

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064



April 30, 2001

LCSA LETTER NO. 01-07

Reason for this Transmittal

- State Law or Regulation Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Change
- Clarification requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by DCSS

TO: ALL IV-D DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR STATE HEARING SITE AND HEARING ROOM GUIDELINES

Effective July 1, 2001, custodial parties and non-custodial parents who are dissatisfied with a local child support agency's resolution of a complaint may request a State hearing if the dispute involves one or more specifically enumerated jurisdictional matters.

The State Hearing Division (SHD) of the California Department of Social Services will conduct these child support State hearings pursuant to an interagency agreement with the Department of Child Support Services.

The SHD will conduct hearings in every county in the State of California. The child support hearing site cannot be a IV-A office and the site must meet the minimum standards for hearing rooms as described in the attached hearing room guidelines document. Please also note that, if prior to a State hearing, an Administrative Law Judge determines additional security is necessary, the county must provide the requested security.

Please submit, within 30 days of the date of this letter, the street address of the hearing site(s) for conducting child support State hearings in your county to:

Department of Child Support Services  
 Child Support Services Division  
 Attention: Complaint Resolution Section  
 P. O. Box 419064, MS 30  
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064



DO YOUR PART TO HELP CALIFORNIA SAVE ENERGY  
 For energy saving tips, visit the DCSS website at  
[www.childsup.cahwnet.gov](http://www.childsup.cahwnet.gov)

LCSA LTR NO. 01-07

April 30, 2001

Page 2

Please contact Francine Woods, Chief of the Customer and Community Services Branch, at (916) 464-5337 or by email at [francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov), if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

CURTIS HOWARD

Assistant Deputy Director

Child Support Services Division

Attachment

## HEARING ROOM GUIDELINES

The State Hearing Division (SHD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will conduct child support hearings in every county in the State of California. All child support State hearings must take place at the local child support agency office or other site designated by the local child support agency.

The SHD recently provided guidelines to individual counties regarding the minimum standards for hearing rooms. The purpose of this letter is to communicate the hearing room guidelines uniformly to all counties. The following list provides the minimum standards for hearing rooms:

1. The hearing room must be large enough to allow reasonable entry and exit, including access for wheelchairs (a minimum of 12 by 17 feet). The room should accommodate seating for a minimum of one Administrative Law Judge and four other people. If the size of the hearing room only meets this minimum standard, the county must also have an alternative larger room available for occasional hearings which involve six or more people.
2. The room must have adequate ventilation.
3. The room must be sufficiently soundproof to prevent interference with the proper electronic recording of the hearing and to preserve the confidential nature of the proceedings.
4. The room must be furnished so that the Administrative Law Judge is at the head of a T-shaped table/desk arrangement.
5. The room must have a telephone and sufficient electrical outlets to facilitate the use of electronic recording equipment.
6. The room should have an appearance appropriate to quasi-judicial proceedings and should be maintained in that fashion. Accordingly, it should not have the appearance of a dual-purpose room (e.g., storage room, lunchroom with microwave or refrigerator, etc.).
7. The county must provide a level of security at the hearing room site which insures the safety of all agency personnel and which is equivalent to the security which is provided to other county employees who are in similar public contact situations.
8. The county shall cooperate with the SHD in providing a storage area so the hearing room can be supplied with materials used during hearings (e.g., tapes, forms, etc.). SHD will provide a cabinet for such supplies.

We request that all counties notify the SHD prior to any change in hearing room locations so that CDSS can work with counties to attempt to meet the above criteria.

Please contact Francine Woods, Chief of the Customer and Community Services Branch, at (916) 464-5337 or by email at [francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov), if you have any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines.