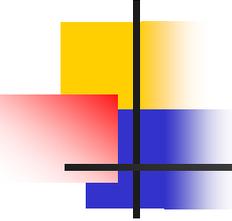# Office of Child Support Enforcement Division of State and Tribal Systems
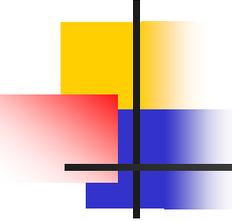
Post – Certification
Level of Automation
Technical Assistance

State Systems Update

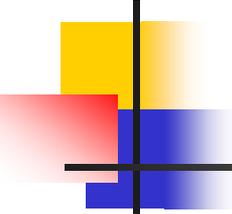Not FSA Certified = 2 States

Not PRWORA Certified = 5 States

Post-Certification Focus

Now it's all about IMPROVING the level of AUTOMATION…

Most States have automated each of their major Child Support processes to some degree.

But does your system maximize the level of automation that is possible?

We want to provide tools that will make that evaluation easier.

Automation Improvements

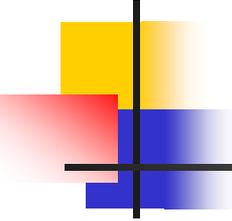We have talked with several States who have significantly improved their processes through enhanced automation

Their message is similar...

- Caseworker's spend less time reacting to and more time proactively resolving issues
- Mandated time frames are adhered to
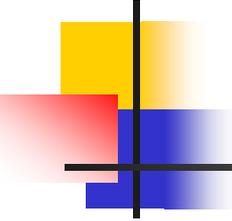- Consistency is greatly improved
- Data is more reliable

Federal Support

Improving the level of automation makes sense, but we understand that States cannot do it alone.

So we are committed to helping States by providing technical assistance and supporting innovative solutions.

Types of Support

Research

- Identify and promote innovative solutions developed by your peers

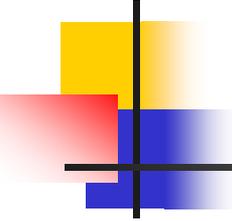Technical Assistance

- Site Visits
- Tool Kits
- Trainings

Demonstration Projects

- Provide resources to implement promising approaches
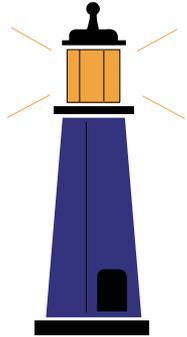
Current Initiatives
Level of Automation

Case Closure

Review and Adjustment

Alerts

State Systems Profile

Case Closure Guide

Chapter 1: Introduction
   Findings

Chapter 2: Case Closure Automation Starter Kit
   303.11 regulations
   Business and system requirements matrix
   Case closure process flowcharts
   Sample case closure intent notice
   Case study: State of Virginia

Chapter 3: Case Closure Automation Discussion Guide

OIG Findings

Overall	Percent of Cases with Error
Case did not meet all Federal closure requirements (n=495)	32 %
Type of Error *	
Case did not meet a Federal closure reason (n=495)	10 %
Notice was not provided to recipient of services (n=372)	25 %
Closure occurred before 60-days had elapsed (n=267)	11%

*Type of error percentages do not total 32 percent because some cases contain more than one error.

Top 6 Case Closure Reasons (95% of Cases, 96% of Errors)

Federal Closure Reason	Percent of Cases Using Reason*
[1] No enforceable order, and arrearage less than $500	26%
[4] Unable to locate noncustodial parent or putative father	24%
[8] Non-TANF client requests closure	18%
[11] Non-TANF client uncooperative	12%
[10] Lost contact with non-TANF client	8%
[3] Unable to establish paternity	7%

(*N=495)

OIG Recommendation

Recommended OCSE assist states in further automating case closure to reduce the error rate.

OCSE response

    Automating Case Closure Guide

    Training

    Technical Assistance

Benefits of Automating Case Closure

1. Reduce case closure errors
2. Ensure that next actions are taken in a timely manner and uniformly across cases
3. Reduce or eliminate backlogs so states can concentrate resources on cases requiring worker determination
4. Reduce data management demands by eliminating duplicate and outdated cases

# Using the Requirements Matrix: Reg. 303.11 (b) (1)

OIG % Cases Closed	Req. 1	Req. 2	Req. 3
26%	*There is no longer a current support order (includes temporary orders - AT-99-04) (AUTO)	*Arrearages are under $500 (AUTO)	*60-day notice required 303.11(c) (DOCUMENT)

**Shaded cells marked with an * contain requirements that could be considered for automation**

Using the Requirements Matrix: Reg 303.11 (b) (1) – cont.

OIG % Cases Closed	Req. 1	Req. 2	Req. 3
26%	*There is no longer a current support order (includes temporary orders - AT-99-04) (AUTO)	*Arrearages are unenforceable under State law (UNKNOWN STATE LAW)*	*60-day notice required 303.11(c) (DOCUMENT)

Using the Process Flowcharts: Reg. 303.11 (b) (1)
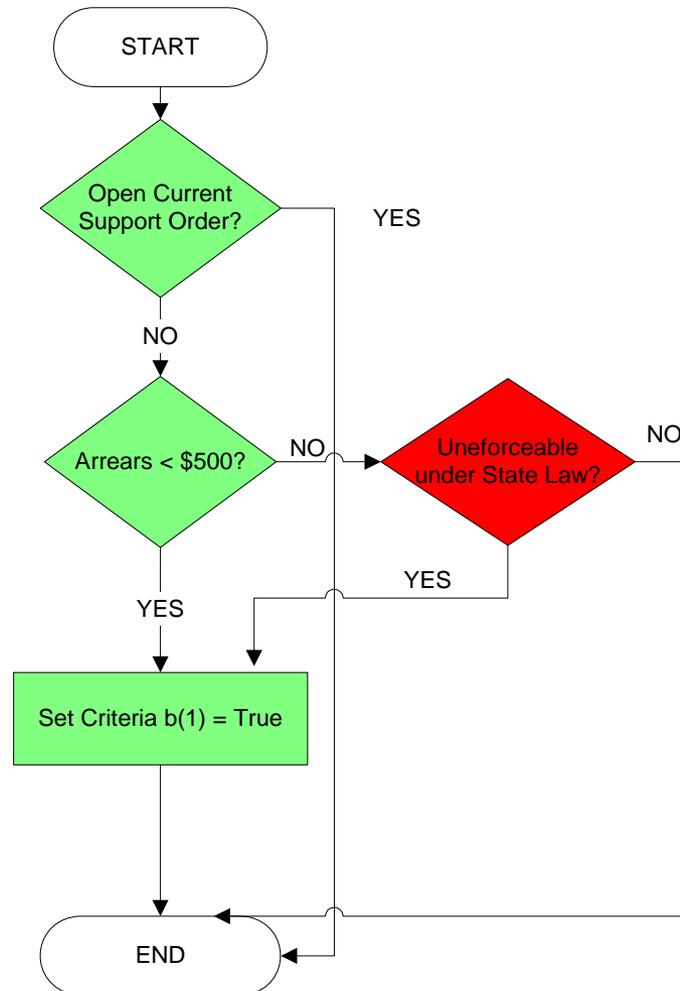
Using the Discussion Guide
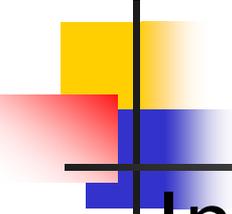
Intended for use by State child support enforcement (CSE) stakeholders, both state policy, program operations, technical personnel and their contractors, and Federal OCSE technical assistance staff, to:

Consolidate and document their knowledge of their CSE system's current level of automation

To identify further opportunities for automation

EXAMPLE – Completed Discussion Guide Sec.303.11(b)(1) only

Sec. 303.11 (b) (1)

There is no longer a current support order (includes temporary orders per AT-99-04) and arrearages are under $500 or unenforceable under state law.

- ☒ Fully automated
- ☐ Partially automated
- ☐ Not automated

If fully or partially automated, briefly describe how.

1. Automated search for cases with no current support order and arrearages under $500
2. Automated search for additional criteria ($0 balance, all children over 18 or emancipated)

If applicable, a 60-day notice of intent to close is sent to the recipient of services.

- ☒ Fully automated
- ☐ Partially automated
- ☐ Not automated

If fully or partially automated, briefly describe how.

1. Automated search for valid custodial parent mailing address
2. Automated verification that no other Notice of Intent to Close has been sent
3. Automated tracking of required 60 days (or longer) timeframe

Automated notice generation to custodial parent's current mailing address

Reaching New Heights
with Case Closure
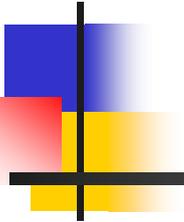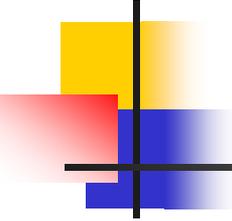
Virginia's Experience

Manual & Automated

Presented by: Connie White,

Virginia DCSE

JLARC Study 1999 Requirements:

Examine caseload, employment levels and workload
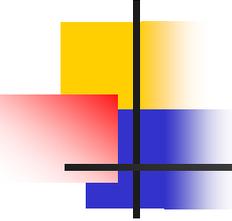
Recommend how to improve the program

Findings

Between 9% and 26% of caseload estimated to be "unworkable" or "inactive":

- Cases that can be closed (using Case Closure criteria)
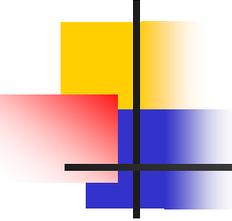- Unworkable (in one status for over three years or very little information)
- Inactive (cases with no action in over a year)

Recommendations

The Department of Social Services should initiate a statewide caseload cleanup effort to remove old cases from DCSE's active caseload.
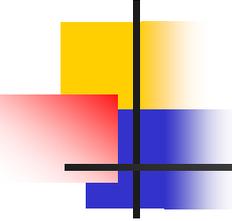
DCSE should make analyzing and cleaning up the statewide caseload a priority

Manual Cleanup

Two year manual cleanup resulted in a net reduction in the State's caseload from 420,000 to 381,000

To supplement the manual process, we developed an automated closure process

Automated Case Closures

Closure reasons:

There is no longer a current support order and arrearages are under $500 or unenforceable under State law - Section 303.11, (b) (1)

The non-custodial parent or putative father is deceased – Section 303.11 (b) (2)

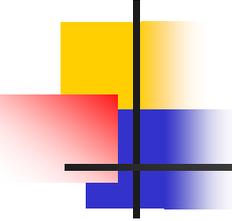The non-custodial parent's location is unknown – Section 303.11 (b) (4)
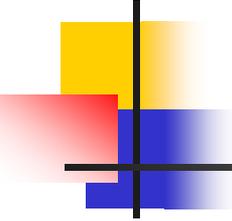
No Longer an Order/Arrears under $500 or unenforceable

There is no longer a current support order and arrearages are under $500 or unenforceable under State law - Section 303.11, (b) (1)

Zero Arrears

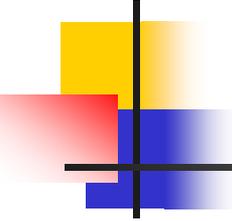All children have reached emancipation age

No payments in last 30 days

NCP is Deceased

The non-custodial parent or putative father is deceased – Section 303.11 (b) (2)

- No further action can be taken by the Division
- The NCP has been deceased for 13 months
- Use Vital Records & FCR data

NCP's Location Unknown

The non-custodial parent's location is unknown – Section 303.11 (b) (4)

There is insufficient information available to initiate automated locate searches, and locate efforts have been unsuccessful for over a one year period.

- NCP has no SSN or Date of Birth
- NCP in locate status for over one year

Sufficient information is available to initiate automated locate efforts and regular attempts using multiple sources to locate NCP have been unsuccessful for more than three years

- NCP has SSN and DOB, no locate matches for 3 years or unsuccessful matches
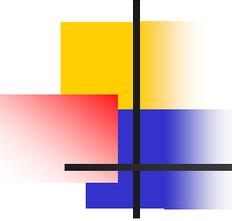
Automated Assist for Worker-Initiated Case Closures

Worker marks case for closure by entering a closure reason.

Closure notice is generated in nightly batch processing & mailed by mailing vendor.

Worker may chose to print closure notice in their office.

Worker can stop closure by deleting closure reason.

System closes case after 65 days.

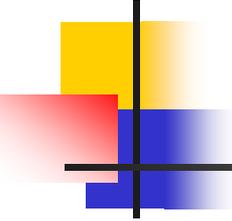Edits prevent worker from closing a case on the same day the closure code is entered.
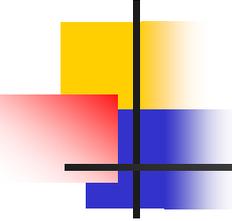
Benefits of Case Closure-Automated

Number of cases closed in compliance with Federal criteria has increased.

There are fewer case closure errors compared to manual processing.
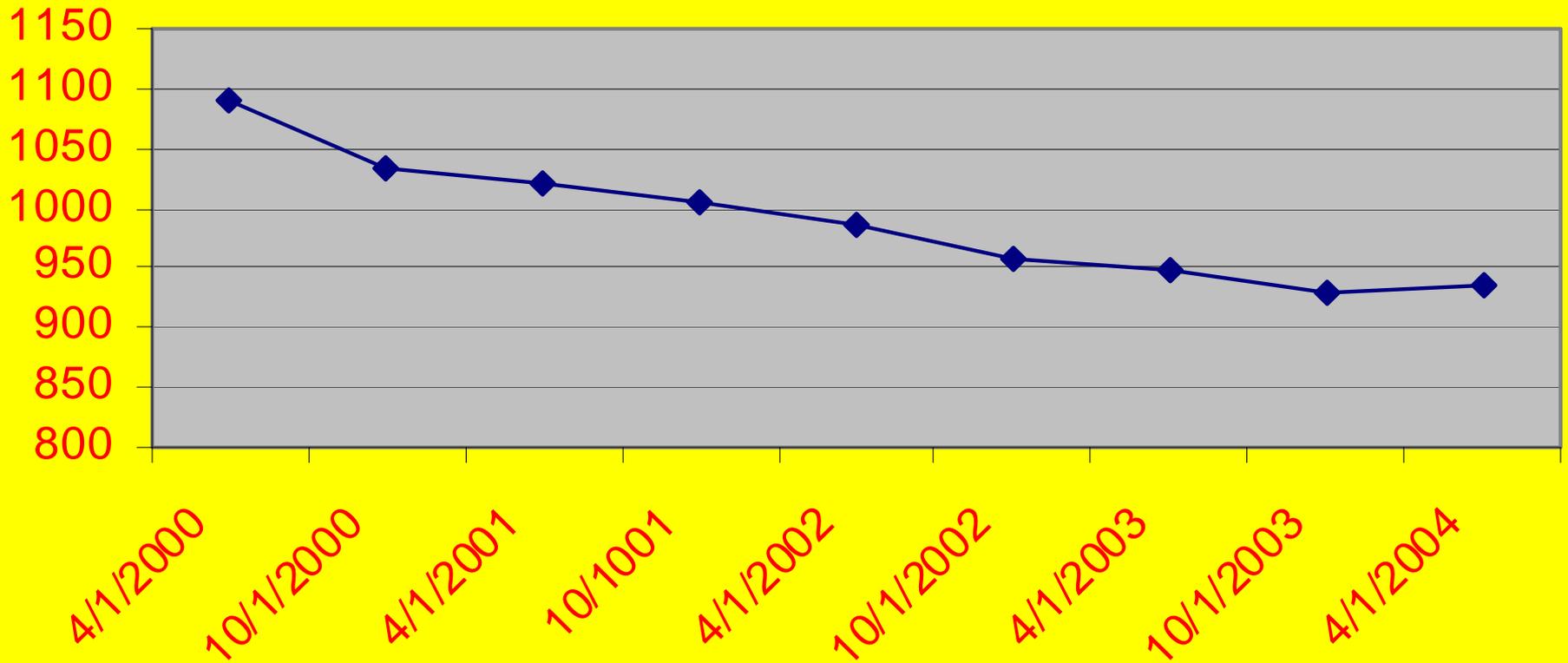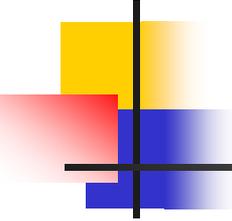
Case closures are more timely.

Benefits of Case Closure-General

Reduced Caseloads

Worker caseloads have decreased significantly, from 1,100 to 950 per caseworker. Workers feel less overwhelmed and have more time to focus on collections

Cases per Worker

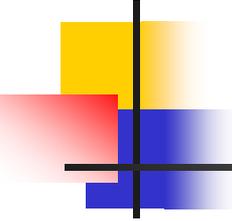# Case Closure Improves Performance

Close cases that meet criteria

- Reduces the denominator
- Eliminates old, unproductive, error-prone cases
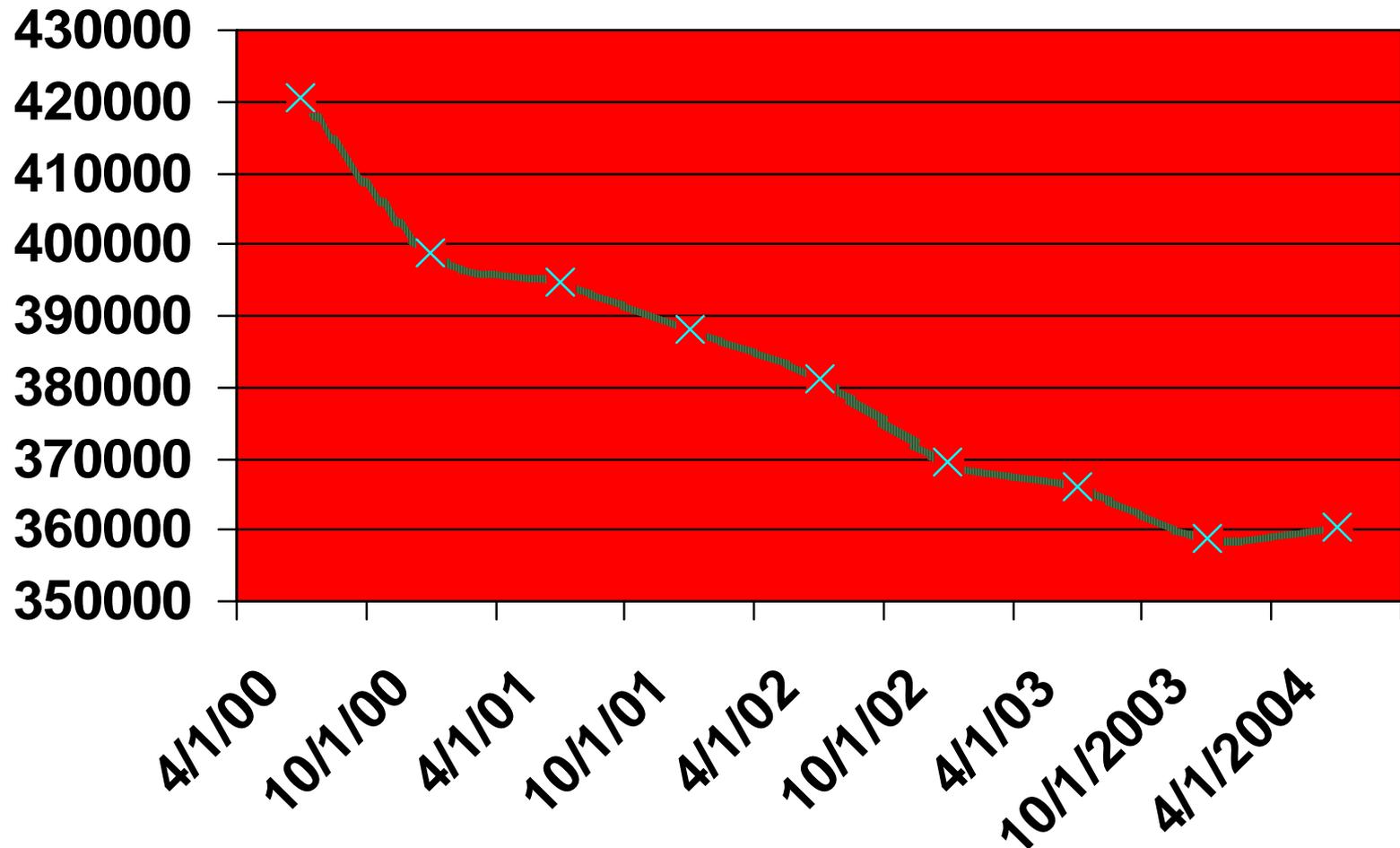- Allows staff time to focus on productive cases
- Virginia has passed the data reliability audit at 95% for the past 4 years
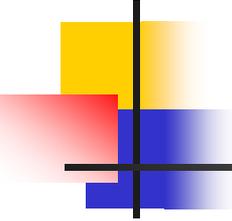
Results

Using a combination of manual and automated case closure the Division has closed 300,000 cases from December 1999 through April 2004.

Automating case closure has reduced Virginia's caseload

Reaching New Heights with Case Closure!!!

Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit

Child support review and adjustment is one of several administrative processes addressed by PRWORA.

Custodial and non-Custodial parents are required to receive notice regarding their right to have the amount of support reviewed if circumstances change.

In addition to a review initiated by either case party, CSE programs can initiate a review using the following methods:

Adjust the current order in accordance with guidelines if the current support amount differs from the guidelines calculation;

Apply a cost-of-living adjustment in accordance with a State developed formula;

Use automated methods to identify orders eligible for review and apply the appropriate adjustment
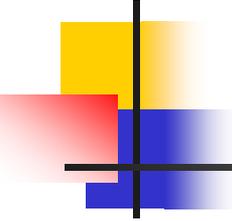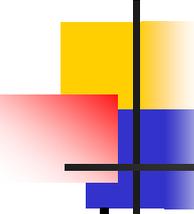
Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit

The Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit targets states that have not yet automated, or fully automated, their Review & Adjustment process.

It highlights innovative solutions implemented by states that have successfully automated the process.

The kit includes information about the benefits of automation, applicable policy and legislation, case studies, and relevant tools that assist with automation assessment and development.

Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit

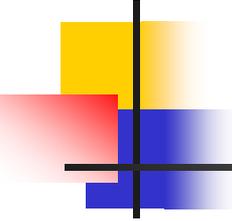Innovative solutions implemented by 4 states will be presented via case studies:
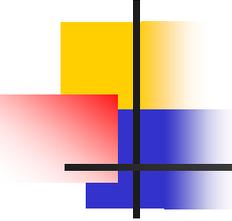
- Alaska
- Maine
- Minnesota
- Vermont

Both automated wage / income comparisons and COLA adjustments will be highlighted.

Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit

Process flowcharts will highlight points in the process that are best served by automation

Tools for assessing existing level of automation and potential for improvement to be developed.

Support Review and Adjustment Tool Kit

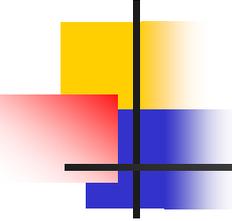Site Visit Itinerary

    Vermont : June (completed)

    Minnesota: July (completed)

    Alaska: August (completed)

    Maine: September (planned)

Draft tool kit document scheduled for fall 2004.

Planning for Technical Assistance

In order to plan how we will provide technical assistance, we first need to know what is most important to you

Most likely you are juggling multiple IT projects … some are in progress and some might be planned for a future time when resources are available

Questions for Audience

What are your automation priorities? Think about your top 2 or 3 automation projects. Do they:

- Add new functionality or enhance existing functionality
- Respond to a Federal or State mandate, or are they in response to program planning
- Involve vendor involvement or will you build them in-house?

Other than financial assistance (that's a given!), what type of OCSE support would most help you improve your current level of automation?