



Child Support Program Self-Assessment Report

Agency: Minnesota Department of Human Services, Child Support Division

Federal Fiscal Year Ending: 9/30/22

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I. Executive Summary

A. Introduction

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 requires states to annually assess their compliance with federal child support case processing activities and timeframes. The standards and criteria for the State Self-assessment reviews and report processes are established in 45CFR 308.

This review covers the twelve-month period from October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022, and evaluated eight categories: case closure, disbursement of collections, enforcement of orders, establishment of paternity and support orders, expedited process, interstate services, medical support enforcement, and review and adjustment (modification).

Minnesota's child support program is a division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). The state office supervises the IV-D program from a central office in St. Paul, and 77 county offices administer direct services to 87 Minnesota counties.

Shaneen Moore is the Director of the Child Support (CSD) and leads county and state child support staff, including 1,382 employees statewide, who work in partnership to serve the needs of Minnesota families, providing support to children.

Minnesota's total IV-D caseload at the end of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 was 187,209. Minnesota provided services to 304,071 parents and 213,835 children in FFY 2022. The program collected and disbursed \$517.6 million.

B. Self-assessment results

Criterion	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred or Should Have Occurred	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred within Timeframe	Efficiency Rate (Confidence Level of Sample)	Federal Minimum Standard	Previous Year's Efficiency Rates
Case Closure	100	99	99.00%	90%	97.00%
Establishment	100	84	84.00%	75%	77.00%
Enforcement	100	100	100.00%	75%	100.00%
Disbursement	3,075,919	2,650,338	86.16%	75%	85.80%
Medical	100	100	100.00%	75%	100.00%
Review & Adjustment	41,658	41,010	98.40%	75%	98.60%
Interstate	100	94	94.00%	75%	100.00%
Expedited Process 6-month	3563	3355	94.16%	75%	94.20%
Expedited Process 12-month	3563	3523	98.87%	90%	98.90%
TOTAL:	3,125,203				

C. Summary

Minnesota exceeded federal minimum compliance standards in all eight review categories: case closure, establishment, enforcement, medical, interstate, review and adjustment, and expedited process.

II. Methodology

A. Introduction to methodology

Minnesota uses a 12-month review period and conducts a statewide review. The goals for the self-assessment are to measure compliance with federal timeframes and provide child support practitioners with information that can be used to improve outcomes and to maximize federal incentive funding.

B. State self-assessment coordination

Minnesota conducts an annual statewide self-assessment review. Staff from the Performance Analytics and Systems (PAS) and Program Support Unit (PSU) conduct the review and work to ensure the review meets all federal compliance criteria.

Minnesota uses a focused sample for each performance criterion evaluated by the PAS and PSU reviewers. This approach identifies a sample from a universe of cases with reviewable actions that occurred during the review period. For example, to determine case closure compliance, 100 cases are selected from the universe of cases closed during the review period.

Minnesota utilizes the entire statewide universe when using data that is compiled from automated methods. This approach ensures compliance is based on data for all relevant statewide actions in the federal fiscal year (FFY). For example, when determining disbursements of collection compliance, all relevant payments received in FFY 2022 were used. Most data are extracted from CSD's data warehouse.

For Minnesota's FFY 2022 Self-assessment review, the review period is October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022. A statistically valid statewide sample of cases is selected for each of the review categories. The reviewers conduct an online review using data from Minnesota's statewide child support computer system, PRISM. After the online review is complete, preliminary case findings are shared with the counties who had cases selected for the self-assessment review. CSD staff is responsible for analyzing and disseminating the review findings, developing any necessary corrective action plans, and writing the annual federal self-assessment report.

C. Universe definition and sampling procedures

Minnesota's goal is to automate sampling as much as possible. Automated compliance determinations were used for the categories of disbursement of collections, review and adjustment of orders, and expedited process.

The criteria for each manual review area are summarized below. Given the size of the universe and the estimated error rate for the case type (set equal to the obtained error rate from the previous year), the size of the required sample was computed for a 90 percent confidence interval with 0.10 precision (i.e., so that the observed error rate is within ten percentage points of the true error rate ninety percent of the time). This standard formula for sample size with the correction for a small universe is used (proportion is equal to the estimated error rate, desired precision is equal to one tenth, universe size determined as described below).

Sample size = $\text{Sum} \left(\left(\frac{1}{\left(\frac{1}{\text{Universe size}} + \left(\left(\frac{\text{Desired precision}}{1.645} \right) * \left(\frac{\text{Desired precision}}{1.645} \right) \right) / \left(\left(\text{Proportion} \right) * \left(1 - \text{Proportion} \right) \right) \right) * \left(1 - \left(\frac{1}{\text{Universe size}} \right) \right) \right) \right) f$

For each case type, a simple random sample was drawn from the universe. A second random sample of 10-25 cases was drawn and ordered by random number as a pool to provide cases to replace cases dropped by the review staff.

The Universe definition (sampling frame) uses specific criteria for determining cases that belong to each statewide universe:

- Case closure: Any IV-D case closed during the review period.
- Establishment: Any IV-D case requiring paternity and/or order for support.

- Enforcement of orders: Any IV-D case with an order for support as of the last day of the review period.
- Medical support: Any case with a new or modified order in the review period.
- Interstate services: Cases with an interstate program code of I (initiating) or R (responding) with an open Interstate case maintenance (INCM) screen at some point during the review period.

The estimated error rates are obtained from FFY 2011:

- Case closure: .16
- Establishment of paternity and child support orders: .28
- Enforcement of orders: 0
- Medical support: .02
- Intergovernmental services- .04

If reviewers need to drop and replace a selected case, the status of the case is changed to “dropped” and the status of a randomly selected reserved case is changed to “selected”. Examples of circumstances requiring reviewers to drop a case include, but not limited to if the case was closed prior to the end of the review period (except for case closure reviews), the case is a non-IVD case, or all children listed on the case are inactive. This allows the needed sample size to be continually maintained.

D. Summary of methodology

Minnesota believes this sampling approach improves the efficiency and value of the review process. It allows for good use of the reviewer’s resources because it eliminates time the reviewers would spend determining the relevance of a case under review to the review category. It also increases the total number of reviewable actions reviewers can process. This approach results in detailed information that is critical to improving performance by targeting vulnerable areas of service delivery.

III. Self-assessment results

A. Introduction to self-assessment results

Federal regulations require states to meet the minimum compliance benchmark of seventy-five percent for each review category except for the case closure category, and the twelve-month expedited process category. A minimum compliance benchmark of ninety percent is required for both case closure and twelve-month expedited process categories.

B. Self-assessment results

Criterion	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred or Should Have Occurred	Cases Where Required Activity Occurred within Timeframe	Efficiency Rate (Confidence Level of Sample)	Federal Minimum Standard	Previous Year's Efficiency Rates
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Medical	100	100	100.00%	75%	100.00%
Review & Adjustment	41,658	41,010	98.40%	75%	98.60%
Interstate	100	94	94.00%	75%	100.00%
Expedited Process 6-month	3,563	3,355	94.16%	75%	94.20%
Expedited Process 12-month	3,563	3,523	98.87%	90%	98.90%
TOTAL:	3,125,203				

C. Discussion of self-assessment results

Case closure: One hundred (100) cases were reviewed for appropriate case closure and notice requirements. Reviewers found ninety-nine cases (99 percent) in compliance with performance standards. One case was found out of compliance because a closure action was completed prematurely.

Establishment: One hundred (100) cases requiring the establishment of a child support order were reviewed and eighty-four cases (84 percent) were in compliance with performance standards. One (1) case was found out of compliance because service of process was not attempted or completed timely. Fifteen (15) cases were found out of compliance because locate requirements were not met.

Enforcement: One hundred (100) cases were reviewed for enforcement on current support, and if eligible, arrears were appropriately certified for state and federal tax offset. One hundred cases (100 percent) met performance standards.

Disbursement: Of the 3,075,919 payments from income withholding, re-employment insurance, and worker's compensation in FFY 2022, 2,650,338 or 86.16 percent of the payments were disbursed within two business days of receipt.

Medical: One hundred (100) cases with a new or modified order were reviewed for securing and enforcing medical support. 100 cases (100 percent) met performance standards.

Interstate: One hundred (100) cases were reviewed for timely referral and communication requirements. Ninety-four cases (94 percent) met performance standards. Six (6) cases were found out of compliance because communication with the other state was not attempted or completed timely.

Review and adjustment: Of the 41,658 cases eligible for a COLA adjustment in FFY 2022, 41,010 cases (98.4 percent) met performance standards.

Expedited process – six months: Of the 3,563 cases with a newly established order reviewed for resolution of legal action by obtaining a court order within six months of service of process, 3,355 cases (94.1 percent) of the cases met performance standards.

Expedited process – 12 months: Of the 3,563 cases with a newly established order reviewed for resolution of legal action by obtaining a court order within twelve months of service of process, 3,523 cases (98.8 percent) of the cases met performance standards.

Findings Summary

Criterion	Number of cases out of compliance	Identified reasons for errors
Case closure	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A closure action was completed prematurely
Establishment	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate requirements were not met Service of process not completed timely
Interstate	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with the other state was not attempted or completed timely.

D. Summary of self-assessment results

Minnesota exceeded federal minimum compliance standards in all eight review categories: case closure, establishment, enforcement, medical, interstate, review and adjustment, and expedited process.

IV. Program direction

A. Introduction to program direction

The Child Support Division Management Team and representation from DHS Information Technology (IT) work together to enhance CSD's ability to prioritize, coordinate, and oversee both operational and new work within the program.

B. Performance improvements

The Child Support Division Management Team consists of the CSD director, deputy director, and program and strategic initiatives director. The policy and planning team along with a dedicated training unit work alongside the CSD Management Team to help prioritize work efforts.

CSD's equity committee continues working to ensure an equity lens is applied to all policies, practices, and procedures. The goal of the team is to mitigate bias in service delivery and build a platform of respectful engagement with internal and external partners and participants. CSD recognizes the importance of equity to achieve high performance. As the committee work moves forward, equity will play a significant role in all decision making and planning.

C. Summary of program direction

CSD focuses on creating a person-centered human services delivery system in which policy, people, processes, technologies, and equity are in alignment with the DHS mission and strategic plan. Our governance structure has enhanced the division's ability to prioritize, coordinate, and oversee both operational and new project initiatives within the child support program.

V. Program service enhancements

A. Introduction to program service enhancements

Minnesota had several initiatives this year that had a positive impact on the child support program, its partners, and the customers it serves.

B. Discussion of program service enhancements

Recently passed child support legislation helps children and families.

In 2022, Minnesota's Child Support Division, county and tribal child support agencies implemented or started preparing for child support laws passed the Minnesota Legislature and signed by Governor Walz, including:

- Interest on past due support – on August 1, 2022, the program stopped charging interest for parents who have past-due child support, allowing them to limit or reduce their debt, increasing the likelihood of complete and timely payments.
- Updated child support guidelines – the program updated the Minnesota Child Support Guidelines Calculator to include the new guidelines that are effective January 1, 2023. The updated guidelines in Minnesota law will help courts more effectively determine child support amounts, especially for families with low incomes.
- Foster care reimbursement – the program is using the changes in Minnesota law and federal guidance to find alternative ways to reduce the reimbursement of foster care expenses in Minnesota. These changes will help stabilize and reunify children and families.
- Credit bureau reporting – starting in 2023, parents behind in their child support will have the opportunity to create a payment agreement plan before the program reports them to the credit agencies.

Equity initiatives

The program continued to work on several important equity initiatives including:

- Launching the Child Support Advisory Board Equity Committee, with members from Minnesota’s child support program including tribal and county staff from across the state, as well as division staff. The committee works to ensure equity in policies, practices, and procedures of the child support program to identify and mitigate bias, and improve equitable access, services, and outcomes for families it serves.
- Completing, and starting an evaluation of, the Driver’s License Procedural Justice Alternatives to Contempt pilot with 12 counties to adjust the driver’s license suspension enforcement remedy by decreasing the number of licenses suspended, increasing engagement, and improving payment outcomes. The current remedy disproportionately affects participants of color and other communities experiencing disparities.

Federal innovation grants

The program expanded its work on the following federal innovation grants:

- Safe Access for Victims’ Economic Security (SAVES) – in October 2022, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, awarded Minnesota and 12 other state child support agencies, SAVES grants to implement comprehensive domestic violence services to survivors who need assistance accessing child support resources over the next five years.
- Paths to Parenthood – division staff continue working on the federal Paths to Parenthood grant. This grant aims to develop a child support curriculum that will educate youth and young adults ages 16-25 on the financial, legal, and emotional responsibilities of parenthood. The curriculum will focus on those who are currently incarcerated, or in the community but still involved with the justice system, and those at risk of becoming involved with the justice system.

- Digital Marketing – in 2022, the division and 12 pilot counties finished a text-messaging pilot and started evaluating its impact as a communications tool. Division staff continued developing digital ads for a variety of online platforms encouraging parents to learn more about the program and sign up for services.

C. Summary of program service enhancements

Minnesota’s Child Support Division (CSD) is committed to enhancing service delivery. Enhancing service delivery throughout the state of Minnesota will reduce barriers to access for participants. CSD collaborates with stakeholders, other resources, and participants to continually improve program outcomes. The initiatives CSD implemented this past year provides new opportunities for families, partners, and county workers.

VI. Conclusion

The Minnesota Child Support program exceeded the federal minimum performance standards in all eight self-assessment review categories. Minnesota will continue to work with our county partners to strive to maintain compliance in all eight review categories and will continue to work towards maintaining these results.