

Judicial-Child Support Collaborative Planning Guide for Leading Change



**A Product of the
National Judicial-Child Support Task Force**

August 2008

Acknowledgments

The *Judicial-Child Support Collaborative Planning Guide for Leading Change* is a work product of the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force. This Planning Guide reflects the combined effort of professionals representing State and Tribal child support enforcement agencies, State courts, State court administrators, national court and judicial associations, and the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement.

The Task Force, responding to a need to address overriding child support issues that impact State and Tribal agencies as well as the judiciary, has met and collaborated since November 2004 with the intention of developing ideas and tools to promote and enhance child support program-judicial collaboration efforts. The Task Force recognizes that enhanced collaboration is a key to fulfilling our commitment to children and families.

The Office of Child Support Enforcement wishes to acknowledge the hard work and invaluable support of Task Force members representing the following organizations who participated in the development of this Planning Guide:

- Conference of Chief Justices
- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- National Judicial College
- National Center for State Courts
- National Council of Child Support Directors
- National Tribal Child Support Association
- Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement

This Planning Guide is intended to provide ideas for future child support program-judicial collaboration efforts, a framework for getting started and practical input from a variety of jurisdictions and projects already underway. We hope you will find this Planning Guide useful as you launch your own collaborations.

Disclaimer: This Planning Guide was developed by the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force. The views expressed herein are those of the participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Health and Human Services or any State, Tribe, court or organization.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary	4
2. Leading Change	5
2.1 National Task Force Promotes Collaboration	5
2.2 Why a Collaborative Planning Guide?	6
2.3 Elements of Effective Collaboration	6
3. Creating a Vision	8
3.1 The Vision.....	8
3.2 Collaboration Objectives	9
3.3 Collaboration Strategies.....	9
3.4 Collaboration Tactics	10
4. Planning Successful Collaboration Initiatives	11
4.1 Introductory Collaboration Planning Meetings	11
4.1.1 The Initial Meeting Agenda	12
4.2 Sample Meeting Format.....	13
4.3 After the Meeting.....	13
4.4 Learning from the Experts	14
Appendix: Collaboration Opportunities and Best Practices	16
A. Collaboration Infrastructure.....	16
A.1.1 Arizona Child Support Committee	16
A.1.2 Arizona Committee on Rules and Procedures for Domestic Relations Cases..	17
A.1.3 Michigan Child Support Leadership Council	18
A.1.4 Oregon State Family Law Advisory Council (SFLAC).....	20
B. Collaboration Opportunities	20
B.1.1 Deficit Reduction Act and Medical Support Requirements– Timely Collaboration Opportunities.....	20
B.1.2 Problem-Solving Courts.....	22
B.1.3 Incarcerated/Released Noncustodial Parents	22
B.1.4 Incarceration for Non-payment of Child Support	23
B.1.5 Arrears Management.....	24
B.1.6 Using Technology to Improve Child Support/Court Operations	24
C. Collaboration Best Practices.....	25
C.1.1 Virginia Barriers Program.....	25
C.1.2 IV-D Co-Location in the Courts	26

C.1.3 Child Support and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)	26
C.1.4 Increasing Collections through Employment.....	27
C.1.5 California’s Video Conferencing Court Project for Nevada County.....	28
C.1.6 New York’s E-filing Project	29
C.1.7 Virginia’s Court Improvement Project	31
C.1.8 OCSE Funded Judicial/Child Support Grants.....	31
D. Sample Documents.....	36
D.1.1 Florida Transfer Order	36
D.1.2 Florida Order Suspending Support and Establishing Arrears.....	37
D.1.3 Florida Final Judgment of Support	38
D.1.4 Oklahoma Child Support Court Order	41

1. Executive Summary

The table below summarizes the content of this Planning Guide. It identifies each topic and provides corresponding summaries, highlights and page numbers. If you are reading an electronic version of this document, clicking your cursor over either the topic or the page number will take you to the corresponding topic or page number in the document.

Topic	Summary	Highlights	Page No.
Leading Change	This chapter focuses on the importance of Judicial-Child Support Program collaboration and outlines the benefits of using a planning guide for your collaboration initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and Tribal environment drives determination of stakeholders and goals and objectives. • Promotes holistic approach and identifies universal and overriding issues. 	Page 5
Creating a Vision	This chapter describes how to create a vision and how to establish a hierarchy of relevant Objectives, Strategies and Tactics to carry it out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines a mission statement and guiding principles. • Emphasizes potential outcomes and benefits up front. 	Page 8
Planning Successful Collaboration Initiatives	This chapter defines the initial planning meeting, presents a sample initial meeting agenda and offers guidance on how to develop a permanent collaboration structure based on the initial engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results in an ongoing rather than one-time event. • Ensures critical participation by policy and decision makers. • Limits scope of collaboration to reflect potential restrictions. 	Page 11
Appendix: Collaboration Opportunities and Best Practices	This appendix features best practice examples of collaborative infrastructures, opportunities and good ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing collaboration structures around the US. • Ideas from a variety of jurisdictions to help you succeed in your collaboration. 	Page 16

2. Leading Change

This Planning Guide is intended to assist you in leading change in your jurisdiction that will focus on better family outcomes as well as improved court and child support processes and results. An effective Judicial-Child Support Program collaboration depends upon the inclusion of a number of universally applicable fundamentals. This Planning Guide represents a collective outline of these ground rules that have helped to launch successful collaborative initiatives across the country. The Guide also offers examples of collaborative outcomes that should create interest and excitement about the benefits of child support stakeholders joining forces to better serve their mutual customers: children and families.

This chapter highlights the importance of Judicial-Child Support Program collaboration and outlines the benefits of planning your collaboration initiatives.

2.1 National Task Force Promotes Collaboration

The National Judicial-Child Support Task Force is a workgroup of child support stakeholders representing State and Tribal child support enforcement agencies, State courts, State court administrators, national court and judicial associations and the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement. The Task Force, responding to a need to address overriding child support issues that impact State and Tribal agencies as well as the judiciary, first met in the fall of 2004 with the intention of developing ideas and tools to promote and enhance child support program-judicial collaboration efforts on topics of mutual interest. The Task Force recognizes that enhanced collaboration is a key to fulfilling our commitment to children and families.

For the period 2005-2007, the Task Force worked in subcommittees addressing the following issues and goals:

- **Collaborative planning** - Develop collaborative plans and principles for State and Tribal IV-D programs and corresponding judicial/legal systems.
- **Education and cross-training for key participants** - Educate and cross-train judges, court officials and child support agencies.
- **Model problem solving courts** - Expand the use of problem solving court techniques and practices by child support enforcement courts to improve the outcomes of these court cases and measurably reduce the number of subsequent court actions involving the same families.
- **Arrears reduction and management** - Avoid and reduce arrears through standardized criteria and practices.
- **Avoidance of inappropriate orders** - Reduce the number of inappropriate and unrealistic child support orders through improved practice and information sharing.
- **Inter-governmental case processing and data exchange** - Promote electronic information sharing between child support and judicial/legal systems and between IV-D jurisdictions to improve staff efficiency and accuracy of information.

The National Judicial-Child Support Taskforce invites you to lead change in your jurisdiction through a similar collaborative approach.

2.2 Why a Collaborative Planning Guide?

The National Judicial-Child Support Task Force is offering this Planning Guide in an effort to promote and support judicial-child support agency collaboration efforts nationwide. It is consistent with the Task Force’s Strategic Plan mission statement - *“to engage Federal, State and Tribal child support programs and judicial/legal systems in collaborative efforts to better serve the needs of children and families”* – and guiding principle - *“the measure of the best interest of children goes beyond the collection and disbursement of child support.”*

Promoting and enhancing collaboration between the judiciary and child support enforcement agencies is generally accepted as a critical component of any attempt to address child support issues of mutual concern. Collaboration may also be the key to fulfilling our commitment to children and families. Children in need of financial and emotional support from either or both parents should arguably have the benefit of a cooperative network of pertinent government entities that work to overcome differences and obstacles and promote the efficient and fair establishment and subsequent enforcement of child support orders.

In order to achieve the highest level of interest and participation, the Task Force is prompting relevant national organizations and associations to encourage their members (potentially ranging from child support directors to chief justices, Tribal judges and court administrators) to commit to collaborative initiatives and participate in appropriate collaboration activities.

We hope this Planning Guide, which is based, in part, on existing best-practice activities, will be a useful tool for any jurisdiction wishing to attempt collaboration. We believe that adopting and incorporating a collaborative philosophy is a major step toward the establishment of comprehensive and seamless child support enforcement systems and one that can support a continuing integrated planning process to ensure excellence in child support procedures, policies and outcomes.

2.3 Elements of Effective Collaboration

Federally funded child support jurisdictions encompass States, Tribes, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands and Washington, D.C. Child support programs are operated at the State, Tribal and/or county levels, using an administrative, quasi-judicial or judicial process. The child support agency may have cooperative agreements with a number of governmental entities and it must accept service applications from local residents, as well as residents from other States, Tribal Nations and countries. Additional agency customers are brought into the child support system because they are required to assign their child support rights upon application for a number of public assistance programs.

State and Tribal court organizational structures and characteristics can vary. The designated head of the judicial branch may be the court of last resort, the chief justice of that court, or even a

judicial council. Rule-making authority can arise from a State or Tribal constitution or statute, or an inherent power of the court based on its status as an independent branch of government. The source of funding for trial courts may come from State, county, Tribal, other local government entities and/or court fees. The judicial branch may or may not have a uniform case management system. Family courts may or may not exist as a unit within the State or Tribal trial court system. If a State or Tribe has created family courts, they may or may not have the formal status of a “court” (a judicial body to which judges are specifically appointed and considered for subsequent terms). Family court jurisdiction may differ significantly from State to State and Tribe to Tribe. The State or Tribe may have adopted alternative dispute resolution techniques, and may have extended such processes to child support matters.

The process and organizational variances described above will ultimately determine the stakeholders as well as the goals and objectives of individual judicial-child support agency collaborative initiatives. Nonetheless, regardless of how the environment is defined, collaboration will always be an essential component of any plan to maximize the effectiveness of the child support enforcement process. Even in a purely administrative environment, cases serviced by the child support agency are routinely filed in the court for contempt and modification actions,¹ and private support cases (not serviced pursuant to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act) originally established in the court may eventually be serviced and enforced through the administrative process. In non-administrative jurisdictions, virtually every child support agency-initiated establishment and modification action must be filed and processed in the court, and the judicial process may extend to a number of child support enforcement actions beyond motions for contempt.

A successful collaboration effort is therefore driven by a mixture of universal and overriding issues impacting virtually every entity assigned to the child support enforcement process along with jurisdiction-specific issues and concerns, some of which may, in fact, be unique.

¹ Administrative jurisdiction usually does not extend modifications of orders originally established in court.

3. Creating a Vision

The collaborative planning process begins and ends with creating a common vision. Along the way, you will establish a hierarchy of relevant objectives, strategies and tactics to carry it out. The objectives of collaboration are usually those outcomes that have the most long-term significance to stakeholders. Strategies are the top-level initiatives that collaborative partners can take to address those objectives. Tactics are specific implementation procedures addressing those strategies.

The appendix to this Planning Guide offers a number of examples of successful efforts that may help to kick-start your initial conversation about identifying objectives, strategies and tactics. Of course, local factors and environments will ultimately determine the development and prioritization of the most relevant needs and approaches.

3.1 The Vision

It is important to begin collaborative work with a vision that arises from the needs and interests of those involved in the partnership. The act of developing the vision is in itself a collaborative exercise that, if done well, can help the group coalesce as a team and make all individuals feel that they have been heard and their cross-cutting concerns and desires have been addressed.

The Mission Statement and Guiding Principles of the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force's 2006 and 2007 Model Strategic Plan reflect the views and consensus of all Task Force partners and illustrate how such a statement, whatever it may be called, is able to lay out the promise and best thinking of the members and provide guidance for the work that follows:

Mission Statement

To engage Federal, State and Tribal child support programs and judicial/legal systems in collaborative efforts to better serve the needs of children and families.

Guiding Principles

- The Strategic Plan is a model for collaboration between child support programs and the judiciary
- Collaboration partnerships need to be expansive and all-inclusive
- The measure of the best interests of children goes beyond the collection and disbursement of child support
- Judicial and executive branch processes are interdependent
- Data should support collaboration activities whenever appropriate
- Individuals learn best from their peers
- Problem solving techniques and practices have important application in child support cases

3.2 Collaboration Objectives

The reasons to collaborate will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and they will ultimately depend upon individual issues identified at the county, State and/or Tribal level. Some collaboration justifications, however, are generally perceived as having universal application, and they relate to equally consistent benefit expectations. In order for potential collaborators to be motivated toward what may initially be perceived as a new project with less than precise outcomes and measures of success, it is important for the first communications and/or “invitations to collaborate” to highlight as many potential reasons and benefits as possible. This initial list of justifications and potential expectations should be supplemented with jurisdiction-specific objectives and strategies wherever appropriate. Some fundamental objectives for collaboration in the domain of child support are:

- Enhancing the financial and emotional support for children
- Sustaining the application of uniform standards and procedures
- Improving customer service
- Promoting information sharing
- Furthering a holistic approach to addressing the needs of children and families
- Improving performance for courts and child support enforcement agencies

3.3 Collaboration Strategies

Collaboration achieves the aforementioned objectives through the pursuit of multiple yet coordinated strategies. Below are some examples of potentially overriding strategies which should be supplemented with approaches of local significance:

- Collaboration to foster recognition that the judicial and executive branch child support enforcement processes are interdependent
- Collaboration to support the unifying goal of the child support system and the courts to provide appropriate and timely child support orders through a fair process
- Collaboration to further the application of holistic approaches that address the full range of child and family needs
- Collaboration to support the sharing of best practices and good ideas and encourage cross-training activities
- Collaboration to maximize the cost and content effectiveness of judicial-child support agency interfaces and data exchanges
- Collaboration to sustain the application of uniform standards and procedures and enhance the ability to conform to minimum statutory requirements
- Collaboration toward the uniform and consistent application of best-practices to encourage child support payments and avoid arrears build-up
- Collaboration to achieve performance standard improvements and cost savings, and with respect to child support agencies, increased federal incentive payments

3.4 Collaboration Tactics

Collaboration is based on effective communication among people and organizations who can readily perceive the benefit in: (1) improving the quality of their work; and (2) improving the circumstances of the families and children receiving child support services.

This organizational and interpersonal collaboration among those working within the system can be fostered through one-on-one problem resolution discussions, small focus groups with limited agendas, inter-agency regional or national workshops, or standing committees that meet regularly. The important criterion for all of these communication formats is that the interaction be productive and produce actionable decisions that are implemented in a timely manner. There is no easy way to ensure this result. It is up to the participants to commit to the specific objectives and strategies that they are focusing on and to follow through with the necessary action. Anything less will disappoint and frustrate those involved and will work against the notion that collaboration is worthwhile.

It is important to remember that a collaboration meeting's scope of objectives has to have an appropriate relationship to the functional responsibilities of the participants. For example, meetings between case workers and supervisors may yield a host of good ideas and suggestions. However, implementing those ideas and suggestions may require significant policy or inter-agency coordination among those not represented at such a meeting. This suggests that collaboration may need to occur in a two-tiered environment, with one tier focused on the problem and opportunity identification, and the other tier focused on an action plan and implementation.

The eventual establishment of a hierarchy of objectives, strategies and tactics will not only serve to enhance the value of the initial collaborative effort, but it can also function as the foundation on which to build a collaborative infrastructure and support ongoing joint efforts to improve the collaborators' performance and customer services. Strategies and tactics, however, are subject to continuous evolution and will be impacted by respective implementation outcomes.

4. Planning Successful Collaboration Initiatives

The Planning Guide is drafted in broad terms in order to encompass collaboration initiatives irrespective of the operational environment of potential stakeholders. Collaboration planners are therefore encouraged to fine tune the Planning Guide's recommendations and ideas to best meet their own local needs and concerns.

4.1 Introductory Collaboration Planning Meetings

The impetus to meet may come from any corner and will hopefully be greeted with a positive response. Stakeholders may wish to agree that the initial meeting be limited in purpose to promoting and encouraging collaboration. In fact, stakeholders may decide to have a neutral party convene and/or facilitate the initial discussion.

Jurisdictions that do not have existing collaborative infrastructures and that do not already have a high-level commitment to initiate collaborative activities should benefit from any introductory collaborative meeting. The initial meeting, if conducted at a multi-State or higher level, may require an eventual grouping of the participants according to some potentially critical commonalities in order to maximize the meeting's relevancy and success. For example, group breakouts may be desirable based on the child support program process (administrative, judicial or quasi-judicial), the caseload, the operating environment (State or county-based) and/or the court structure.

In planning the initial meeting, consider the following:

- Include officials from the child support agency and court system who have the authority and/or influence to make collaboration happen, and/or who can initiate policy and/or legislative changes, if needed, that may be prerequisites to meaningful collaborative activities²
- Have a neutral party facilitate the meeting, if desired³
- Recognize and acknowledge potential fiscal and staff restrictions and, if significant, limit collaborative activities accordingly
- Recognize that the initial willingness to collaborate may be limited and, if appropriate, limit in scope and/or geography initial collaboration activities to willing participants
- Premise the collaboration as a continuing process, not a one-time event

² For collaboration to be fully successful, it must be supported at the highest level. While the governor, chief justice and state court administrator may not need to actively participate, they may need to actively support and enable the effort. Active participation may also need to go beyond just the key officials from the court and IV-D agency and extend to officials from the legislature, the prosecutor's office and relevant advocacy groups.

³ The National Judicial-Child Support Task Force maintains a list of subject matter experts who may be able to assist with moderating initial collaboration meetings or facilitating the discussion of subsequently identified objectives, strategies or tactics. For more information, please contact Larry Holtz, OCSE's judicial liaison, at Larry.Holtz@acf.hhs.gov.

During the initial meeting you may want to:

- Focus on the common customer, i.e., children and families, and consider that customer satisfaction may be directly impacted by collaboration and cooperation or the lack thereof
- Create a vision or ideal that provides common ground for moving forward
- Identify issues of mutual court and agency concern (such as uniformity of process, reduction of unrealistic and inappropriate support obligations, efficient and cost-effective inter-entity communications, cross-training, etc.) and identify all stakeholders impacted by the same
- Establish a process for inter-agency communications--who should communicate with whom and for what purposes with respect to the collaborative process
- Identify barriers affecting issues identified and any additional stakeholders that may be associated with these barriers

The introductory collaboration meeting may be the most appropriate time to distribute informational material, including National Task Force work products and surveys (e.g., the Business Case Template promoting electronic data exchanges, the survey of existing State level collaboration initiatives, problem-solving court materials, arrears management best practice summaries, etc.).⁴ Generally speaking, any material that directly or indirectly promotes court-child support agency collaboration would be appropriate.

The Task Force encourages relevant national organizations and associations⁵ to likewise encourage their memberships (ranging from child support directors to chief justices, tribal judges and court administrators) to commit to and participate in collaboration activities. The intent is to create a national environment of interest and commitment to judicial-child support collaboration.

4.1.1 The Initial Meeting Agenda

The initial meeting agenda will ultimately be guided by a number of variables, some of which are identified above. The focus of the initial meeting or meetings, especially if held at a multi-State level, should nonetheless rest on promoting collaboration principles, leading change and creating a common vision rather than on addressing specific issues and concerns. It is therefore recommended that the initial planning meeting be limited to key officials representing the respective court, the child support agency, and other relevant or sponsoring entities. A broader

⁴ See the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force Strategic Plan (FY 2006 & 2007) for a complete list of planned and pending activities and work products designed to promote and support collaborative activities.

⁵ National partners relevant to collaboration initiatives include, but are not limited to, OCSE (Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement), CCJ (Conference of Chief Justices), COSCA (Council of State Court Administrators), NCSEA (National Child Support Enforcement Association), NASJE (National Association of State Judicial Educators), NCSC (National Center for State Courts), NCCSD (National Council of Child Support Directors), NTCSA (National Tribal Child Support Association), NAICJA (National American Indian Court Judges Association), NJC (National Judicial College), NCJFCJ (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges), and NTJRC (National Tribal Justice Resource Center).

and more inclusive membership becomes more appropriate when planning and conducting ongoing collaboration meetings at the State or lower level, once key decisions about approaches and topics have been decided.

The purpose of the initial meeting or meetings is to set in place a plan of action leading to the establishment of a court-child support agency collaborative infrastructure. Once the infrastructure is established, subsequent meeting agendas will tend to be much more focused, addressing specific, identified issues.

4.2 Sample Meeting Format

There are many ways to structure a meeting. This sample format should meet the needs of most collaboration events:

- Ensure that all relevant stakeholders are in attendance. This includes key officials from the court and child support enforcement agency, and perhaps officials representing the legislature, prosecutors and relevant advocacy groups.
- Enlist, if possible, a moderator or facilitator who is not directly connected to or beholden to any of the stakeholders. However, it is important that the moderator/facilitator has a background that meets participant expectations. For example, a key court or IV-D official from another jurisdiction with an established collaborative infrastructure may be ideally suited to facilitate the initiation of collaboration in a sister jurisdiction.
- Encourage participants to agree to a set of overriding principles governing the collaboration effort. It may be useful to discuss up front what is subject to collaboration and what is not, based on the fact that the judicial-child support program collaborative effort extends across two government branches with independent and exclusive authorities. For example, the executive and judicial branches may be willing to agree on a specific set of policies and processes, while simultaneously needing to retain the exclusive right to determine other policies.
- Provide participants an opportunity to explain their perceived roles and responsibilities with respect to child support establishment and enforcement, which may extend to a description of their activities, any relevant performance measures (metrics) tied to those activities, and how funding and activities are impacted by the metrics.
- Develop a prioritized list of stakeholder problems and issues that can be addressed through collaborative activities.
- Work toward a strategic plan and/or action plan, including dates and organizations responsible for specific agreed upon activities or products.
- Determine a schedule for ongoing collaboration activities and document a follow-up strategy, indicating who will take the lead for each activity.

4.3 After the Meeting

It is important to reiterate that collaboration is not a one-time event, but an ongoing process. One meeting in and of itself will accomplish little – but one meeting leading to the establishment

of a collaborative infrastructure that can address old and new issues on a continuing basis presents a very viable option to accomplish established objectives.

A collaborative infrastructure can take many forms and may initially have been created to address a specific and limited objective (such as a review and revision of child support guidelines), only to evolve into a broader collaborative effort.

To ensure the organization and consistency of the collaborative process, a jurisdiction may consider creating an actual position or staff, through an interagency agreement, to serve as the child support judicial liaison to manage these issues and the ongoing process.

Examples of infrastructures include standing committees established by legislative act, councils created by executive order, grant-inspired advisory councils, and informally established workgroups. In other cases, interagency agreements have resulted in the creation of new liaison positions and staff solely devoted to managing the collaboration effort.

In some instances, the infrastructure was established by the office of court administration or by the supreme court. Examples are Florida's Supreme Court Steering Committee on Families and Children, California's Judicial Branch Stakeholders Workgroup, Alabama's Advisory Committee on Child Support Guidelines and Enforcement, Idaho's Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Child Support Guidelines, Missouri's Family Court Committee, and Pennsylvania's Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee.

States that already have developed a collaboration infrastructure may nonetheless want to review the scope of objectives of the existing committee or workgroup and, based on the factors outlined in this Planning Guide, consider to what extent the scope and/or membership might be expanded to further improve their respective operations. The enactment of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and future child support related legislative actions may offer additional opportunities to evaluate whether or not the scope of existing collaborative efforts should be modified or expanded.

Please see the attached Appendix A for specific and detailed examples of collaborative infrastructures and respective points of contact for additional information.

4.4 Learning from the Experts

If you are considering or about to begin a collaborative activity, you may find it helpful to review the literature on leadership and creating change, for they are at the heart of collaboration.

One author on leading change describes "vision" as a sensible and appealing picture of the future and "strategies" as the logic for how the vision can be achieved. An effective vision should be imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible and communicable.⁶

Another book on leading people illustrates eight principles of leadership in a litany of case studies on the topics of vision, trust, participation, learning, diversity, creativity, integrity, and community. In a chapter on participation, the author notes that, "If vision provides the direction,

⁶ John P. Kotter, Leading Change, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA, 1996.

and trust creates the safe foundation, then participation is the fuel that drives the organization [or collaboration] forward.”⁷

The literature on leadership may help you and your partners in designing and succeeding in your own judicial-child support program collaboration.

⁷ Robert H. Rosen with Paul B. Brown, Leading People, Penguin Books, 1997.

APPENDIX: COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES AND BEST PRACTICES

A. Collaboration Infrastructure

A.1.1 Arizona Child Support Committee

Legislation passed in 2002, A.R.S. § 25-323.01, created the Child Support Committee (“Committee”) of the Arizona State Legislature. The Committee is comprised of 21 members representing the legislature, legal community, parents, judiciary and State child support agency. A member of the State Senate and a member of the House of Representatives share chairmanship of the Committee and staff support is provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

The Committee is a forum for all system stakeholders to develop and coordinate policies and strategies to improve the child support system. To that end, the Committee actively explores new concepts for improving the system, with Committee deliberations resulting in recommended legislative and/or administrative changes regarding child support guidelines, enforcement and related issues.

25-323.01. Child Support Committee; membership; duties; report

A. The Child Support Committee is established consisting of the following members:

1. The director of the Department of Economic Security or the director's designee.
2. The assistant director of the Division of Child Support Enforcement of the Department of Economic Security.
3. A division or section chief from the Office of the Attorney General who has knowledge of or experience in child support enforcement and related issues and who is appointed by the attorney general.
4. The director of the Administrative Office of the Supreme Court.
5. Two presiding judges from the domestic relations division of the superior court who are appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court. One judge shall be from an urban county and one judge shall be from a rural county.
6. A title IV-D court commissioner who is appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.
7. A clerk of the superior court who is appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.

8. One county attorney who is appointed by the director of the Department of Economic Security and who is from a county that is currently contracting with the State to provide child support enforcement services.

9. An executive assistant from the Office of the Governor who is appointed by the governor.

10. One person who is knowledgeable in child support issues and who is a noncustodial parent and one person who is knowledgeable in child support issues and who is a custodial parent. The president of the Senate shall appoint these members.

11. One person who is knowledgeable in child support issues and who is a noncustodial parent and one person who is knowledgeable in child support issues and who is a custodial parent. The speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint these members.

12. One parent who is knowledgeable in child support issues, who has joint custody and who is appointed jointly by the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives.

13. One person from the executive committee of the family law section of the state bar of Arizona who is appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.

14. One person from the business community who is appointed jointly by the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives.

15. Two members of the Senate from different political parties. The president of the Senate shall appoint the members and designate one of the members as the co-chairperson.

16. Two members of the House of Representatives from different political parties. The speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint the members and designate one of the members as the co-chairperson.

B. The Committee shall prepare an annual written report on its work, findings and recommendations regarding child support guidelines, enforcement and related issues. The Committee shall submit this report to the governor, the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives and the chief justice of the supreme court on or before December 31 of each year and shall provide a copy of this report to the secretary of state and the director of the Arizona State library, archives and public records.

C. Nonlegislative members of the Committee are not eligible to receive compensation but are eligible for reimbursement of expenses pursuant to title 38, chapter 4, article 2.

A.1.2 Arizona Committee on Rules and Procedures for Domestic Relations Cases

A Committee of the Supreme Court of Arizona is hard at work drafting Rules of Procedure for Domestic Relations and Family Law Cases. The Committee was created by Administrative Order dated June 2, 2003 (A.O. 2003-63).

The formal mission statement of the Committee is that it will establish a comprehensive, statewide set of rules of procedure for domestic relations and family court cases, which are aimed at achieving fair, effective, uniform and timely resolution of family disputes, and which use non-adversarial, problem-solving means to the extent possible and appropriate.

In reality, the Committee's daunting task was to begin with the existing Rules of Civil Procedure and systematically organize, rewrite and adapt those Rules to fit family court cases. These Rules, when and if adopted by the Arizona Supreme Court, will supplant the Rules of Civil Procedure and will apply in all family court or domestic relations proceedings.

The Committee carefully reviewed the Arizona Rules of Civil Procedure and the local domestic relations rules for the twelve Arizona counties which have them. The Committee also reviewed and considered family court rules in several other states which have already adopted specialized Family Court Rules, including Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and Texas.

The proposed Arizona Rules of Family Law Procedure (ARFLP) are divided into broad categories similar to the Arizona Rules of Civil Procedure, including General Administration, Commencement of Action, Pleadings and Motions, Parties, Simplified Proceedings, Emergency and Temporary Orders, Disclosure and Discovery, Settlement and ADR, Pretrial and Trial Procedures, Judgments, Post-Judgment Proceedings, Family Court Services, and Sanctions and Contempt.

The Committee's ongoing work and current drafts of the proposed Rules changes are posted online at <http://www.supreme.state.az.us/drrc/>. Every section of the proposed Rules is available for download and review at the website.

A.1.3 Michigan Child Support Leadership Council

The following is the charter document for Michigan's Child Support Leadership Council. The Council is a good example of establishing an effective collaboration infrastructure.

April 11, 2002
Administrative Order No. 2002-1
Child Support Leadership Council

On order of the Court, the following order is effective immediately.

Recognizing the integral role played by the judicial branch in the operation of programs affecting Michigan's families, this Court joined the Governor in 1997 in establishing the Child Support Coordinating Council to set statewide goals for the efficient and prompt delivery of adequate child support to the children of Michigan. In continuing cooperation with the Executive Branch, we now reconstitute that committee as the Child Support Leadership Council to resume a coordinated effort to provide Michigan families with optimal child support and related services.

It is therefore ordered, concurrent with the Executive Order issued today by Governor John Engler, that the Child Support Leadership Council is established. The Council is advisory in nature and is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Establish statewide goals and objectives for the child support program.
2. Review and recommend policy for the child support program.
3. Share information with appropriate groups regarding program issues.
4. Analyze and recommend state positions on pending and proposed changes in court rules and federal and state legislation.

The Council shall consist of nine members. Four shall be appointed by the Governor, four shall be appointed by the Supreme Court, and one shall be appointed by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan.

The term of appointment is two years, except that two of the Governor's first appointments and three of the Court's first appointments shall serve terms of one year. Reappointment is at the discretion of the respective appointing authority.

Two members shall be appointed each January to serve as co-chairs of the Council, except that the first appointments shall occur coincident with this order. The Governor shall appoint one co-chair and the Court shall appoint the other co-chair.

The Council shall meet quarterly or more frequently as it deems necessary. The co-chairs shall organize the time and location of each meeting, develop an agenda, and facilitate the conduct.

Each year the Council shall submit to the Governor and the Court its recommendations for annual goals and strategies. Within sixty days, the Governor and the Court may approve or amend the recommendations.

By January 31 of each year, the Council shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Court for the previous year.

By-laws for the operation of the Council shall be developed and approved by the members.

Policy changes warranted by federal or state law shall be presented to the Council by the Office of Child Support (federal or state law) or the State Court Administrative Office (state law or court rule), or shall be submitted to one of the co-chairs by other sources. The Council shall develop a format for presenting and discussing issues, which shall include an opportunity for raising issues during a regular meeting or placing them on the agenda through one of the co-chairs before the meeting.

In developing recommendations, members may seek comment as appropriate, including comment from various child support advocacy organizations, through a process determined by the members.

If the Council cannot reach agreement on an issue requiring its recommendation, the alternative positions shall be documented in writing for decision by the Governor and the Court.

More information on this council can be found at the following website:

http://www.michigan.gov/formergovernors/0,1607,7-212-31303_31305-26211--,00.html .

A.1.4 Oregon State Family Law Advisory Council (SFLAC)

The law authorizing the creation of SFLAC follows:

ORS3.436 Appointment of statewide family law advisory committee.

- (1) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may appoint a statewide family law advisory committee to assist the State Court Administrator in carrying out the administrator's responsibilities under ORS 3.438 (2) and (4)(a) and in identifying family law issues that need to be addressed in the future. The Chief Justice shall consider the diversity of this state in appointing the members of the statewide advisory committee.
- (2) The Chief Justice shall determine the terms and organization of the statewide advisory committee.
- (3) Members of the statewide advisory committee are not entitled to compensation, but may be reimbursed from funds available to the State Court Administrator from the Family Law Account for actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by them in the performance of their official duties. [1997 c.801 §136; 2001 c.779 §18]

The following link takes you to the web page for the SFLAC:

<http://www.ojd.state.or.us/osca/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/sflac.htm>

The SFLAC charter is available in pdf format at:

http://www.ojd.state.or.us/osca/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/documents/SFLACSignedCharter_000.pdf

B. Collaboration Opportunities

B.1.1 Deficit Reduction Act and Medical Support Requirements– Timely Collaboration Opportunities

Recent child support provisions in the Deficit Reduction Act and future legislation that affects the child support community may create instant and time-sensitive collaboration opportunities. For example, the Act requires periodic review of TANF-related child support orders and requires child support agencies to seek medical support from either the custodial or noncustodial parent. These provisions may be best addressed within a collaborative setting that includes the child support agency, the court and the legislature. Even when mandates have already been addressed in State policies, regulations or legislation, an underlying collaborative structure may further enhance the implementation processes.

The complete Deficit Reduction Act may be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

The National Center for State Courts provided the following summary as it affects child support enforcement and the courts:

Congress approved the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 (S. 1932). President Bush signed the legislation on February 8, 2006 making it PL 109-171. Below are the highlights of the provisions of particular interest to State courts:

Child Support Enforcement

The DRA placed more responsibility on State and local governments for funding the Title IV-D child support enforcement program. Additionally, the DRA incorporated some child support enforcement program enhancements outlined below.

- **Threshold for Passport Denials** - The threshold for triggering passport denial for past-due child support is lowered from \$5,000 to \$2,500 effective October 1, 2006.
- **Mandatory Fee for Services** - Child support enforcement agencies will be required to collect an annual mandatory \$25 fee for successful child support collections of over \$500/year for families who have never received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. The agencies will be required to begin collecting the fees effective October 1, 2006. States will have the option of collecting the fee from the custodial parent or the noncustodial parent, or paying the fee as a State government expense.
- **Mandatory Review and Adjustments** - Child support enforcement agencies will be required to conduct reviews of TANF-related support orders every three years for possible modification of the support order amount. If the agency determines that a change of circumstance has occurred, motions to modify the child support order will be filed. These mandatory reviews are effective October 1, 2007.
- **Medical Support from Either Parent** - Child support enforcement agencies are required to seek medical support for children from either or both the custodial or noncustodial parent. The agencies are now allowed to enforce medical support against a custodial parent if the health care coverage is available to the custodial parent at a “reasonable” cost (the legislation does not define “reasonable”). “Medical support” is defined as including health care coverage, such as coverage under a health insurance plan (including payment of the costs of premiums, co-payments, and deductibles), and payment of medical expenses incurred on behalf of a child. These requirements are effective October 1, 2005.
- **Information Comparisons with Insurance Data** – The Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) is authorized to compare information concerning individuals owing past-due child support with information maintained by insurers (or their agents) concerning insurance claims, settlements, awards, and payments. This requirement is effective October 1, 2005.
- **Use of Tax Refund Intercept Program** - The Tax Refund Intercept Program was amended to permit Federal tax return intercept to be used to collect past-due child support on behalf of children who are no longer minors. This provision is effective October 1, 2007.

- **Tax Refund Intercept Program Priorities-** The Tax Refund Intercept Program was also amended to raise the priority of all child support debt (TANF and non-TANF) to second priority in the refund offset process following Federal tax debts. This provision is effective October 1, 2009.

B.1.2 Problem-Solving Courts

Jail overcrowding, unemployment, increased court dockets, and staggering numbers of arrears owed to the children and the State are universal problems throughout the country and all have a potential remedy through alternatives to incarceration.

Judge Kristin Ruth, a member of the Judicial-Child Support Task Force, has implemented problem-solving court strategies in her courtroom in Raleigh, NC. She believes that wisely chosen alternatives to incarceration can break the cycle of redundant court appearances by parents who fail to pay court-ordered child support, face contempt charges, are then sentenced to jail, and, after paying enough to gain release, typically resume nonpayment until required to return to court. In addition, she believes that these strategies improve parental responsibility, and better address the needs of children. However, widespread adoption of a problem-solving model for child support collections would be unlikely without convincing proof of its powers. Judge Ruth instigated research collaboration between Meredith College and the Wake County, NC, Child Support Enforcement Office to investigate the effectiveness of her strategies.

In comparing the community strategies to jail's effects, this evidence shows that electronic house arrest stimulates impressive immediate improvements in payment compliance, and that vocational counseling brings about results that are more enduring. Jail orders were associated with rapid spikes in payment, but in subsequent months payments were erratic. The compliance gains were modest rather than dramatic, regardless of sanction, but statistical tests assure that these gains were not random.

Articles addressing problem solving techniques have been published in the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement's Child Support Report, and can be accessed at:
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pubs/csrindex.html>

- January 2006 – ‘Breaking the Cycle’- Alternatives to Incarceration Lead to Collections in Wake County, North Carolina
- August 2006 – A Recipe for Improved Collections? Judicial/CSE Task Force Sifts Methods in Problem-Solving Courts
- April 2007 – New Research Shows Power of Problem-Solving Methods in Courts
- August 2007 – Oklahoma Honors Judge Norman, Success with ‘Problem-Solving Court’
- March 2008 – Judges Take Center Court at NCSEA Forum

B.1.3 Incarcerated/Released Noncustodial Parents

Two publications dealing with incarcerated/released parents are available from the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement. One is “Working with Incarcerated and Released Parents:

Lessons from OCSE Grants and State Programs, A Resource Guide” and the other is “Incarceration, Reentry and Child Support Issues: National and State Research Overview.” The Resource Guide provides highlights of ten OCSE funded Section 1115 and Special Improvement Project (SIP) demonstration grants as well as some State and local CSE agency projects that address issues related to incarceration and child support over the past several years. This includes educating courts about the circumstances inmates face as a result of growth of arrears during incarceration and working with courts to use simplified modification requests and affidavits that are accepted as a substitute for personal appearances at court hearings. The Resource Guide Appendices include a sample memorandum of understanding, modification request forms, outreach materials and regulations to help you adapt promising practices in your jurisdictions. The Research Report presents a synopsis of key reentry research from many sources including Bureau of Justice Statistics, Urban Institute and the Vera Institute of Justice. It provides a national overview of several collaborative efforts which address the array of problems of incarceration and reentry for families and children. These publications were sent out as a Dear Colleague Letter and can be found on the OCSE website at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/DCL/2006/dcl-06-31.htm> .

There are four key reasons why child support agencies should be providing services to incarcerated/released noncustodial parents. They are:

- A large number of parents in the child support caseload have a criminal background. More than 650,000 people are released from State and Federal prisons each year. The majority of inmates in State and Federal prisons are parents with children under the age of 18, and many of them have formal child support obligations.
- The children of incarcerated/released parents are more likely to become recipients of public assistance and are vulnerable to a variety of negative outcomes including a greater likelihood of: failing in school, exhibiting behavioral problems and becoming involved with the juvenile and criminal justice systems.
- These parents are accessible in prison settings and respond positively to outreach efforts by child support personnel. Research shows that incarcerated noncustodial parents often enter prison with current monthly obligations and arrears. But few understand that they must notify the child support agency to request a modification to reflect their change in circumstances and subsequent lack of or reduction in income.
- While there is no national study showing the portion of child support arrears held by incarcerated/released noncustodial parents, State studies (Colorado and Massachusetts) suggest it is substantial (about 16 to 18 percent).

B.1.4 Incarceration for Non-payment of Child Support

The National Judicial-Child Support Task Force has prepared a paper titled, *When All Other Options Have Failed: The Use of Civil Contempt, Incarceration and Related Mechanisms for Enforcing Child Support Obligations*. Co-authored by Susanne H. Dolin, Senior Attorney for the New York State Division of Child Support Enforcement, and Melody C. McKinley, Legal Services Analyst for the Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement, this paper explores the efficacy of incarceration, particularly through civil contempt actions, as a method of coercing nonpaying, noncustodial parents to comply with their child support orders. The paper addresses

the distinctions between civil and criminal contempt actions; the effect of different sentencing types on payment; costs of incarceration and ways to alleviate those costs; various alternatives to incarceration; and modification or suspension of child support obligations during incarceration. The authors conclude that, when all other enforcement mechanisms have failed, incarceration or the threat of incarceration can be a powerful tool which is effective in producing support for children to whom it is owed and who have long done without it.

For further information, contact Susanne H. Dolin at Susanne.Dolin@otda.state.ny.us) or Melody C. McKinley at Melody.McKinley@dss.virginia.gov .

B.1.5 Arrears Management

The Nation's cumulative child support arrears balance exceeds \$105 billion (FY06 preliminary data). The FY01 balance was \$88 billion. Whether or not this growth in arrears is brought under control may depend upon the successful implementation of arrears management practices that range from outreach to young teenagers to timely termination of child support orders when the legal obligation to support has ceased--and just about everything in-between. Tackling this issue under an umbrella of Court/IV-D agency collaboration and coordination may likely expand the range of available options, reduce the likelihood and impact of potential implementation barriers and improve the odds for positive outcomes.

A short list of arrears management issues may illustrate the point. Noncustodial parent-friendly outreach may not reach optimum success unless all of the partners in the child support community have a consistent message that fully addresses noncustodial parents' concerns and issues. Efforts to involve community-based organizations in the child support process may be more far-reaching if the court and child support agency, as primary process-participants, share a harmonious and united vision. Arguments that arrears compromise or forgiveness policies can be consistent with public policy and the best interests of children may be more persuasive if the argument is the outcome of all-inclusive collaboration.

States in Federal Regions I, II and III have met over five years to identify arrears management issues and strategies. Meeting summaries are available from Jens Feck, Child Support Program Manager Region II, at JFeck@acf.hhs.gov. The summaries repeatedly identify overlapping issues that lend themselves to collaborative solutions. Good practices cited in the summaries are oftentimes based on actual and thriving collaborative efforts between courts and child support agencies. Arguably, any jurisdiction that moves toward a renewed focus on establishing fair orders, developing timely enforcement/modification policies and considering arrears adjustment options will most likely identify myriad reasons to initiate or enhance collaborative activities--and by pursuing such collaborative opportunities, the jurisdiction may be taking a significant step toward increasing collections for children and reducing the level of unwarranted arrears.

B.1.6 Using Technology to Improve Child Support/Court Operations

Business case templates were developed by the National Judicial-Child Support Task Force as part of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement's continued focus on child

support/judicial collaboration. These templates will support both State and Tribal child support and judicial staff in gaining executive approvals to further the collaboration between child support and judicial entities by enhancing electronic exchange of information.

The electronic exchange of data between the courts and child support entities can improve child support collections for children and families. The advantages of automation include:

- Increased Collections – Increases collections via quicker delivery of child support records and quicker child support order establishments and enforcement actions.
- Paper Reduction – Achieves dollar savings in paper, postage, storage, courier, etc., as well as minimizes the staff burden of archiving records and destroying archived records according to State regulations.
- Increased Private Health Insurance – Increases in private coverage via quicker delivery of support records and quicker establishment of medical support orders, offsetting the government’s responsibility for medical coverage for children.
- Facilitate Access to Current Case Information (for those with a business need to know) – Alleviates the need for staff (caseworkers, court staff, process servers, attorneys, etc.) to call, fax, email requests for current case information.
- Error Reduction – Reduces the amount of time staff (child support agency and judicial/legal agency) spends to correct data entry errors.
- Easier Records Management – Provides easier storage, retrieval and searching of large amounts of documents and records. It also allows for the potential for public viewing of selected documents if the court desires to permit this.
- Potential to Reuse System for Other Filings – E-filing child support cases has the potential to be reused with other case types and can generate funds from electronic filing and charges for online record retrieval.
- Faster Case Intake/Potential for Automated Case Initiation – Reduces data entry time per case and staff time dedicated to data entry.
- Facilitate State-to-State Data Exchange – Improves data exchange between child support agencies and judicial/legal agencies in other States. Alleviates the need for staff to call, fax, email requests for current case information and improves collections by expediting the process.

C. Collaboration Best Practices

C.1.1 Virginia Barriers Program

Virginia’s *Barriers Program* (BP) was designed to provide special services to noncustodial parents facing incarceration for nonpayment of child support and to assist them in overcoming barriers that prevented their payment of child support. The project had two phases: Barriers I was conducted from 3/1/2000 – 4/1/2001 and Barriers II was conducted from 4/1/2001 to 6/1/2005. Juvenile and Domestic Relations (J&DR) District Court judges in the Fredericksburg, VA area referred 294 noncustodial parents representing 490 cases for case management services, in lieu of incarceration for non-payment of child support. The most frequently used services provided by case managers were referral of noncustodial parents to employment services (mainly through temporary employment agencies or the VA Employment Commission), mailing of monthly

statements to noncustodial parent participants, and written and oral communication with noncustodial parents to reinforce the importance of making regular payments.

Six months after enrollment in the BP, noncustodial parents entering between March 2000 and June 2004 made payments that were 106 percent greater (representing \$211,869 additional dollars) than they made six months prior to enrollment. For all participants, the trend in additional payments, ranging from 16 and 70 percent greater, continued for 18 months after enrollment in the program. Arrearages for 29.7 percent of the noncustodial parents declined an average of 20.2 percent.

Significant costs were also avoided through using an alternative to incarceration. For example, if 260 noncustodial parents had been incarcerated for six months in lieu of being referred to the BP, incarceration costs to Virginia would have been over \$2.3 million and \$412,000 in support payments would have been lost.

C.1.2 IV-D Co-Location in the Courts

Puerto Rico's child support agency (ASUME) has co-located child support agency staff in court facilities for years, even though ASUME facilitates a 100 percent administrative process that extends to establishment, modification and enforcement. The co-location supports the court-based contempt process, and the concurrent need for updated arrears information and sworn testimony. The original co-location was the result of an informal agreement between agency heads, and the resulting establishment of a long-term working relationship has led to recent negotiations toward a comprehensive collaborative agreement covering all priority cross-cutting issues.

C.1.3 Child Support and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Applying alternative dispute resolution (ADR) concepts to the child support establishment and enforcement process may be an innovative way to improve customer services as well as support other collaboration objectives. Cynthia Bryant, University of Texas School of Law, provided this description of ADR and how it can be applied to child support.

Since the late 1970s, judges have lead efforts to use ADR. Indeed they have championed the use of ADR to resolve civil suits in general and family law cases in particular. As a result, ADR processes, especially mediation, have become widely used.

However, ADR processes and skills are not widely used in IV-D cases because: 1) court rules usually exempt IV-D cases when they mandate ADR for other family law cases, 2) ADR is not well known within the IV-D community, or 3) some IV-D programs refer custody, visitation, and access disputes to local mediation services but do not usually refer child support disputes.

The unique character of the IV-D program creates barriers to the effective use of ADR in IV-D cases. These include the requirement to dispose of a large volume of IV-D cases within set time frames limiting the feasibility of traditional mediation and consuming a half-day or more for

each case; and the limited access of parents in IV-D cases to no-cost or low-cost mediation services.

ADR encompasses a wide range of skills, processes, and systems that can be adapted to the challenges of the IV-D caseload and the families served. Examples include collaborative negotiation and communication skills for IV-D staff, dispute resolution system design for effective workflow processes, and mediation of cases with significant custody, visitation, and access disputes.

Advantages of using ADR in IV-D cases include:

- Individualized approach considers unique circumstances of each family
- Active involvement of both parents in setting support orders
- Avoiding default orders
- Greater compliance with support orders
- Avoiding arrearages
- Parents gain better understanding of orders negotiated outside of court, creating a collaborative relationship between parents and the IV-D agency
- Increasing agreed orders reduces contested hearings on court dockets

Cynthia Bryant also authored the article, “Beyond Mediation, Dispute Resolution Methods Show Promise for CSE Program, Clients,” which appeared in the Child Support Report Vol. XXVIII, No. 7, July 2006. The website address is: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pubs/2006/csr/csr0607.pdf> .

Ms. Bryant, a clinical law professor, may be reached at cbryant@law.utexas.edu or 512-232-1574.

C.1.4 Increasing Collections through Employment

After successfully piloting the Parental Responsibility Initiative in the Development of Employment (PRIDE), North Dakota is expanding the program statewide. PRIDE is a TANF-funded fatherhood initiative involving Job Service North Dakota (JSND), the District Courts and Child Support Enforcement.

Through PRIDE, nonpaying parents at contempt hearings are referred by the courts to the JSND caseworker for employment services such as job-search, training, and job-placement follow-up. The caseworker also looks for impediments to employment, resulting in referrals to address substance abuse, mental health and vocational rehabilitation needs. Additionally, parents can volunteer to participate so they can better manage anticipated employment difficulties.

The PRIDE pilot projects demonstrated benefits to all parties through increased child support collections, increased visitation time and reduced use of court time and of other assistance benefits. The average monthly child support payment increased 88 percent, while the monthly contempt hearings dropped 55 percent after referral. Only eight of the 127 parents referred

failed to find jobs; the average time from referral to employment was 1.8 months. North Dakota also noted decreased TANF, Food Stamp and Medicaid usage among the participants.

For further information about the North Dakota project, contact State IV-D Director Mike Schwindt at soschm@nd.gov or 701-328-7501.

C.1.5 California's Video Conferencing Court Project for Nevada County

The Challenge

Sierra Nevada Regional Department of Child Support Services (SNRDCSS) is a law office and collection agency that moves approximately \$9 million annually to support Nevada County's children. The traditional time lapse between court hearing dates and production of court orders can delay the collection of child support up to six weeks. Any process change that shortens the time frame increases benefits to children as well as efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

The Solution

The Video Conferencing Court Project debuted in April 2003, using existing video conferencing equipment originally envisioned for more cost-effective child support trainings and meetings among 13 eastern California counties. Also called the 1058 Window Project (a reference to the legislation that created special child support courtrooms), this is a highly successful partnership between the department, Nevada County Superior Court, and Nevada County Information Systems.

The project is effective because work is done simultaneously in real time. On hearing dates, courtroom video conferencing equipment is connected with video conferencing equipment in the SNRDCSS law library at the Grass Valley location. An attorney is physically present in court while the court team, which includes another attorney and two legal secretaries, attends virtually from the law library. The court team accesses the child support database via laptop and monitors the proceedings. If additional information is required in court or at the office, the Commissioner or attorneys have instant contact directly over the system.

When the court is called to order, its reach encompasses all the resources of the child support services agency. From the courtroom, attorneys obtain up-to-date information that may not be contained in physical files. SNRDCSS participates in the proceedings more seamlessly, without any disruption to the court, and communication is enhanced between department and court staff.

Secretaries and attorneys enter events into the child support computer system in real time, expediting the production of court orders. The information is immediately accessible to all child support services employees. Child support specialists and the department's public service unit can respond to customer inquiries appropriately with access to the most current case information. Resources are maximized because staff is able to review narratives, initiate work on tasks produced during the court session, and move on to other work assignments during court recesses and calendar delays.

Budget/Costs/Savings

The project used existing capital investments in video conferencing equipment for SNRDCSS and the courts, and no budget was necessary to implement this process improvement.

Results

This project is a practical way to get more support to children in less time, helping parents to better meet their children's financial and medical needs. Because of significant efforts that focus on early intervention, of which the video conferencing court project is a major element, the department was awarded the "Most Improved Small County Award" for current child support collections by the State of California. In addition, the 1058 Window Project is being reviewed by the State of California as a model for statewide implementation through the new California Child Support Automation System (CCSAS) Project mandated by the Federal government.

Primary Contact

Kathleen Hrepich, Director, Sierra Nevada Regional Dept. of Child Support Services, 840 East Main Street, Suite A, Grass Valley, CA 95945, 530-271-5400, kathy.hrepich@co.nevada.ca.us

C.1.6 New York's E-Filing Project

The New York State Family Court Interface (NYSFCI), a joint project of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), and the New York State Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration (OCA), is a real-time electronic interface between two statewide computer systems. These systems are the Universal Case Management System (UCMS), developed and maintained by OCA, and the Automated State Support and Tracking System (ASSETS), developed and maintained by DCSE. The interface development has been divided into two phases, referred to as the "back-end" and the "front-end."

OTDA and OCA started talking about sharing information concerning the "back-end"--that is, following a court disposition on a child support matter, in early 2002. Formal approval for the initiation of this project came from the top level for both parties. The agreement was not reduced to any formal writing between the parties, although all parties agreed that a more formal written agreement may be necessary at some point in time.

Development of the interface began with electronic messages being sent from the court system (UCMS) to the child support system (ASSETS) whenever any court activity is completed in a child support matter. Two main categories of messages are transmitted, documents (PDFs) and data. The types of PDF files transmitted include Orders, Summons and Petitions. The interface began operation in NYC in April, 2004. It has been expanded to all 58 local social services districts in New York State.

Much of the "back-end" information is used by the local social services district child support enforcement offices (Local Districts) to create or adjust child support accounts. It seemed natural that this information could be provided electronically, rather than by paper. So work began and continued in earnest to make transmission of this back-end data simple, quick and electronic. While the parties continue to evaluate and refine data being sent, the project has had a significant impact on the local IV-D agencies' business operations. This change has been most profound in

New York City where the child support enforcement program has been able to change its business operations through centralization of the account building and modification functions. In addition, the project has improved the accuracy and timeliness of information transmitted to the child support program.

The second phase of the NYSFCI is referred to as the “front-end”--the electronic filing of child support petitions. The significance of transferring data on the front-end, including the eventual electronic filing of petitions, was realized by the parties, particularly in light of the volume of child support petitions filed with the courts, the need for litigants to sometimes spend hours with the court or child support offices, and the duplication of data entry, time and resources.

Under the existing process, information is being entered on the front-end by the individual courts in their UCMS system on a daily basis, chiefly when a litigant comes to the court to file a petition. Litigants may later be sent to the local child support enforcement office to open a case and the information is data-entered again on the DCSE ASSETS system. Conversely, litigants might initiate the petition filing process at the local child support enforcement office where data is entered on ASSETS and the process is repeated when the petition is received and docketed by the court. The need to standardize the petition filing process, reduce the time and effort required by a litigant to successfully file a petition, and reduce double data entry was obvious.

The development of the front-end E-filing capabilities and the concomitant business rules was considerably more complex than originally envisioned. The respective representatives from OCA and OTDA have met regularly to overcome a variety of challenges. A pilot was commenced in late 2007 in the New York City borough of Kings County, focusing solely on original support petitions for cases where support rights are not assigned to the Local District. Based on the successful implementation in Kings County, plans are in place to expand access to this feature to the four remaining New York City boroughs, up to three upstate counties, and eventually statewide. Plans for 2008 include development of the E-filing capability for support petitions in cases where support rights have been assigned. Thereafter, the parties will implement E-filing of paternity, modification and violation petitions.

New York has been able to accomplish great strides in the evolution of E-filing largely because stakeholders had already been meeting every month (the Courts, DCSE, and the local NYC Office of Child Support Enforcement – which represents approximately 40% of the New York’s IV-D caseload) to discuss and address common issues. Since these ongoing, regular discussions were already happening, it was natural to begin talking about ways to improve the exchange of information and how best to solve shared concerns. Meetings between the Court and DCSE technical and program staff were soon added and continue to be conducted on a regular basis.

For further information, contact Eileen Stack, Deputy Counsel, New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Department of Legal Affairs, at Eileen.Stack@otda.state.ny.us .

C.1.7 Virginia’s Court Improvement Project

The Office of the Executive Secretary (OES), Supreme Court of Virginia, the Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), and the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) collaborated on a two-year Federal and State grant-funded project that comprehensively examined the management of child support cases. The project focused on three core areas, or goals:

- Improving case and calendar management of child support cases in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts
- Providing increased support and information to pro se (i.e., self-represented) litigants
- Increasing the accuracy and timeliness of providing paternity and support orders to partner agencies

The primary purpose of the project was to develop “best practices” in each of the three core areas, implement them and evaluate their impact in the pilot courts to determine whether each one improved the efficiency of child support litigation for all participants. Successful best practices could be disseminated and then implemented in other Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Courts in the Commonwealth to improve their management of child support litigation.

The full report can be found at:

http://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/about/reports/children/child_support/2006/strengtheningcasemanagementinjdrcourts_10-06.pdf .

C.1.8 OCSE Funded Judicial/Child Support Grants

The following chart lists OCSE grant projects that relate to both child support and the courts. For those grants that have a link on the OCSE website to an abstract, that link is provided as the first entry in the Project column. Just place your cursor over the title, press CTRL key and lift click and you will be taken to the abstract. A report synthesizing the results of these grants is available at

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/DCL/2007/dcl-07-29.htm> .

Grantee	Project	Contact Information
AZ Department of Economic Security Division of Child Support Enforcement	Arizona Statewide Arrears Calculation Tool (eCalc) Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0112 Project Period: 08/01/2005-05/31/2007	Veronica Hart-Ragland Assistant Director Division of Child Support Enforcement P.O. Box 40458 Phoenix, Arizona 85067 (602) 771-8000 vragland@azdes.gov
CA Department of Child Support Services	California Resolves Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0114 Project Period: 09/15/2006-09/14/2008	Leslie Carmona, Staff Counsel Office of Legal Services California Department of Child Support Services P.O. Box 419064 (MS-70) Rancho Cordova, California 95741-9064 (916) 464-0141

Grantee	Project	Contact Information
		leslie.carmona@dcss.ca.gov
CA, San Francisco Department of Child Support Services	Enhanced Parental Involvement Collaboration (EPIC) SIP Grant No. 90FI0063 Project Period: 07/01/2004-06/30/2006	Karen M. Roye, Director SF Department of Child Support Services 617 Mission Street San Francisco, CA 94105 (415) 356-2700 Karen.Roye@sfgov.org
CT Department of Social Services	Partners Executive Council Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0037 Project Period: 09/30/2000-02/29/2004	Diane Fray, IV-D Director Department of Social Services, Family Services 25 Sigourney Street Hartford CT 06106 (860) 424-5253 Diane.fray@gmail.com
CT Judicial Branch, Support Enforcement Unit	CT Customer Service Outreach Project SIP Grant No. 90FI0068 Project Period: 07/01/2004-11/30/2006	Dalia Panke, Program Manager CT Judicial Branch 90 Washington Street, Third Floor Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 569-6233 ext. 302 David.Panke@jud.ct.gov
CO Dept. of Human Services, Division of Child Support Enforcement	Data Information Sharing (DISH) Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0115 Project Period: 09/15/2006-09/14/2008	Dan Welch Grant Manager 1575 Sherman Street 5th floor Denver, CO 80203-1714 (303) 866-4452 dan.welch@state.co.us
D.C. Office of Attorney General Child Support Services Division	Modifying Orders for D.C. Prisoners Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0119 Project Period: 09/15/2006-09/14-2008	Cory Chandler Deputy IV-D Director Child Support Services Division D.C. Office of the Attorney General 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 550N Washington, DC 20001 (202) 724-2032 Cory.Chandler@dc.gov
FL Department of Revenue Child Support Enforcement Program	Impact of Mediation on Non-Compliant Noncustodial Parents Who Indicate Reason for Nonpayment Relates to Access and Visitation Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0099 Project Period: 09/30/2004-02/28/2007	Velva Knapp FL Child Support Enforcement Program 4070 Esplanade Way Tallahassee, FL 32399 (850) 410-3244 knappv@dor.state.fl.us
GA Department of Human Resources Office of Child Support Enforcement	Integration of Access and Visitation and Child Support Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0090 Project Period: 9/30/2004-2/28/2007	Russell Eastman Policy Specialist, Child Support Enforcement GA Dept. of Human Services Two Peachtree St. NW, Suite 20-292 Atlanta, GA 30303 (404) 463-6861 reastman@dhr.state.ga.us

GA State University Research Foundation, Inc.	PAPA and MAMA Real World SIP Grant No. 90FI0074 Project Period: 09/03/2005-09/29/2007	Douglas Greenwell, Ph.D. Director Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc. The Atlanta Project P.O. Box 5317 Atlanta, GA 31107 tapdgg@langate.gsu.edu
IL Division of Child Support Enforcement	Father Reintegration Project Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0057 Project Period: 10/01/2001-9/29/2004	Norris Stevenson Deputy Administrator for Field Operations Noncustodial Parent Services Unit IL Dept. of Healthcare and Family Services 32 W. Randolph, 11th Floor Chicago, IL 60601 312-793-7984 aidd5144@idpa.state.il.us
KS Episcopal Social Services	Reliable Income for Kids Coalition SIP Grant No. 90FI0079 Project Period: 09/30/2005-04/29/2007	Carolyn West Project Coordinator Episcopal Social Services 1005 East 2 nd Street Wichita, KS 67214 (316) 269-4160 sfc@ess.kscoxmail.com
LA, Christian Community Council	Fill the Gap SIP Grant No. 90FI0084 Project Period: 9/01/2006-08/31/2008	Cheryl Breaux Program Director Christian Community Council P.O. Box 280 Albany, LA 70711 (985) 974-5586 cbreaux@selv.edu
MD, Family Division of the Circuit Court of Baltimore County	MD Family Employment and Support Program SIP Grant No. 90FI0057 Project Period: 07/01/2004-06/30/2006	Peter Lally, Court Administrator The Circuit Court for Baltimore County County Court Building Towson, MD 21204 (410) 887-2687 plally@co.ba.md.us
MI Supreme Court	Prisoner Support Adjustment Project SIP Grant No. 90FI0064 Project Period: 07/01/2004-11/30/2005	William Bartels Prisoner Support Adjustment Project Coordinator State Court Administrative Office MI Supreme Court PO Box 30048 Lansing, MI 48909 (517) 373-5975 BartelsB@courts.mi.gov
MI 14th Circuit Court Muskegon, MI	The Noncustodial Parent Program SIP Grant No. 90FI0050 Project Period: 01/01/2003-09/30/2004	Kevin Eaton Muskegon County Family Court Services Work First Program Family Division of Circuit Court Muskegon, MI (231) 724-6312

MI, Third Judicial Circuit Court, Detroit	Reducing Paternity Defaults with E's SIP Grant No. 90FI0081 Project Period: 09/30/2005-09/29/2007	Joseph Schewe Wayne County Friend of Court Special Assistant Prosecuting Attorney 645 Griswold, Suite 323 Penobscot Bldg. Detroit, MI 48226 (313) 224-6639 Joseph.Schewe@3rdcc.org
National Center for State Courts	Automating the Exchange of Court Data SIP Grant No. 90FI0034 Project Period: 08/30/2001-02/01/2002	Kay Farley, Executive Director Government Relations 2425 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 350 Arlington, VA 22201 (703) 841-5601 kfarley@ncsc.dni.us
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges	Judicial Tools to Improve Court Practice in Child Support SIP Grant No. 90FI0082 Project Period: 09/30/2005-09/29/2007)	Cheryl Lyngar, Information Specialist National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges 1041 N. Virginia Street Reno, NV 89503 (775) 784-6225 CLyngar@ncjfcj.org
NJ Department of Human Services Division of Family Development	The Use of an In Court Facilitator Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0038 Project Period: 09/30/2000-08/31/2003	Alisha A. Griffin Assistant Director New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Family Development PO Box 716 Trenton, NJ 08625-0716 (609) 588-5093 Alisha.griffin@dhs.state.nj.us
NV 8th Judicial District Court	Nevada Drug Court SIP Grant No. 90FI0030 Project Period: 10/01/2000-12/31/2001	Kendis Stake Drug Court Manager Eighth Judicial District Court 601 N. Pecos Road Las Vegas, NV 89101 (702) 455-2060 stakeke@co.clark.nv.us
PA, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County	Improving Judicial Case Processing Through the Use of Technology SIP Grant No. 90FI0065 Project Period: 07/01/2004-11/30/2006	Patrick W. Quinn, Esq. Administrator, Family Division 440 Ross Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (412) 350-6930 PatrickQuinn@pacses.com
TN Child Support Enforcement Division	Testing Approaches to Developing Amicable Family Relationships Among Unmarried Parents Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0108 Project Period: 08/01/05-07/31/08	Charles Bryson Director, Child Support Field Operations and Management Department of Human Services Citizens Plaza Bldg., 12 Floor 400 Deaderick St. Nashville, TN 37248 (615) 313-5126 Charles.bryson@state.tn.us

TX Office of Attorney General	TX Family Reintegration Project Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0073 Project Period: 09/30/2002-03/31/2005	Michael Hayes Office of Family and Legal Policy Office of Attorney General Child Support Division PO Box 12548 Austin, TX 78711 (512) 460-6218 Michael.Hayes@cs.oag.state.tx.us
VA Department of Social Services Division of Child Support Enforcement	Improving the Court-Ordered Paternity Process Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0051 Project Period: 09/30/2000-02/28/2003	Nathaniel L. Young, Jr. Director, Child Support Enforcement 730 East Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219 (804) 726-7416 nick.young@dss.virginia.gov
VA Department of Social Services Division of Child Support Enforcement	Strengthening CS Case Management in Virginia, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Courts Pilot Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0087 Project Period: 09/30/03-02/28/06	Nathaniel L. Young, Jr. Director, Child Support Enforcement 730 East Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219 (804) 726-7416 nick.young@dss.virginia.gov
VA Department of Social Services Division of Child Support Enforcement	The Barriers Program Section 1115 Grant No.90FD0063 Project Period: 03/01/2000-04/01/2001 and extended 04/01/2001-06/01/2005	Nathaniel L. Young, Jr. Director, Child Support Enforcement 730 East Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219 (804) 726-7416 nick.young@dss.virginia.gov
VA Department of Social Services Division of Child Support Enforcement	Dead File Project Section 1115 Grant No. 90FD0074 Project Period: 09/30/2002-09/29/2005	Nathaniel L. Young, Jr. Director, Child Support Enforcement 730 East Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219 (804) 726-7416 nick.young@dss.virginia.gov

D. Sample Documents

Judicial-Child Support Agency collaboration has been very effective in developing uniform pleadings and orders that meet both the Federal mandates applicable to child support agencies as well as the needs and preferences of the judiciary.

D.1.1 Florida Transfer Order

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF
FLORIDA IN AND FOR PASCO COUNTY
CASE NO.: _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
_____ DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
_____ DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES
FOR THE BENEFIT OF

_____,
Child,
vs.
_____,
Respondent.
_____ /

ORDER TRANSFERRING SUPPORT ISSUES TO CIVIL DIVISION

THIS CAUSE came before the Court for review on this date, pursuant to Section 39.41(a) Florida Statutes, the Court finds that it has jurisdiction of the parties and the subject matter and that an obligation of support exists in the amounts shown on the attached FINAL JUDGMENT OF SUPPORT, pursuant to Section 61.30, Florida Statutes, and the Court being fully advised in the premises, it is, thereupon,

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the Clerk of this Court shall make a certified copy of the said FINAL JUDGMENT OF SUPPORT and cause the same to be docketed and filed in the Civil Division of the Circuit Court, assigning to it a new Circuit Civil Case Number, and all further matters regarding support or modification or enforcement thereof shall be heard in that cause in the Civil Division of the Circuit Court.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the parent(s) of the minor child and the Florida Department of Children and Family Services shall notify the Florida Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement Division and the Clerk of the Circuit Court, at the following addresses, in writing, immediately upon any change in the custodial status of the minor child named herein. Notice to the Department of Revenue shall be sent to 6709 Ridge Road, Port Richey, FL 34668; and Notice to the Clerk of the Court shall be sent to either

[] P.O. Drawer 338, New Port Richey, FL 34654-0338

[] 38053 Live Oak Avenue, Dade City, FL 33523

DONE AND ORDERED in Pasco County, Florida, this _____.

CIRCUIT JUDGE

Copies furnished to:
Family Continuity
Clerk of Circuit Court: Child Support
Mother
Father
Custodian _____
Department of Revenue if a IV-D case
Case file

D.1.2 Florida Order Suspending Support and Establishing Arrears

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA
IN AND FOR PASCO COUNTY
CIRCUIT CIVIL NUMBER: _____

IV - D

STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT
OF REVENUE ON BEHALF OF

_____,
Petitioner,

**FINDINGS AND ORDER SUSPENDING
SUPPORT AND ESTABLISHING ARREARS**

Vs.

_____,
Respondent.
_____ /

THIS CAUSE came before the Court on _____ and it appearing to the Court that support entered in the above-styled cause should be suspended for the reason ____

The following findings are made after reviewing the Court file, and weighing all admissible evidence:

1. **JURISDICTION:** This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this Cause and over the Respondent, who has been duly noticed of this proceeding or who has knowingly filed a waiver of service of process and has participated in this cause. The Department of Revenue is or may be an interested party in this cause and this Order is entered without prejudice to it to bring appropriate proceedings for relief before the undersigned Circuit Judge within a reasonable time from the date of the entry of this Order, by motion and notice of hearing to the parties hereto; notice shall be sent by regular United States Mail to the addresses of the parties noted on this Order, which constitutes the last known addresses of all parties to this Court.

2. **SUSPENSION OF CURRENT SUPPORT:** Child support on an on-going basis should be suspended because of the reason stated above, as of _____.

3. **ESTABLISHMENT OF ARREARS:** Arrears exists in the amount of \$ _____ as of _____. The Court reserves jurisdiction over any and all arrears due and owing, specifically any public assistance arrears that may be prosecuted by the Department of Revenue.

Whereupon, it is ordered and adjudged as follows:

1. **CURRENT SUPPORT:** Current support is hereby suspended as of _____.

2. **NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:** The Individual Petitioner, the Respondent and Respondent's Employer (Payor) shall provide the correct name, address, and social security number of the Petitioner and Respondent to the Department of Revenue, Office of Child Support Enforcement, and also to the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Support Division. THE RESPONDENT SHALL ALSO PROVIDE ANY CHANGE IN HIS NAME, ADDRESS, EMPLOYMENT OR SOURCE OF INCOME RECEIVED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND THE CLERK OF THE COURT, WITHIN SEVEN (7) DAYS of the change, pursuant to Section 61.181, Florida Statutes (1985) as amended. Notice by regular U.S. Mail at the address provided pursuant to this paragraph shall constitute sufficient notice of any subsequent proceedings.

3. **RESERVATION OF JURISDICTION:** The Court reserves jurisdiction to enforce the executory provisions hereof and to enter such other and further orders affecting child support and enforcement thereof.

DONE and ORDERED in PASCO County, Florida, this _____.

Circuit Judge

Copies furnished to:

_____, whose address is _____
_____, whose address is _____

Department of Revenue, Child Support Enforcement
Department of Children & Families
Clerk of Circuit Court: Child Support

D.1.3 Florida Final Judgment of Support

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF THE STATE OF
FLORIDA IN AND FOR PASCO COUNTY
CASE NO.: _____

STATE OF FLORIDA
_____ DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
_____ DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES
FOR THE BENEFIT OF

_____,
Child,

vs.

_____,
Respondent.
_____ /

FINAL JUDGMENT OF SUPPORT

THIS MATTER, having come before the Court for review, the Court finds as follows:

- A. The Respondent owes a duty of support to the minor children named above, who were born on _____ and whose social security number are _____ ;
- B. The Respondent is the _____ mother _____ father of the minor child as follows:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security # _____

C. There is a need for child support and the Obligor (herein described) has the present ability to pay child support, and either

() The amount in the Child Support Guidelines Worksheet, Florida Family Law Form 12.902, filed herewith is correct, **OR**

() The Court makes the following findings:

The mother's net monthly income is \$ _____.

The father's net monthly income is \$ _____.

Child care expenses are \$ _____,

Health insurance for the child is \$ _____ ;

D. The Respondent owes a legal duty to support the child and shall pay child support as herein set. Whereupon, the Court being otherwise fully advised in the premises, it is accordingly,

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The child support established herein shall continue until the minor child attains the age of eighteen (18) years or otherwise emancipates. However, in the event that the said child is still in high school and has not otherwise emancipated, performing in good faith with a reasonable expectation of graduation from high school before the age of nineteen (19), then in that event the support shall continue through the month in which the said child graduates high school.

2. The Respondent shall pay child support for the benefit of the minor child as follows:

() **Current Support:** The Respondent shall pay current support in the amount of _____ per () month () semi-monthly () bi-weekly () weekly beginning _____ and continuing until further order of the Court as prescribed in paragraph "1" above.

() **Retroactive Support:** The Respondent shall pay \$ _____ per () month () semi-monthly () bi-weekly () weekly for retroactive support or arrears in the amount of \$ _____ for the period from _____ through _____, beginning on _____ and continuing until paid in full.

() **Clerk's fee:** Respondent shall add to each payment the Clerk of Court's fee of 4% of the total payment (up to \$5.25 maximum) on all payments for cases for which the Department of Revenue is not a party to the case.

Total Payments: \$ _____ current support

\$ _____ Retroactive/Arrears support

\$ _____ Clerk's fee

For a total of \$ _____ to be paid as directed above.

3. **Payee Information:** Child support payments shall be forwarded by the agency noted below to the payee as follows:

_____ Department of Revenue
 _____ Department of Children & Families
 _____ Other: Name: _____
 Relationship to child: _____
 Payee Address: _____
 Payee's Date of Birth: _____ Payee's Social Security # _____

and there shall be no change of payee authorized without court order.

4. At such time as current support terminates by emancipation of the minor child, and in the event there are any arrears in past due and unpaid support, the amount set herein as current support shall continue to be paid and shall be applied to satisfy said arrears in past due and unpaid child support, in the same periodic payment as set forth herein, until the arrears are paid in full.

5. Respondent shall forward all support payments set forth below. All payments must include the County Number (Pasco # 51, Pinellas #52, Hillsborough # 29) followed by the case number to assure that payments will be directed properly. Failure to include this information may result in payments being delayed or misapplied:

() **With Income Deduction Order:** Respondent shall pay support ordered through income deduction, and such support shall be paid to the state disbursement unit. Respondent is individually responsible for paying this support obligation in the event that all or any portion of said support is not deducted from Respondent's income. Until such support payments are deducted from Respondent's paycheck pursuant to the Income Deduction Order, Respondent is responsible for timely payments directly to the State Disbursement Unit. All payments shall be paid to

State of Florida Disbursement Unit (FLSDU)
 P. O. Box 8500
 Tallahassee, FL 32314-8500

() **Without Income Deduction Order:** Respondent shall pay support ordered through the office of the Clerk of Court All payments shall be paid to

Pasco County Clerk of Court 38053 Live Oak Avenue Dade City, FL 33523	OR	Pasco County Clerk of Court P. O. Drawer 338 New Port Richey, FL 34654-0338
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------	----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

6. All payments made directly to the individual Petitioner rather than through the appropriate agency listed above shall be deemed gifts.

7. The Court shall reserve jurisdiction over any and all arrears and/or retroactive child support due and owing, if any.

8. The Respondent shall notify the Clerk of Court, in writing, of any change of address or change of employment, within seven (7) days, at the same address where (s)he is to pay (her) his current child support.

9. An Income Deduction Notice shall be entered effective immediately. It is the Respondent's obligation to pay child support when it is not being deducted from (her) his paycheck.

10. The Respondent shall provide medical coverage for the minor child if available at a reasonable rate, and provide written notice of coverage or nonavailability of coverage within thirty (30) days of this Order.

11. This order is without prejudice to any party to apply to the Circuit Court for any modifications.

12. This order shall continue in full force and effect until modified or further order of the Court.

13. The Court will order payment frequency based on Respondent's pay frequency. If Respondent's pay cycle changes, upon written notification from the Respondent's employer, the Clerk will adjust payment frequency in the Court's computer system to reflect the new pay frequency.

14. All present and subsequent employers/payers of Respondent are hereby ordered pursuant to Florida law to make regular deductions from all income of the above-named Respondent in accordance with the terms of the order and NOTICE TO PAYOR(EMPLOYER), and are further ordered as follows:

A. To deduct from all income due and payable to the Respondent in the amount set forth above in paragraph numbered 3, with the first payment due immediately upon the next date a payment is scheduled to be paid to the Respondent.

B. To deduct for arrears and/or retroactive support as ordered above until full payment is made on the arrearage and/or retroactive support.

C. To provide the Court depository the date on which each deduction is made.

D. Not to deduct in excess of the amounts allowed under s.303(b) of the Consumer Credit Protection Act, 15 U.S.G., s. 1673(b), as amended (50% of disposable income where the Respondent has a second family, 60% where there is no second family, and an additional 5% of either limit if the arrearage is equal to 12 weeks or more in support payments.)

E. To deduct 100% of any income paid in the form of a bonus or other similar one-time payment, up to the amount of arrearage reported in the income deduction notice of the remaining balance thereof and forward the payment to the court depository.

DONE AND ORDERED in Pasco County, Florida, this _____

CIRCUIT JUDGE

Copies furnished to:

Family Continuity
Clerk of Circuit Court: Child Support
Mother
Father
Custodian _____
Department of Revenue if a IV-D case
Case file

D.1.4 Oklahoma Child Support Court Order

1. The Petitioner/Respondent (*whomever is noncustodial parent*) shall pay current child support in the amount of \$_____ per month in accordance with the child support computation sheet attached hereto, commencing on the ____ day of _____, 20__ and continuing on the same day of each month thereafter until the minor child(ren) reach(es) age 18, or through age 18 until age 19, for as long as the child(ren) is/.are regularly and continuously enrolled in high school, or until further order of the Court.

2. Pursuant to 12 O.S. §1171.3 (J) and 43 O.S. §115, effective immediately a portion of Petitioner's/Respondent's (*whomever is noncustodial parent*) monthly or other periodic income shall be assigned to the custodial parent or other person or entity entitled to the support in the amount of the monthly support obligation, including any payment ordered on arrearages or judgment, and no further notice is required prior to service of the income assignment upon an employer or other payor of income.

3. The Petitioner/Respondent (*whomever is noncustodial parent*) shall maintain health insurance for the minor child(ren) whenever such is available through his/her employment or other group plan, unless medical care is provided by the Indian Public Health Service or military dependent benefits; and further, the Petitioner shall pay _____ % and the Respondent shall pay _____ % of all necessary and reasonable medical, dental, orthodontic, optometric, psychological or any other physical or mental health expenses of the minor child(ren) not reimbursed by insurance.

4. Payments shall be made payable to the Department of Human Services and mailed to the Oklahoma Centralized Support Registry, P. O. Box 268849, Oklahoma City OK 73126 until further order. Payments made in any other manner shall be considered gifts and shall not be credited to the amount owed, as provided in 56 O.S. §237 (C)(4).

5. **Address of Record for Service of Process:** Title 43 O.S. All §112A requires all parties and custodians to keep the Central Case Registry informed of a current address of record for service of process in support, visitation and custody actions. The following applies to the Petitioner and Respondent and any custodian subject to this order. Any changes in the address of record, employer, or health insurance shall be provided in writing to the Central Case Registry within thirty (30) day of the change. The address is:

Central Case Registry
P.O. Box 528805
Oklahoma City

The last address of record may be disclosed to a party or custodian upon request in accordance with rules of the Department of Human Services. The Department of Human Services does not release home addresses if prohibited by a court order granted for the protection of a parent or custodian, or if the case has a Family Violence Indicator. The address of record does not have to be the address where you live. Child support actions filed after this date may be served by regular mail to the last address of record provided to the Central Case Registry. If the physical address and address of record are different, the child support office must be notified of any changes in the physical address.

a. The following is the Petitioner's current address of record:

b. The following is the Respondent's current address of record:

IN THE FINAL ORDER IF ARREARAGES HAVE ACCRUED PURSUANT TO A TEMPORARY ORDER, PLEASE INCLUDE:

6. The Petitioner/Respondent (*whomever is noncustodial parent*) owes a past due child support judgment in the amount of \$_____ representing past support owed pursuant to the temporary order; and further, the Petitioner/Respondent (*whomever is noncustodial parent*) shall make payments of \$ _____ per month on the judgment, commencing on the ____ day of _____, 20 __, and continuing until the judgment and interest are paid in full or until further order.