



2023 Annual California Child Support Automation System (CCSAS) Summary Report

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INTRODUCTION

In 1999, California enacted Assembly Bill 150 (Aroner), Chapter 479, Statutes of 1999. The legislation directed the California Health and Human Services Agency and the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) to develop, implement, maintain, and operate a new statewide child support system. As a result, the California Child Support Automation System (CCSAS) Project was initiated in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2003--04 to establish a single statewide child support system that automates and centralizes all child support activities such as: establishing paternity; obtaining, enforcing, and modifying child support orders; locating absent parents; and collecting and disbursing support payments. By December 2008, all county local child support agency (LCSA) operations were consolidated into CCSAS. In January of 2014, California concluded the project through the Post Implementation Evaluation Report process.

CCSAS consists of two major components: State Disbursement Unit (SDU) and Child Support Enforcement (CSE) system. The SDU collects, processes, and distributes all child support payments. The CSE provides a central database and case management system to support child support enforcement activities at all LCSAs.

Per Family Code (FC) section 17561, beginning in 2010, the California Department of Technology (CDT) and DCSS shall submit an annual report by March 1 of each year to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature on the ongoing implementation of CCSAS. The report shall include the following components:

1. Clear breakdown of funding elements for past, current, and future years (Sec. 2).
2. Descriptions of active functionalities and a description of their usefulness in child support collections by LCSAs (Sec. 3).
3. Review of current considerations relative to federal law and policy (Sec. 4).
4. Policy narrative on future, planned changes to CCSAS and how those changes will advance activities for workers, collections for the state, and payments for recipient families (Sec. 5).

Consistent with this statute, DCSS and CDT have developed this CCSAS Annual Summary Report.

FUNDING

Federal and state funding for CCSAS was first approved in SFY 2003-04 to initiate system development. In December 2008, California received federal certification of CCSAS, successfully concluding the state's efforts to create a single uniform system. CCSAS continues to receive 66 percent Federal Financial Participation (FFP) and 34 percent State General Fund (GF) to support system activities.

1.1. CCSAS Project Costs

Budget Category	ACTUAL 2003-04 thru 2018-19	ACTUAL 2019-20	BUDGET 2020-21	BUDGET 2021-22	BUDGET 2022-23	BUDGET 2023-24	TOTAL
CSE Development	902,073,292	-	3,713,301	2,742,168	7,156,244	7,406,244	923,891,249
CSE Maintenance & Operations	1,691,175,410	100,744,554	102,964,191	104,685,282	104,180,191	106,201,047	2,289,958,675
SDU Maintenance & Operations	294,377,655	13,500,783	14,966,000	14,966,000	14,966,000	12,766,000	345,542,439
TOTAL CCSAS Expenditures	2,887,626,357	114,245,337	121,643,492	122,393,450	126,302,435	126,373,291	3,498,584,363

The definitions below provide details for the cost categories in the table above.

Development - Development costs include significant application software changes such as the redesign of a child support system's enforcement module; implementation of new electronic interfaces; development of a graphical user interface to replace character-based user interfaces; rewriting a set of underlying business rules in system logic, installation of a document imaging component to the system; and application system migration from a mainframe-based architecture to a client-server architecture.

Maintenance and Operations - Maintenance and Operations (M&O) costs include state and county staff, operational expenses, and contract services to provide an operating environment that meets the availability and reliability requirements critical to the Child Support Program. Operations activities include production oversight, problem management, configuration and asset management, network and system administration, host and desktop hardware and software refresh, application modifications and testing, user help desk, printing and imaging, technical infrastructure and architectural support, Enterprise Customer Service Solution (ECSS) support, and application hosting.

The SFY 2023-24 CCSAS budget includes the following proposed adjustments:

- An increase of \$576,000 for employer retirement contribution rates.
- An increase of \$895,000 for employee compensation benefits.
- An increase of \$800,000 for Cyber Security measures to be implemented for compliance with federal and state guidelines.
- A shift of \$2,200,000 from the State Disbursement Unit to CSE M&O.

SYSTEM FUNCTIONALITY

This section lists and describes CCSAS functions that positively impact worker effectiveness, customer service, and program performance within the Child Support Program.

1.2. Effectiveness

The paragraphs in this section reflect achievements made toward worker effectiveness resulting from the implementation of CCSAS.

1.2.1. Statewide Access to Data

Regardless of their geographic location, caseworkers can view data for a case or case member. Case transfers occur within the system with minimal manual effort increasing the time caseworkers have available to provide customer service and increase program performance.

1.2.2. E-Filing with California Courts

CSE functionality provides a standard interface with the courts to provide the capability to transmit forms electronically using their vendor of choice; including some of the most frequently used forms (e.g., Summons and Complaints, Proofs of Service, and Default Judgments). E-Filing reduces manual paper processing time for caseworkers and court personnel, lowers material costs, and expedites the establishment and modification of child support orders which allows for faster collection of support and distribution to families.

DCSS has expanded the number of form-sets available for e-Filing from 13 to over 70, which includes all legal form-sets the LCSA may file with the court. Enhanced e-Filing functionality includes the ability to e-File legal pleadings with attachments, the capacity to scan, upload, and e-File documents returned by case participants, and apply electronic signatures on legal filings. DCSS has been working with our previously enabled e-filing counties to facilitate expansion of their e-filing capacity and will continue to do so as we move forward.

Currently, there are 31 counties utilizing e-Filing for one or more of the available form sets generated from CSE: Contra Costa, Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Lake, Los Angeles, Mendocino, Merced, Monterey, Napa, Orange, Placer, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba. DCSS will continue to expand the use of e-Filing to additional courts and LCSAs in 2023 as well as add forms and functionalities to the e-filing process.

1.3. Customer Service

The paragraphs in this section reflect achievements made toward customer service resulting from the implementation of CCSAS.

1.3.1. The Enterprise Customer Service Solution

The Enterprise Customer Service Solution (ECSS) is comprised of the Self-Service Platform and the statewide Automated Phone System.

- Self-Service Platform: The Self-Service Platform provides a direct point of access for customers to have more than just payment information at their fingertips. After entering their user login information, customers can access case-specific information, as well as information regarding payments made by persons ordered to pay support (PPS) and payments sent to persons ordered to receive support (PRS). Access is granted over a secured connection and does not require the customer to speak to a child support representative. If customers wish to communicate with a representative, they are able to communicate confidentially through the website and email responses are provided within 48 business hours. Customers can also update their contact information and obtain information about appointments. In SFY 2021-22, 70 percent of program participants utilized the Self-Service Platform to manage their child support cases.
- Automated Phone System: The Automated Phone System is a single statewide Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system that enables all customers to authenticate and quickly obtain information about their child support case through its self-service capabilities or, if requested by the customer, they can transfer to a county or state representative for assistance. The IVR received 3.9 million calls in SFY 2021-22. Approximately 1.8 million calls were resolved by the self-service IVR and approximately 2.1 million were forwarded to a program representative.

1.3.2. Electronic Child Support Payments and Disbursements

Electronic payments and disbursements are faster, more accurate and less expensive to process than paper checks. Employers and persons ordered to pay support may make one-time or recurring payments by electronic debit from a checking or savings account, or with a Visa or MasterCard branded debit or credit card. The SDU provides both credit card and bank account online payment options over the Internet and via telephone using the SDU toll-free number. Electronic disbursements include an electronic prepaid debit card with payments going directly to the customer's card account and direct deposit with payments directly deposited to a customer's savings or checking account. Total combined electronic transactions have increased from 14 percent of total transactions in SFY 2005-06 to 88 percent in SFY 2021-22.

1.4. Program Performance

DCSS is committed to continuously monitoring, measuring, and evaluating its performance to improve California's Child Support Program. DCSS receives a portion of its funding from the federal government based on an incentive system implemented under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. To qualify for these federal incentive payments, California's Child Support Program must achieve or exceed performance thresholds in key areas. If the program performance fails to meet minimal standards, California may lose vital federal incentives and face financial penalties.

1.4.1. Federal Performance Measures

California's performance on Federal Performance Measures reported for FFY 2022 continue to exceed minimum thresholds required to earn maximum federal incentives.

- Paternity Establishment Percentage: The Statewide Paternity Establishment Percentage (PEP) measure for California in FFY 2022 was 94.4 percent, a decrease of 0.1 percentage points from the previous year. Statewide PEP measures the total number of children born out-of-wedlock for whom paternity was acknowledged or established during the FFY compared to the total number of children born out-of-wedlock during the previous FFY.

The alternate paternity measure, IV-D PEP measured 104.2 percent for FFY 2022, an increase of 3.4 percentage points from the previous year. IV-DPEP measures the total number of children, in cases falling under the purview of Part D of Title IV of the Social Security Act (IV-D) in the fiscal year, who have been born out-of-wedlock and for whom paternity has been established, compared to the total number of children in the IV-D caseload at the end of the preceding fiscal year that were born out-of-wedlock.

- Percent of Cases with a Child Support Order - California's FFY 2022 performance measured at 90.7 percent, a decrease of 2.3 percentage points from the previous year. This measure compares the number of child support cases with support orders compared to total caseload.
- Current Collections Performance - California's FFY 2022 performance measured at 63.1 percent, a decrease of 5.1 percent. This measure compares the amount of current support collected to the total amount of current support owed.
- Arrearage Collections Performance - California's performance decreased in FFY 2022 to 67.3 percent, a decrease of 9.7 percentage points over the previous year. This measure compares the number of cases with child support arrearage collections to the total number of cases owing arrearages during the FFY.
- Cost Effectiveness - In FFY 2022, California's cost effectiveness measured at \$2.46, a decrease of 8.2 percent over the previous year. This measure compares the total amount of distributed collections to the total amount of expenditures for the FFY. This comparison is expressed as the ratio of distributed collections per one dollar of expenditure.

LAW AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Changes to state and federal law often result in amendments to the Child Support Program. Occasionally, these amendments also result in changes to the CCSAS system.

1.5. Data Reliability Audits

Pursuant to section 452(a)(4)(C)(i) of the Social Security Act, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) is required to conduct annual audits to assess the completeness, reliability, and security of system data, as well as the accuracy of reporting for state child support enforcement systems. States are required to meet a 95 percent data reliability standard in specified performance indicators. These annual audits take the form of either a full Data Reliability Audit (DRA) which includes case sampling and calculations of estimated efficiency (i.e., reliability) for each of California's eight performance indicator lines or a more limited Data Reliability Review (DRR). California passed OCSE's DRR of the FFY 2019 data in July 2020 and OCSE's DRR of the FFY 2020 data in June 2021. California expects OCSE to finalize the full DRA of FFY 2021 data in the Spring of 2023.

1.6. Review of Federal Law and Policy

Family Code Section 17561 requires DCSS to provide a summary of current amendments to federal law and policy if the changes affect the CCSAS system. No new federal legislation or policy was enacted in FFY 2022 regarding the CCSAS system.

1.7. Guideline Calculator Mandates

Counties and courts are required by federal law to use the Guideline Calculator tool to calculate child support order amounts. Annual updates to the Guideline Calculator address changes in state and federal tax laws and related requirements. State rules and regulations require the Guideline Calculator to be certified by the Judicial Council of California (JCC) each year for the period of April 1 through March 31. In addition, Family Code Section 4054 requires the JCC to perform a periodic review of economic indicators and other contributing factors to analyze the fairness and appropriateness of the application of the child support guidelines.

PLANNED SYSTEM CHANGES

The CSE application was successfully migrated to the Microsoft Azure Government Cloud in November 2021. As part of this effort, a Training Environment was delivered, and training was conducted in December 2021. Two Development/Test environments, one Performance, and one Production environment were also delivered. Production went live in the Microsoft Azure cloud on November 15, 2021. There was a transition stabilization period to address incidents quickly. The production environment was considered operational and complete on January 6, 2022.

With these items in place and CSE successfully migrated, DCSS possesses enhanced security with FedRAMP Certification and more reliability with improved disaster recovery. DCSS is updating the CSE application reporting functionality to provide caseworkers with a modernized way to securely access data, produce required reports, utilize visual analytics, build dashboards, and perform ad hoc analyses when necessary. This translates into better services to the residents of California through the CSE caseworkers and customer connect self-service portal used by the public to view and interact with their CSE case.