

# A Day In the Life of Child Support

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# Vision, Mission and Core Values

## *Vision*

**Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia.**

## *Mission*

**Strengthen Georgia by providing Individuals and Families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia's vulnerable children and adults.**

## *Core Values*

- **Provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families.**
- **Deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect. Manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency.**
- **Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.**
- **Develop our employees at all levels of the agency.**

# DCSS Case Initiation

- Case Management Agents
  - Where do the cases come from?
    - Direct applications from Customers
    - Online applications through our Customer Online Services Portal
    - Referrals from DFCS
    - Other State IV-D Child Support Agencies

# DCSS Case Initiation

- Case Registration
  - Agents in the offices complete a thorough screening process to ensure correct information is entered.
    - The parties are screened to ensure that they are assigned the correct client identification number.
    - Agents review the case to determine the proper paternity coding is used.
    - Interstate cases are reviewed so the proper FIPS (Federal Information Processing Standard) Codes are used.
    - The Non Custodial and Custodial Parent are notified upon case registration of services provided by DCSS.
    - Cases are reviewed to determine if establishment of a new court order is appropriate.

# Order Establishment

- Establishment Agents

- The establishment agents prepare the documents needed to enter a court order for child support.
  - Discovery information is gathered from both parties.
  - Income information is researched through Department of Labor wage records.
  - A worksheet using the information for both parents is completed to determine the proposed child support amount.
  - The legal documents are generated and forwarded to the staff attorneys for review and filing.
  - Eligible cases registered through the Same Day Service process are forwarded for filing the date of application.

# Order Establishment

- Establishment Agents
  - Genetic Testing is required for cases where paternity has not been established.
    - The Non Custodial Parent is notified that genetic testing is available at a reduced cost through DCSS.
    - Agents in the local office have received specialized training to become certified specimen collectors.
    - Customers can walk into a local office and have their samples collected by DCSS staff that day.

# Order Establishment

- Establishment Agents
  - Many Agents attend court hearings on a monthly basis.
    - Settlement negotiation training is provided to Agents to assist them presenting information to customers.
    - Agents may be required to testify in the Judicial or Administrative Hearings.
    - Once the order is obtained DCSS provides copies for the parties and notifies the NCP's employer when to initiate wage deductions.

# Compliance Monitoring

- Enforcement Agents

- The Enforcement Agents maintain caseloads of obligated cases.
  - Agents perform audits and research financial history to provide customers accurate payment records.
  - Cases are reviewed for enforcement actions. Qualifying cases will be reviewed for drivers license suspension, tag suspension, DNR license suspension, bank liens, workers compensation liens, passport denial, and credit bureau reporting.
  - The Agent will review cases to determine if filing a civil contempt action is appropriate. If appropriate, the case Agent prepares the audit and generates the legal documents.



# Compliance Monitoring

- Enforcement Agents
  - Many Agents attend court hearings on a monthly basis
    - Settlement negotiation training is provided to Agents to assist them presenting information to customers.
    - Agents will attempt to negotiate the terms of a consent order at court. DCSS staff also may be required to testify during a hearing.
    - Administrative Hearings are also held regarding actions initiated by DCSS.
    - Enforcement Agents will also provide customers information regarding how to modify the support order.

# Modification

- Modification Agents
  - Support Order modification is one of the services provided by DCSS.
    - Any customer can submit a request for their court order to be reviewed for modification.
    - The Agent will collect discovery information from both parties. A recommendation for a new amount of child support will be issued to both parties.
    - After an order is obtained the requesting party is asked to pay a modest fee if their income qualifies.

# Fatherhood and Problem Solving Court

- Fatherhood Agents
  - The Fatherhood Agents work with Non Custodial Parents to secure employment.
    - Orientations are held monthly to present program information to possible participants.
    - Once enrolled, participants are required to pay child support, attend workshops, seek employment and further their education with assistance.

# Fatherhood and Problem Solving Court

- Problem Solving Court Agents
  - Problem Solving Court aims to help resolve the underlying issues of chronic non-payers.
    - Agents work closely with the Judge and Judicial staff in their circuit.
    - Services offered through Problem Solving Court include substance abuse treatment, job assistance and placement, short term training, coaching and mentoring, and educational services as an alternative to incarceration.

# Intergovernmental and Locate Staff

- HUB Agents
  - Certain cases Statewide are housed in specialized units.
    - Locate agents work cases where we have lost contact with the NCP.
    - Agents use various tools to verify the address of the missing party and return the case to the local office.
    - Intergovernmental agents monitor cases for compliance and to have orders established outside the State of Georgia.
    - These agents also register online applications and IV-A referrals.

# Casework

- All Agents complete tasks in addition to our core casework.
  - DCSS Agents process mail in their daily routine. The documents received can be revised orders, transmittals from other State Agencies, customer inquires, hearing requests and notices, and employer correspondence.
  - The Customer Contact Center forwards in-dept inquiries to the local office to resolve.
  - Our operating system also generates prompts for the case management agent to review.
  - Customers can also walk into any local DCSS office and meet with an agent to get updated information on their case.