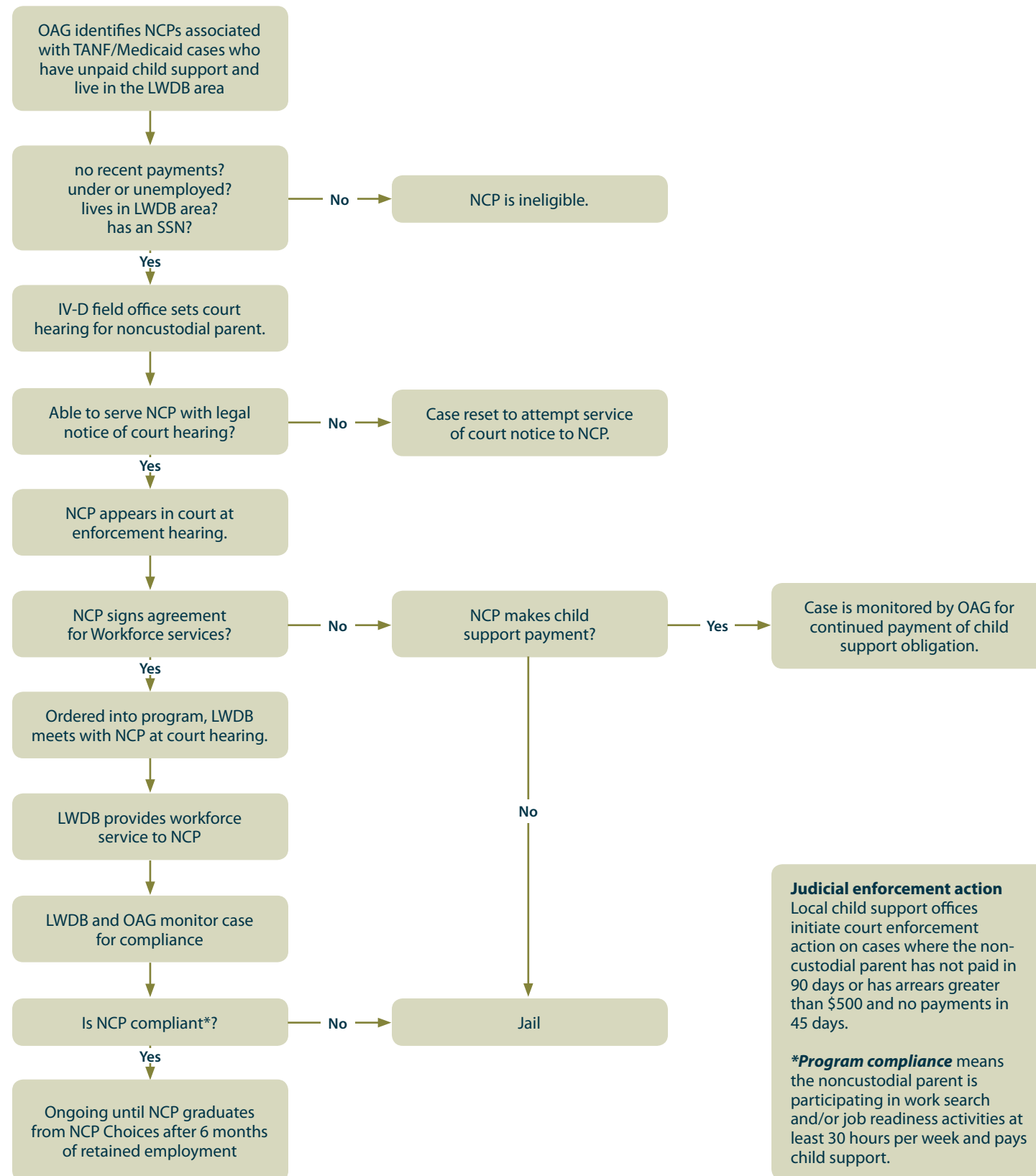


NCP Choices Flowchart



REV 5/09

NCP Choices: Finding Work & Staying Employed



NCP Choices - Finding Work and Staying Employed

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) lead a model, multi-site employment and child support enforcement program to help unemployed noncustodial parents (NCPs) find work and financially support their children. In 2005, NCP Choices began as a pilot project in five, largely urban sites. The success of the program led to expansion, and as of April 2009, the program is operating in 14 workforce board areas that serve parents from 39 child support offices. Evaluation of the program by the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas found it to be the most successful NCP employment effort in the nation to date.

The NCP Choices Program links strong court ordered compliance monitoring to assistance with job search efforts, backed by swift and certain sanctions for those who fail to comply with program requirements. By leveraging the resources of the OAG, TWC, and the IV-D associate judges, the program has proven to be cost effective for parents who have fallen behind on their child support. More than \$3 in child support is collected for every \$1 spent on the program.

The impact on families receiving child support, especially families living at the lower end of the economic spectrum, is great. Poor families rely heavily on child support to make ends meet.

- Among custodial mothers below the poverty level who received any payments, the average child support received represented almost half of their average income (U.S. Census).
- NCP Choices has a ripple effect. Families who receive child support are less likely to rely on TANF, working parents are less likely to file unemployment claims, and their children are more likely to be covered by medical insurance.
- NCP Choices diverts non-compliant obligors from jail and directs them into productive employment activities.
- Helping NCP Choices participants find work benefits multiple families. The average participant has 1.8 child support cases – the 3,400 current participants represent 6,120 families.

Beyond the impact on financial stability, consistency in child support yields a positive impact on father-child and mother-father relationships.

- **‘Jorge’ – NCP choices participant:** “My relationship with my kids has been much better. Now I know they have insurance and I know they are safe.”
- **‘Mary’ – custodial parent on NCP Choices impact:** “He’s excited about helping with [his daughter], and so it’s pretty good because we communicate about something else, something besides him not paying.”

FACTS AT A GLANCE

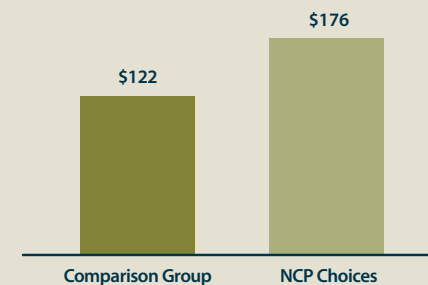
NCP Choices Participants

- 3400 NCPs
- Approximately 6,100 families impacted
- \$10 million collected*
- 81% find work within 8 weeks
- 61% stay employed for at least 6 months

Results relative to comparison group

- NCPs paid child support 50% more often
- 44% increase in total collections
- Custodial parents are 17% less likely to receive TANF benefits

IMPACT ON MONTHLY CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS



*Prior to program entry, NCPs paid \$0 in eight months.

NCP Choices FAQs

What makes NCP Choices successful?

Previous NCP employment programs did not have the strong tie between child support enforcement, workforce development, and the courts – relying either on “the carrot” (services) or “the stick” (penalties). NCP Choices combines the two, providing employment help backed with accountability.

Why can’t all noncustodial parents with child support debt participate in NCP Choices?

Currently, the program is funded with statewide TANF employment dollars and program participation is limited by the funding source.

How much child support does an NCP have to owe support before he or she is eligible for NCP Choices?

Most local child support offices have taken previous judicial enforcement actions with program participants before ordering them into NCP Choices. The court often orders program participation when the NCP has not paid any support in the past 90 days or has not paid in 45 days and has a minimum of \$500 in unpaid child support debt (arrears).

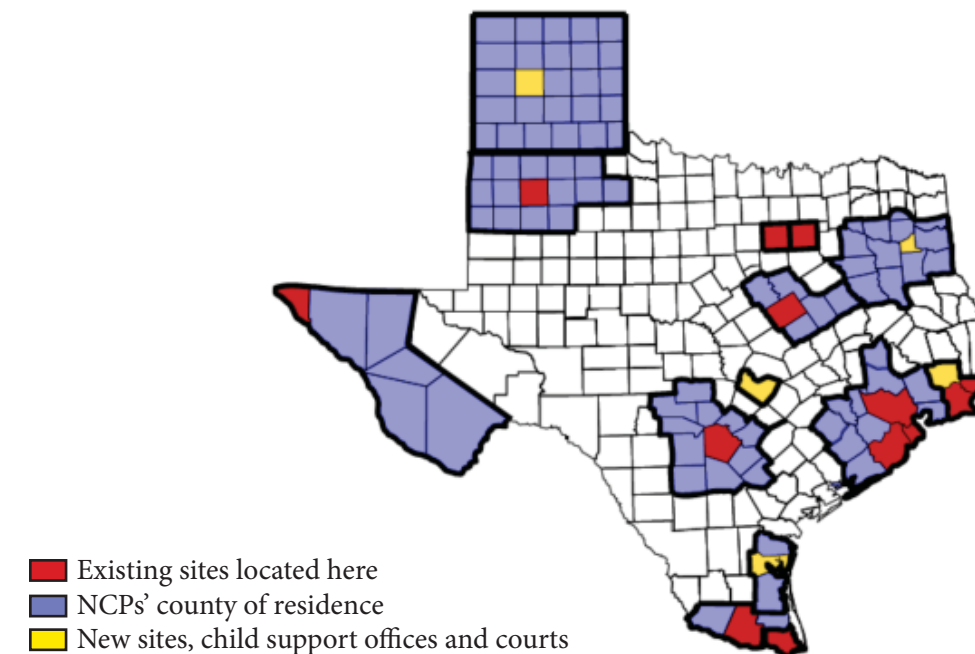
What if an NCP wants to voluntarily participate in NCP Choices?

In order to be eligible for NCP Choices, an NCP must be facing possible jail time for non-payment of child support. A parent in need of employment services can voluntarily access universal workforce services through his/her local workforce center.

Where is NCP Choices currently operating? How many counties are covered?

Fourteen workforce development boards provide services to NCPs from 39 child support offices and 25 child support courts, in more than 100 counties.

NCP Choices Sites, Sprint 2009 Expansion



*Statewide expansion by the end of 2010.