	370,830
SFY08	352,422	SFY13	372,701
SFY09	351,315	SFY14	364,295
SFY10	356,436	SFY15	347,740

SFY 2015	TANF/Foster Care	Former Assistance	Never Assistance	Total IV-D Caseload
July	38,327	193,274	120,360	351,961
August	37,964	192,578	119,369	349,911
September	37,698	192,397	118,973	349,068
October	37,215	192,423	119,025	348,663
November	37,216	191,908	118,733	347,857
December	35,979	192,821	118,828	347,628
January	36,447	192,163	118,949	347,559
February	35,715	192,596	119,163	347,474
March	35,131	192,847	119,339	347,317
April	34,699	192,278	119,180	346,157
May	34,593	191,095	119,251	344,939
June	33,496	191,439	119,411	344,346
Mo. Avg.	36,207	192,318	119,215	347,740

⁶ Case counts are unduplicated.

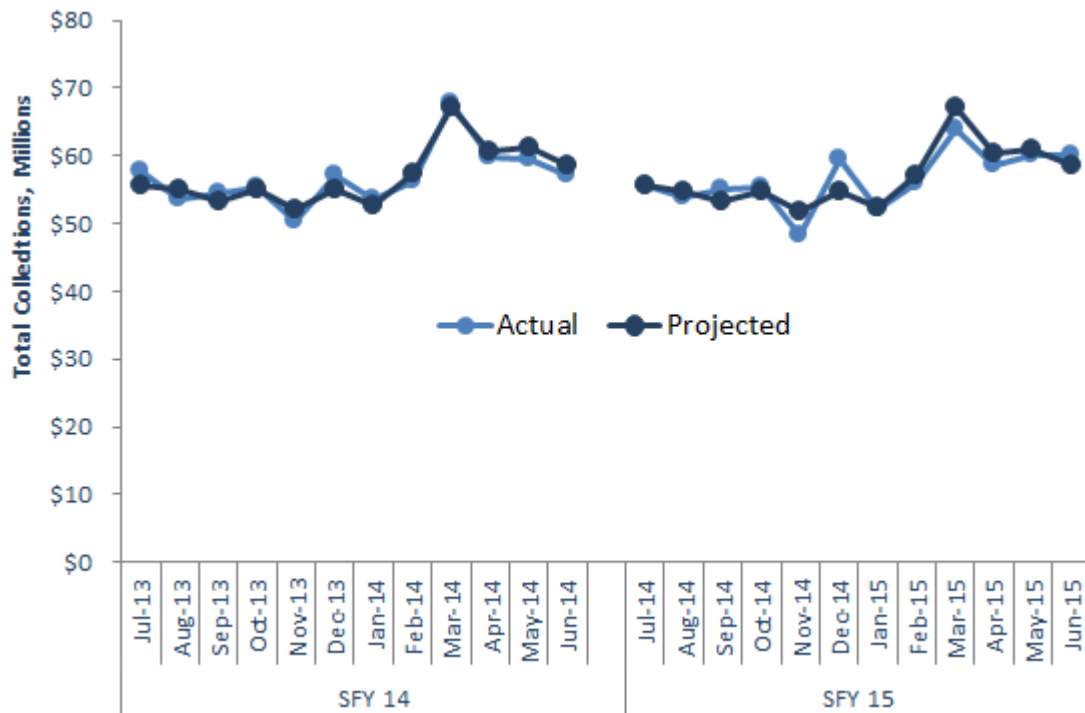
Child Support Collections, SFY 2006 – SFY 2015



SFY	Collections	SFY	Collections
SFY06	\$662,571,225	SFY11	\$679,114,124
SFY07	\$682,569,955	SFY12	\$686,339,317
SFY08	\$704,983,914	SFY13	\$686,994,705
SFY09	\$696,497,265	SFY14	\$682,411,249
SFY10	\$678,663,012	SFY15	\$677,763,250

SFY 2015	TANF/Foster Care	Former Assistance	Never Assistance	Total IV-D Collections
July	\$2,109,507	\$21,155,276	\$32,358,688	\$55,623,470
August	\$2,011,860	\$20,357,800	\$31,421,744	\$53,791,405
September	\$2,019,287	\$20,621,501	\$32,349,943	\$54,990,730
October	\$2,044,228	\$20,816,793	\$32,382,811	\$55,243,832
November	\$1,733,079	\$17,743,013	\$28,638,357	\$48,114,450
December	\$2,124,009	\$22,026,197	\$35,214,113	\$59,364,319
January	\$1,825,385	\$19,279,831	\$31,099,252	\$52,204,468
February	\$2,158,889	\$21,487,744	\$32,162,686	\$55,809,320
March	\$2,392,536	\$24,983,909	\$36,578,813	\$63,955,259
April	\$2,024,441	\$22,632,868	\$33,954,023	\$58,611,332
May	\$2,347,144	\$23,672,400	\$34,071,381	\$60,090,926
June	\$2,157,288	\$23,216,689	\$34,589,762	\$59,963,739
Total	\$24,947,653	\$257,994,021	\$394,821,573	\$677,763,250

Child Support Collections, Actual and Projected, SFY 2014 - SFY 2015



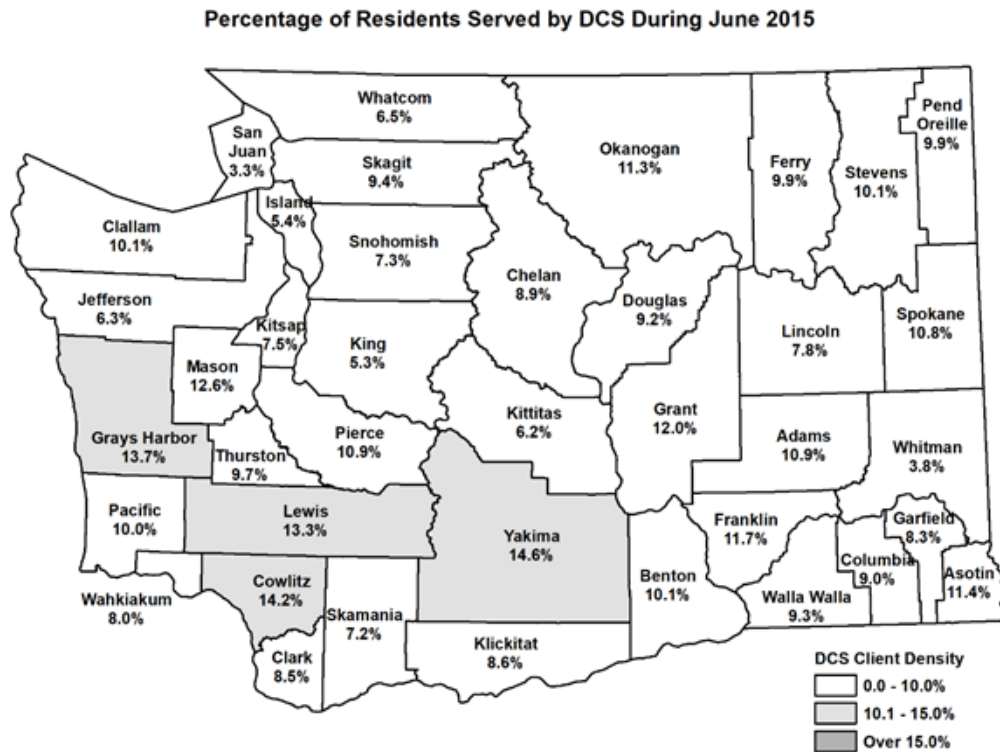
	SFY 2014		SFY 2015	
	Actual	Projected	Actual	Projected
July	\$57,585,386	\$55,737,235	\$55,623,470	\$55,542,427
August	\$53,713,179	\$55,134,973	\$53,791,405	\$54,839,780
September	\$54,342,387	\$53,186,170	\$54,990,730	\$53,162,285
October	\$55,429,379	\$54,953,071	\$55,243,832	\$54,799,090
November	\$50,353,916	\$52,151,569	\$48,114,450	\$51,833,542
December	\$57,156,795	\$54,956,396	\$59,364,319	\$54,837,084
January	\$53,561,741	\$52,776,578	\$52,204,468	\$52,472,087
February	\$56,144,807	\$57,270,181	\$55,809,320	\$57,047,301
March	\$67,675,290	\$67,312,371	\$63,955,259	\$67,198,379
April	\$59,838,105	\$60,624,324	\$58,611,332	\$60,398,619
May	\$59,356,506	\$61,313,557	\$60,090,926	\$60,912,448
June	\$57,253,759	\$58,730,687	\$59,963,739	\$58,596,191
Total	\$682,411,250	\$684,147,112	\$677,763,250	\$681,639,233

Child Support Clients by County of Residence, June 2015 Snapshot

County	Clients	Population Estimate	% of Residents Served	County	Clients	Population Estimate	% of Residents Served
Adams	2,107	19,410	10.9%	Lincoln	832	10,720	7.8%
Asotin	2,507	22,010	11.4%	Mason	7,840	62,200	12.6%
Benton	19,019	188,590	10.1%	Okanogan	4,729	41,860	11.3%
Chelan	6,658	75,030	8.9%	Pacific	2,120	21,210	10.0%
Clallam	7,365	72,650	10.1%	Pend Oreille	1,316	13,240	9.9%
Clark	38,445	451,820	8.5%	Pierce	90,299	830,120	10.9%
Columbia	370	4,090	9.0%	San Juan	536	16,180	3.3%
Cowlitz	14,814	104,280	14.2%	Skagit	11,380	120,620	9.4%
Douglas	3,677	39,990	9.2%	Skamania	825	11,430	7.2%
Ferry	760	7,710	9.9%	Snohomish	55,464	757,600	7.3%
Franklin	10,238	87,150	11.7%	Spokane	52,624	488,310	10.8%
Garfield	187	2,260	8.3%	Stevens	4,436	44,030	10.1%
Grant	11,234	93,930	12.0%	Thurston	25,826	267,410	9.7%
Grays Harbor	10,047	73,110	13.7%	Wahkiakum	320	3,980	8.0%
Island	4,384	80,600	5.4%	Walla Walla	5,624	60,650	9.3%
Jefferson	1,936	30,880	6.3%	Whatcom	13,627	209,790	6.5%
King	108,264	2,052,800	5.3%	Whitman	1,774	47,250	3.8%
Kitsap	19,300	258,200	7.5%	Yakima	36,496	249,970	14.6%
Kittitas	2,627	42,670	6.2%				
Klickitat	1,797	21,000	8.6%				
Lewis	10,223	76,660	13.3%	State Total⁷	592,027	7,061,410	8.4%

⁷ Not including clients who lived out of the state. Not including clients who lived out of the state and clients without a valid address.

Percentage of Total Population with a DCS Case by County, June 2015 Snapshot

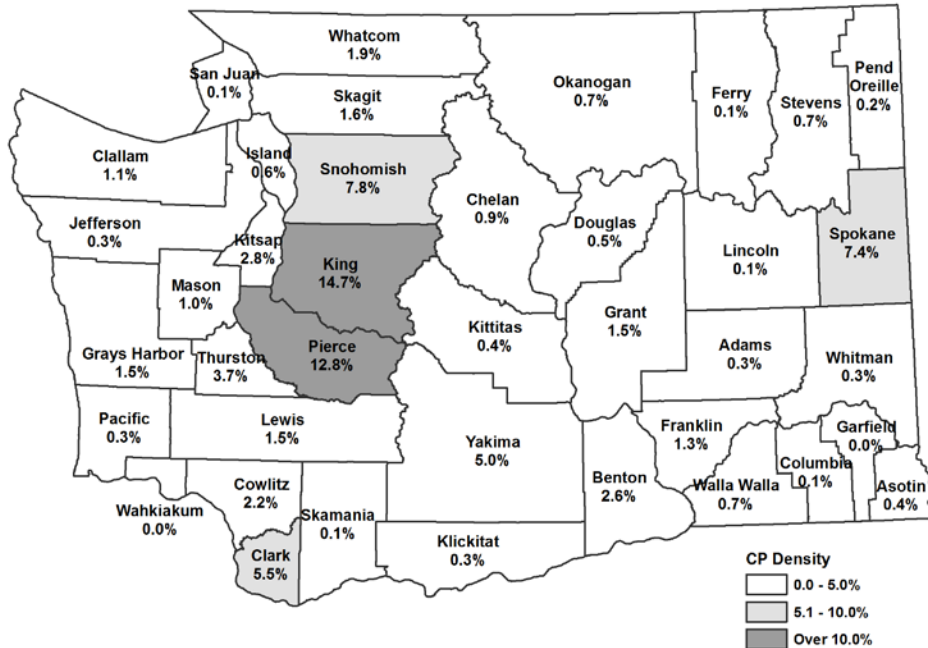


Note: The percentage of residents served is obtained by dividing the number of DCS clients in a county during June 2015 by the OFM 2015 County Population estimate.

Provided by DSHS/ESA/OAS/E-MAPS - Feb. 2022

Percentage of Custodial and Noncustodial Parents by County, June 2015 Snapshot

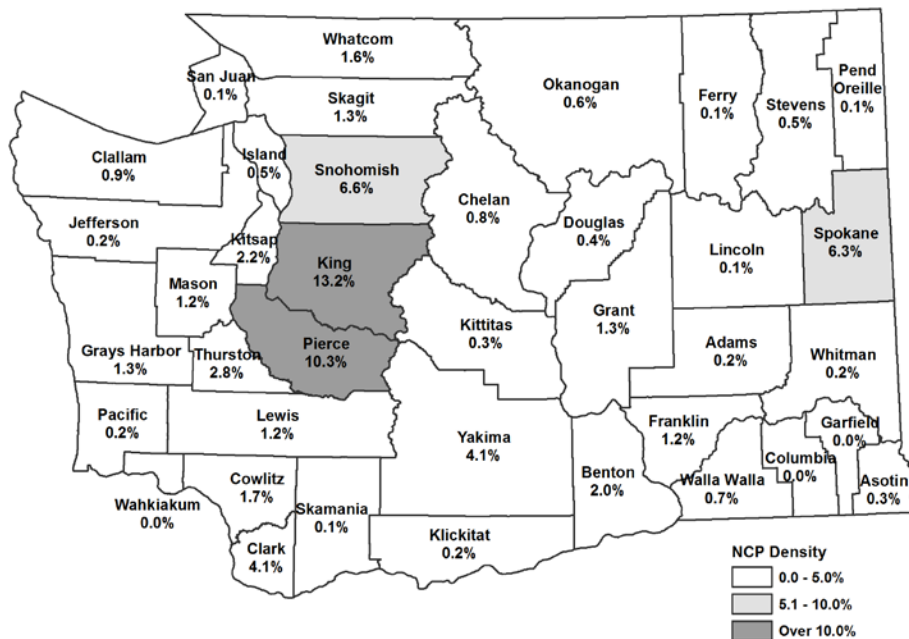
Percentage of Custodial Parents by County in Washington State: June 2015



Note: 17.2% of CPs are out of state or do not have valid county address code.

Provided by DSHS/ESA/OAS/E-MAPS - Oct. 2015

Percentage of Noncustodial Parents by County in Washington State: June 2015



Note: 30.9% of NCPs are out of state or do not have valid county address code.

Provided by DSHS/ESA/OAS/E-MAPS - Oct. 2015

Child Support Cost Avoidance, SFY 2015

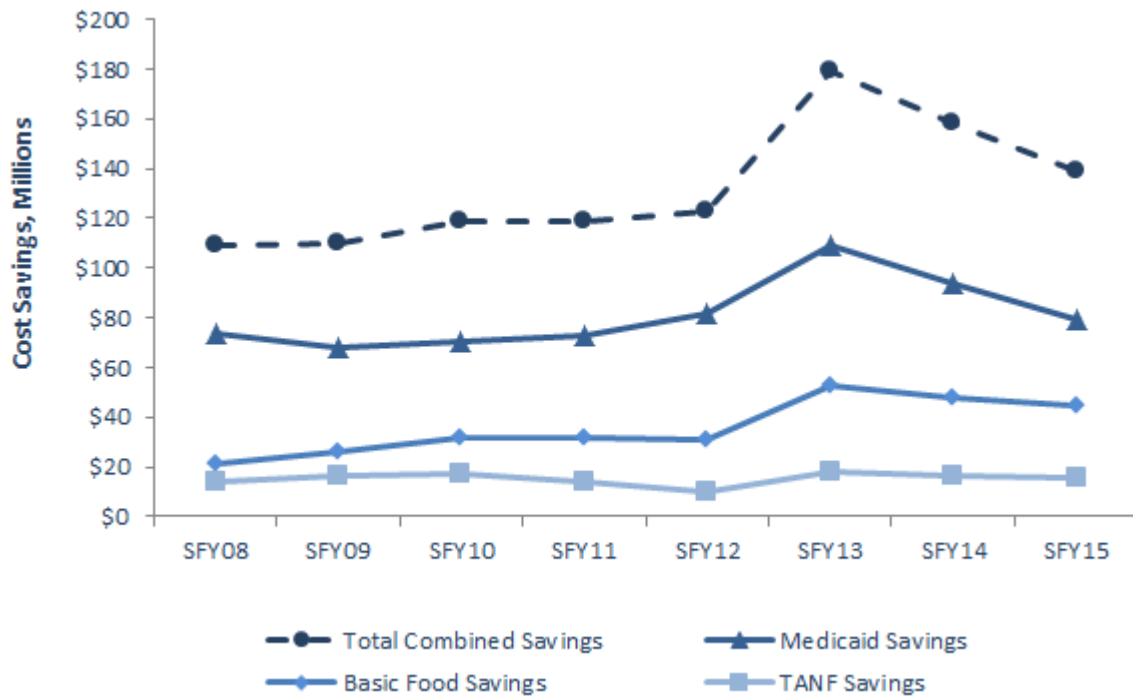
SFY 2015	Basic Food			TANF		
	Average CR ⁸ Basic Food Expenditure	Average CI ⁹ Basic Food Expenditure	Total Basic Food Savings	Average CR TANF Expenditure	Average CI TANF Expenditure	Total TANF Savings
July	\$93.83	\$155.49	\$3,706,457	\$8.98	\$33.21	\$1,393,785
August	\$94.29	\$155.08	\$3,594,795	\$8.85	\$32.40	\$1,327,887
September	\$92.80	\$153.51	\$3,597,897	\$8.51	\$32.10	\$1,346,469
October	\$96.68	\$159.25	\$3,729,585	\$8.21	\$31.81	\$1,369,215
November	\$94.04	\$155.95	\$3,627,358	\$8.01	\$31.23	\$1,297,738
December	\$92.81	\$154.41	\$3,654,333	\$7.90	\$31.57	\$1,351,890
January	\$93.40	\$156.25	\$3,694,456	\$7.66	\$30.57	\$1,316,674
February	\$94.44	\$156.99	\$3,690,674	\$7.60	\$29.95	\$1,276,768
March	\$93.31	\$154.57	\$3,662,203	\$7.52	\$29.03	\$1,241,316
April	\$92.28	\$153.39	\$3,707,851	\$7.36	\$27.98	\$1,206,443
May	\$91.25	\$152.45	\$3,918,489	\$7.19	\$27.55	\$1,247,430
June	\$91.25	\$149.91	\$3,604,788	\$6.86	\$26.96	\$1,182,331
Total			\$44,188,887			\$15,557,947

SFY 2015	Medicaid		
	Total CP Medicaid Savings	Total Child Medicaid Savings	Total Medicaid Savings
July	\$3,342,159	\$3,741,199	\$7,083,358
August	\$2,858,524	\$3,504,600	\$6,363,124
September	\$3,384,900	\$3,518,324	\$6,903,224
October	\$3,755,344	\$3,526,171	\$7,281,515
November	\$3,401,969	\$3,129,098	\$6,531,067
December	\$3,457,261	\$3,181,676	\$6,638,937
January	\$2,955,035	\$3,491,568	\$6,446,603
February	\$3,011,783	\$3,496,193	\$6,507,976
March	\$2,796,623	\$3,782,556	\$6,579,179
April	\$3,144,140	\$3,304,605	\$6,448,744
May	\$2,917,247	\$3,559,344	\$6,476,590
June	\$2,767,245	\$3,136,427	\$5,903,672
Total	\$37,792,230	\$41,371,761	\$79,163,989

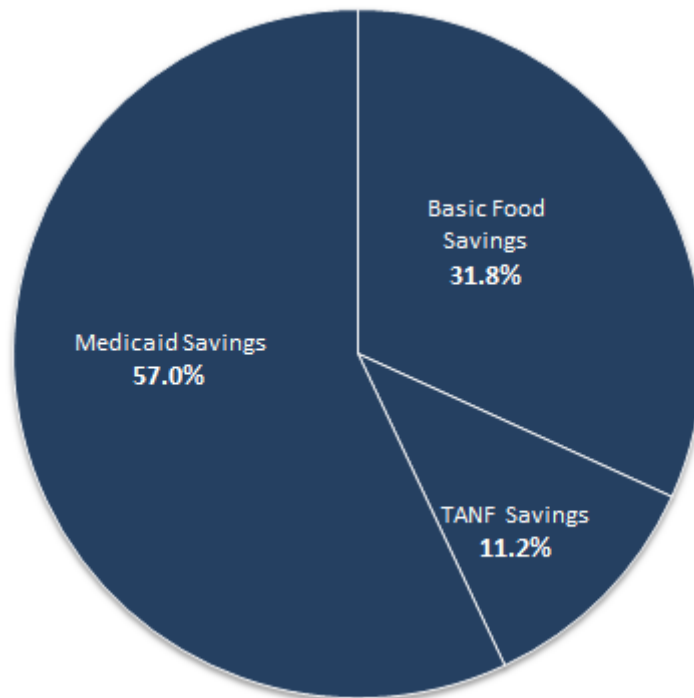
⁸ CR: Custodial parents with regular child support payments. Regular child support payments are defined as summed monthly order amount more than \$0 and summed total arrearage debt less than twice the summed monthly order amount.

⁹ CI: Custodial parents without regular child support payments.

Child Support Cost Avoidance, SFY 2008 – SFY 2015



Sources of \$138.9 Million in Child Support Cost Avoidance, SFY 2015



Child Support Client Demographics, June 2015 Snapshot

Characteristic	Non-Custodial Parents ¹⁰		Custodial Parents ¹¹		Children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Clients	246,365	100.0%	268,402	100.0%	290,909	100.0%

Gender						
Female	37,570	15.3%	236,758	88.2%	143,018	49.1%
Male	208,272	84.5%	30,124	11.2%	147,685	50.8%
Not Reported/ Unidentifiable	523	0.2%	1,520	0.6%	206	0.1%

Age of Parent						
< 26 Years Old	16,945	6.9%	22,104	8.2%		
26 – 35 Years Old	78,659	31.9%	85,562	31.9%		
36 – 45 Years Old	88,146	35.8%	88,947	33.1%		
46 – 55 Years Old	48,363	19.6%	48,310	18.0%		
55+ Years Old	12,428	5.0%	22,082	8.2%		
Not Reported/ Unidentifiable	1,824	0.7%	1,397	0.5%		

Age of Children						
< 6 Year Old					62,112	21.4%
6 – 10 Years Old					87,374	30.0%
11 – 15 Years Old					91,475	31.4%
16 – 18 Years Old					42,766	14.7%
18+ Years Old					7,012	2.4%
Not Reported/ Unidentifiable					170	0.1%
Mean Age	39.0		39.5		10.1	
Median Age	38.5		39.1		9.5	

¹⁰ Some NCPs may also be a CP on another case.

¹¹ Some CPs may also be an NCP on another case.

Special Grant/Projects

- The Alternative Solutions Program – this program is a statewide employment initiative implemented by DCS in July 2014 to assist non-custodial parents (NCPs) who struggle to meet their child support obligations by connecting them to community resources that can help them remove those barriers, such as helping them with work related training, education, and supportive services. Between July 2014 and August 2015 the voluntary program received 798 referrals, and of those who actively engaged, 98 NCPs have been steered to employment solutions. The program has been embraced by parents, field staff, prosecuting attorney staff, and community partners with real-life success stories already resulting from this cooperative effort.
- Behavioral Interventions for Child Support Services (BICS) – In September 2014, DCS was awarded two five-year grants from the Office of Child Support Enforcement. These grants explore the potential relevance and application of behavioral economics to child support services, using insights from psychology and related fields to explain why and how people may act in ways that do not appear to be in their best interests. Within the child support system, incorporating behavioral economics is helpful to understanding how structural or informational bottlenecks could influence a noncustodial parent’s fulfillment of their support obligation. A total of eight states/districts were awarded the BICS demonstration grant to test behaviorally informed interventions that seek to improve child support outcomes. The BICS evaluation grant manages and provides technical assistance and evaluation services for the eight BICS demonstration grantees. DCS was selected as the sole agency to receive this larger, overarching evaluation grant. Under DCS’ BICS demonstration grant, the Seattle, Everett, and Olympia field offices are the ‘architects’ of the three intervention pilots. These pilots focus on early engagement and intervention in the establishment, enforcement and modification of child support orders, with the intent of having more active parent engagement and better compliance towards meeting monthly obligations. The first pilot involves testing an intervention focused on improving early noncustodial parent engagement in DCS’ administrative order establishment process. This intervention will be fully designed by the end of 2015, with testing to begin thereafter. These grant projects run through September 2019.
- Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self Sufficiency (BIAS) – DCS is also working on a project called BIAS which is based on a project which originated between OCSE and the State of Texas. This is a short-term non-grant project for DCS, the study of which will become a part of the larger BIAS study. The project involves a pilot at the Olympia Field Office which focuses specifically on revisiting child support orders that were based on the NCP’s income prior to incarceration. These monthly support obligations continue to accrue during the NCP’s period of incarceration, unless the NCP proactively seeks to change the support obligation to match his or her lack of income during incarceration. The project focuses on NCPs incarcerated at the Washington Correction Center (WCC) in Shelton.

Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgments and Genetic Testing

Voluntary Paternity Program Background

The Washington State Paternity Acknowledgment Program began in July 1989 as a partnership between the Washington State Division of Child Support (DCS) and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). The program provides cooperative unmarried parents an opportunity to sign a Paternity Acknowledgment at the child's birth or a later date. Most Paternity Acknowledgments are signed at a birthing hospital. Based on its success of increasing paternity establishments using the voluntary acknowledgment and its cost effectiveness, Washington's program was soon recognized as a national best practice. In the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993, the U.S. Congress required that every state implement a voluntary paternity establishment program based on Washington State's model.

Legal Requirements: The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) created numerous state requirements, including the requirement that states afford all unmarried parents the opportunity to voluntarily acknowledge paternity. Section 45CFR 303.5 (g) provides the applicable federal regulations; RCW 70.58.080 and RCW 26.26 are the applicable state laws.

A hospital, midwife, or other authorized entity must provide an opportunity for unmarried parents to sign a Paternity Acknowledgment at the time of the child's birth. The parents are entitled to both a written statement of their rights and responsibilities (on the back of the Paternity Acknowledgment) and oral notice (a short video, 1-800 line). Upon receipt of a properly completed and notarized Paternity Acknowledgment, DOH must name the father on the birth certificate.

Effects of the Paternity Acknowledgment: A properly signed and filed Paternity Acknowledgment creates a legal determination of paternity immediately without the need for a court order. Paternity for a child of unmarried parents must be determined before a child support order can be established for financial and medical obligations. The determination of paternity afforded by this simple administrative process also provides other benefits, such as making a child eligible to participate in any available social security, veterans', life insurance, or health insurance benefits.

Results: The signed and filed Paternity Acknowledgment allows DCS to establish a child support obligation quickly and at low cost. DCS is usually able to obtain a child support order in 90 days or less from the date DOH files the Paternity Acknowledgment, which is a much quicker and less costly process than establishing paternity through a court order. DCS administrative costs total less than \$200 per case, compared to an average of \$1,350 each time DCS must establish paternity in court. As a result of the Paternity Acknowledgment Program, DCS saves the taxpayers more than \$13,000,000 yearly. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2014, 17,751 paternitys were established, 71.6% of them by Paternity Acknowledgment.

Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgments and Genetic Testing (cont.)

Voluntary Paternity Testing Program

DCS continues to operate the Voluntary Paternity Testing Program (VPTP), after the conclusion of the successful Bright Start demonstration grant which operated August 1, 2005 through July 31, 2009. There were two successful strategies from the demonstration grant that previously were not part of the Paternity Program, but are now. DCS pays for Notaries Public at the State's birthing hospitals, increasing the availability for parents to sign a Paternity Acknowledgment, since Washington State requires that parents' signatures be notarized on the document. DCS also offers unmarried parents no-cost genetic testing in a non-judicial setting. Through the VPTP, hospital staff can offer an application for genetic testing to unmarried parents. This gives parents the ability to confirm that they are the child's biological parent before voluntarily agreeing to paternity, which is good for both the parents and child if there is a question about paternity.