

**MODULE 2:  
CHILD SUPPORT BASICS**

## Executive Order 12953

The Federal Government, through its civilian employees and Uniformed Services members, is the Nation's largest single employer and as such should set an example of leadership and encouragement in ensuring that all children are properly supported.

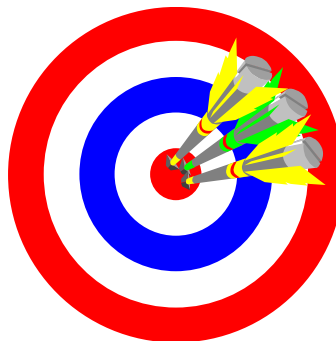
7  
5/23/02

## Module 2 Objectives - Child Support Basics

- State origins and general description of the Child Support Enforcement Program
- Identify four primary child support services
- Identify four requirements for employers

8  
2/27/03

## 2.1 MODULE OBJECTIVES



At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Provide a general description of the Child Support Enforcement Program.
- Briefly describe the origins of the Child Support Enforcement Program.
- Identify the four primary services offered by the IV-D program.
- Identify the employer's four requirements for child support.

### Child Support Basics

- Definition of "child support"
- Definition of "medical support"



9  
4/30/02

### Magnitude of the Child Support Program

- Caseload
  - 1976 - 2 million cases
  - 2000 - 19+ million cases
- Collections
  - FY 1992 - \$ 8 billion
  - FY 2000 - \$18 billion




10  
1/10/02

## 2.2 DEFINITION OF “CHILD SUPPORT”

- Child support is the money ordered to be paid by a parent for the support of his or her (minor) child, when that parent does not live with the child. The amount of money to be paid is based on standardized guidelines that consider the parent’s income, the needs of the child, and whether or not there are other dependents.
- Child support also comes in the form of “medical support.” Medical support is a form of child support owed by a non-custodial parent as stated in the judicial or administrative order—most often as health care insurance coverage available under the non-custodial parent’s policy. It may also be an additional payment towards payment of insurance coverage provided by the custodial party or for medical expenses.

### Child Support Enforcement Program


- Established 1975
- AFDC only; later, all applicants
- Federal, state and local level



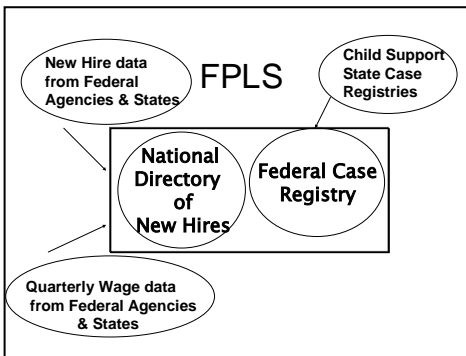
11  
5/8/02

### Federal Level - OCSE

- Program standards, policy & regs
- Program funding
- Audits state & local programs
- Technical assistance & training
- FPLS



12  
5/8/02



### State Level

- Central administration
- Operates statewide automated system
- Maintains registry of all cases in state
- Maintains database of new hires

14  
5/8/02

### Local Level

- Regional and county agency offices
- Provides direct services

15  
5/8/02

## 2.3 OVERVIEW OF THE “CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM”

**WHAT:** The government program responsible for the collection and distribution of payments and medical support enforcement to support children in single-parent (single-guardian) families.

**WHEN:** Established by Congress in 1975.

**WHY:** To reimburse the government for public assistance expenditures and later, as an alternative to public assistance.

**WHERE:** At the federal, state, and local levels of government.

- **Federal:** Office of Child Support Enforcement, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health & Human Services

Provides program funding, sets program standards, policy, and regulations, evaluates and audits the state/local programs, provides technical assistance and training to states, and operates the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS), a computer system that helps states find the newly hired employees reported by employers.

- **State:** Administered centrally, operates the automated child support computer system required in each state, processes payments at a single, centralized site, maintains a registry of all child support cases in that state (State Case Registry, or SCR) and a database of all newly hired employees in that state (State Directory of New Hires, or SDNH).
- **Local:** County and regional agency offices providing direct child support services to families, such as locating non-custodial parents, establishing paternity, and establishing, modifying and enforcing child support orders.

There are two types of child support cases: IV-D and non-IV-D.

1. **IV-D:** a case in which an individual applied (or was referred) to a state/county child support enforcement agency.
2. **Non-IV-D:** a child support order handled by a private attorney that is not affiliated with a state/county child support enforcement agency.

### Four Basic Child Support Services

- Locate
- Establish paternity
- Establish child support orders
- Collect

12  
1/21/03



## **2.4 THE FOUR BASIC SERVICES OFFERED BY THE CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

1. Locate.
2. Establish paternity.
3. Establish child support orders.
4. Collect child support.

### Four Basic Steps in Child Support

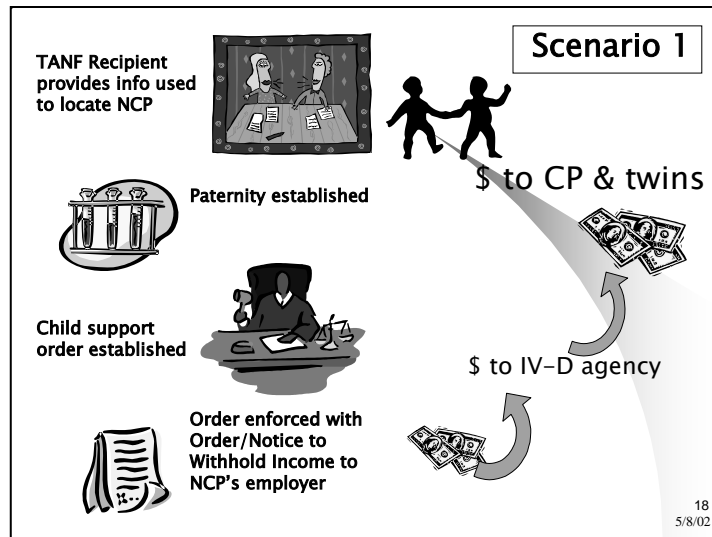
- Report new hires & respond to verification requests
- Withhold income, premiums
- Disburse payments
- Report terminations



14  
2/7/03

## **2.5 THE FOUR BASIC STEPS IN CHILD SUPPORT**

1. Report new hires and respond to employment verification requests.
2. Withhold income and premiums for medical insurance.
3. Disburse payments.
4. Report terminations.



Let us walk through the processing of a child support case.

### **Scenario 1**

Unmarried mother of twins is receiving public assistance through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. She is required to cooperate with the Child Support Enforcement program, and is referred to her local agency for services.

1. **Locate** – First, information from the mother is gathered by the agency during the “intake” process. The child support worker interviews the mother to get information about the alleged father, such as address, Social Security Number and last known employer. This information is run through various locate sources, such as motor vehicle records, to locate him.
2. **Establish paternity** –The man is located, but denies that he is the father of the twins. DNA testing is undertaken to determine whether he is the father. DNA testing is positive, and paternity is established.
3. **Establish child support order** – Once paternity is established, a child support order is entered. This is called the “underlying order” and the employer usually does not see this legal document.
4. **Collect child support** – Once the father is ordered to pay child support, it is enforced when an Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support is sent to the father’s employer. Regular deductions from his pay can now be made by the employer, and sent directly to the issuing child support agency.

### **Scenario 2**

Divorced mother of one child goes to the child support agency to apply for services. The one-time application fee is \$25.

1. **Locate** – Information obtained from the mother during the “intake” process is used to verify the father’s location and current employment in a neighboring state.
2. **Establish paternity** – Since the man is the custodial parent’s ex-husband, paternity is assumed.
3. **Establish child support order** – A child support order is entered.
4. **Collect child support** – An Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support is sent to the father’s employer. Regular deductions from his pay are made by the employer, and sent directly to the issuing child support agency.