

Child Support Enforcement STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 – 2009

The purpose of the
Child Support Enforcement program
is to enhance the well-being of children and
reduce the demand on public treasuries by
securing financial and medical support from
legally responsible parents and encouraging
positive relationships between children and
their parents.

October 2008

Goal I
All children have established paternity

Objective 1: Maintain PEP at or above 95%.

Note: The Child Support Enforcement program is committed to providing quality and timely paternity establishment services. While no specific action steps were developed under Goal I during the 2008 strategic planning session, maintaining PEP at or above 95% remains a priority. In addition, several other objectives and action steps in other areas of the Strategic Plan may positively affect PEP. See, for example, Goal II/Objective 1/Action Step 1 and Goal V/Objectives 8 and 9/Action Step 1.

Goal II
All children in IV-D cases have support orders

Objective 1: Increase the percent of IV-D cases with court orders.

Target: Increase 2% per year

Action Step 1:

Develop a plan in conjunction with Tribes that addresses providing IV-D services on Tribal-related cases.

(**Jim Fleming**, Heidi Ahl, Curt Sinness, Teralyn Farden, Ranee Kringen – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Determine criteria for “LJ” determinations
- Assess impact on cases reported on the OCSE-157
- Consider personal jurisdiction, subject matter jurisdiction, enforcement jurisdiction, and the need to differentiate (possibly on FACSES)
- Consider for specialization
- Maintain licensure of IV-D attorneys in Tribal Courts
- Establish a point of contact with Tribes in each appropriate Regional IV-D office
- Full faith and credit for Tribal VPAs
- Efficient exchange of payments and payment data

Action Step 2:

Conduct research to assess characteristics of cases without orders.

(**Terry Peterson** – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Rewrite OCSE 157
- Number in Locate
- Number with an outgoing interstate process
- Number with noncooperation in place
- Number with unknown alleged fathers
- Number with an incarcerated individual
- Number pending less than 6 months
- Number pending 6 – 12 months
- Number pending more than 12 months

Action Step 3:

Implement data clean-up projects and strategies to address issues identified from research conducted in Action Step 2.

(**Terry Peterson**, Paulette Oberst, Leila Brucker – **January 2010**)

Tactics:

- Training
- Develop training tool kit
- Identify and implement FACSES supports
- Design and generate reports

Goal III
All children in IV-D cases have medical support

Objective 1: Increase the percent of IV-D cases with orders for medical support.

(Note: pending federal performance measure)

Target: Increase 2% per year
(Baseline – FFY 2007 = 88%)

Objective 2: Increase the percent of IV-D cases in which medical support is provided.

(Note: pending federal performance measure)

Target: Increase 2% per year
(Baseline - FFY 2007 = 47.3% or 53.8% depending on calculation used.)

Action Step 1:

Implement medical support changes in compliance with final federal medical support rules, state law, and state administrative rules.

(Mike Schwindt – December 2009)

Tactics:

- Analyze final federal medical support rules
- Develop medical support administrative rules
- Revise guidelines administrative rules
- Policy/procedure development
- Training
- Promote use of child only policies
- FACSES support
 - Spouse designation
 - Type of coverage (major medical, dental, vision)
 - Recording policy holder (need clean up)
 - Health insurance tied to employer-based alert (needed upon employer change)
 - OCSE 157 issues
- Consider HMS automation

Goal IV

All children in IV-D cases receive financial support from parents as ordered

Objective 1: Increase the percent of current support collections.

Target: 2% increase

Action Step 1:

Conduct research to assess characteristics of cases without full current support collections.

(Terry Peterson – December 2009)

Tactics:

- Rewrite OCSE 157
- Evaluate existing strategies including interest suppression, pro se process, and Review and Adjustment exceptions to the 3-year rule
- Number in Locate
- Number with an outgoing interstate process
- Number with noncooperation in place
- Employment status
- Number with an incarcerated individual
- Look at cases with less than full current support collection

Action Step 2:

Implement data clean-up projects and strategies to address issues identified from research conducted in Action Step 1.

(Terry Peterson, Paulette Oberst, Leila Brucker – March 2010)

Tactics:

- Training
- Develop training tool kit
- Identify and implement FACES supports
- Design and generate reports

(Goal IV, continued)

Objective 2: Increase the percent of cases with an eligible arrears collection.
Target: 2% increase

Objective 3: Implement remedies that avoid the accumulation of arrears, collect existing arrears, eliminate uncollectible debts, and write-off debts to ensure the IV-D arrears principal balance owing on June 30, 2007, is not exceeded in subsequent years. (Consider tracking child support and medical support separately.)

Action Step 1:

Enhance access to information that will assist in the use of arrears collection tools.
(Jim Fleming, Heidi Ahl – January 2010)

Tactics:

- Monitor PAID Updates
- Look at what the Regional IV-D offices are doing
- Identify how and when asset information is shared with Regional IV-D offices
- Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM) issues
- Coordinate activities with HIEU as appropriate
- Access to Cooperative information and dividend interception procedures
- Intercept rebates for using debit card
- Pending legislation to allow access or strengthen current access (Child Support Lien Network (CSLN) mandate, insurance companies, gaming, utilities, and other entities)

Action Step 2:

Increase debt reduction efforts.
(Jim Fleming – July 2009)

Tactics:

- Expand write off
- Implement PAID strategies
- Increase case closure
- Explore utilizing DRA distribution changes for older assignments

(Goal IV, continued)

Action Step 3:

Study and make recommendations regarding the centralization of employer-related activities.

(Barb Reiersen, Lee Bjerklie, Diane Hausmann, Heidi Ahl – August 2009)

Tactics:

- Employer tables
- IWO issuance, amendment, termination
- NMSN issuance, termination (role of contract, e.g., HMS?)
- Lump sum reporting
- Employer contacts
- Employer compliance issues (until court intervention is needed)
 - IW
 - NMSN
 - Lump sum reporting
 - New hire
- Location
 - Within Central IV-D office as an expansion of current Operations Unit responsibilities
 - Housed within a Regional IV-D office
- Consider reconvening employer task force
- Look at how this would affect Regional IV-D office case management activities and processes

Action Step 4:

Develop a master list of all entities issuing licenses and permits in North Dakota.

(Paulette Oberst – May 2009)

Tactics:

- List to include entity name and contact; type of license/permit; details/specs on license/permit; how they store data

Action Step 5:

Increase referrals to States Attorneys for state criminal prosecution.

(Jim Fleming, Heidi Ahl – October 2009)

Tactics:

- Consider using contempt list to determine appropriate referrals (e.g., guilty of contempt twice)
- Focused outreach with select counties
- Meet with State's Attorney's office regarding forms and process
- Coordinate with State's Attorneys Association as appropriate
- Possibly bring to County Commission attention
- Consider possible Special Prosecutor
- Consider coordination with parole/probation requirement to support dependents

Goal V

The IV-D program will be efficient, consistent, and responsive in its operations

Objective 1: Increase the program's cost effectiveness.

Target: Increase \$0.25 per year

Action Step 1:

Increase use of automated processes (a – c) that lead to reduced operating costs.

- a. Implement electronic payment options (e.g., credit and debit cards) and increase use of existing electronic payment options (e.g., income withholding and autopay).

(Lee Bjerklie, Paulette Oberst – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Consider expansion of autopay functionality to include individuals who volunteer or are court ordered for automatic withdrawal (e.g., self-employed, VA benefits)
- On-line bill pay

- b. Statewide document imaging/scanning plan.

(Lee Bjerklie, Brad Davis, Heidi Ahl, Paulette Oberst – **January 2009**)

Tactics:

- Incorporate any previously scanned information
- Include criteria to ensure consistency
- Consider tying in Clerks of Court
- Ensure data reliability issues, if any, are addressed
- In the interim, scan court orders

- c. Automate the generation of emails to custodial parents and noncustodial parents, at identified times.

(Lee Bjerklie, Brad Davis – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Consider asking, on Web site, if customer wishes to receive email updates. If so, require the customer provide email address, phone number, and other information.
- Consider an automatic email to NCP when payment fails to post (e.g., when no payment through auto withdrawal is received)
- Consider an automatic email to CP when payment is received (need to define what will trigger this – e.g., receipt, distribution, disbursement, etc.)
- Consider other automatic emails to NCPs and CPs
- Consider feasibility, including cost
- If centralized call center implemented, consider interaction

(Goal V, continued)

Action Step 2:

Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the centralized outgoing interstate project (NDOIC).

(Diane Hausmann – December 2009)

Tactics:

- Identify criteria
- Consider customer feedback
- Identify method for extraction and analysis
- Analyze
- Report

Action Step 3:

Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the High Intensity Enforcement Unit (HIEU).

(Heidi Ahl – December 2009)

Tactics:

- Identify criteria
- Consider customer feedback
- Identify method for extraction and analysis
- Analyze
- Report

Objective 2: Improve the program's responsiveness to customers.

Action Step 1:

Develop customer education materials (a-d), including materials that support early intervention strategies.

a. Develop an informational booklet for customers.

(Mike Schwindt – September 2009)

Tactics:

- Concept similar to that developed for EA programs
- Possibly tap into "expert" assistance. This may include adult learning experts, DHS public information officer, vacant Trainer position, etc.
- Consider coordination with NDSU parenting program

b. Develop an informational fact sheet for customers as an introduction to the IV-D program.

(Barb Siegel – May 2009)

Tactics:

- Possibly tap into "expert" assistance. This may include adult learning experts, DHS public information officer, vacant Trainer position, etc.

(Goal V, continued)

- c. Develop an informational fact sheet or letter for customers when an order is entered.

(Paulette Oberst – May 2009)

Tactics:

- Possibly tap into “expert” assistance. This may include adult learning experts, DHS public information officer, vacant Trainer position, etc.

- d. Develop a “best practice” protocol that could be used by Regional IV-D offices for in-person meetings with customers as an introduction to the IV-D program.

(Teralyn Farden – May 2009)

Tactics:

- Consider Minot Regional IV-D office’s current practice
- Perhaps replace in-person meetings with telephone consultations, when necessary
- May use booklet (see “a” above) as a guide

Action Step 2:

Determine the feasibility of a centralized customer service call center.

(Mike Schwindt – June 2010)

Tactics:

- Contract vs. in-house
- Location
 - Within Central IV-D office
 - Housed within a Regional IV-D office
 - Multiple sites – possibly 2 to cover time zones
- Budget issues
- Need to define customer service role of call center vs. roles of Regional IV-D office and Central IV-D office
- Look at call centers in other states

Action Step 3

Promote customers’ participation in the IV-D program.

(Lee Bjerklie, Terry Peterson, Barb Siegel – September 2009)

(Goal V, continued)

Objective 3: Implement a public awareness plan.

Action Step 1:

With the assistance of experts and with consideration given to the analysis of on-line customer service survey responses, identify targeted groups and define general messages.

(Mike Schwindt, Brad Davis – September 2009)

Tactics:

- Consider involving University System to assist in identifying the audience and the message
- Consider coordinating public awareness activities with NDSU parenting program as appropriate

Action Step 2:

In consultation with experts, develop and implement a public awareness plan.

(Mike Schwindt, Brad Davis – one year after completion of Action Step 1)

Objective 4: Enhance cooperation with Tribes.

Action Step 1:

Develop, in cooperation with all interested Tribes, plans that address methods of improving service delivery for Tribal-related cases.

(Mike Schwindt, Ellen Wilson (invited), Curt Sinness, Teralyn Farden, Heidi Ahl, Ranee Kringen, Brad Davis – September 2009)

Tactics:

- Consider establishing services through agreement
- Negotiate with Tribal officials in conjunction with DHS Tribal Liaison, Indian Affairs Commission, Governor's office, and Native American Training Institute
- Include Tribes in Family Support Council conference
- Offer to bring in other Tribes to serve as a resource for North Dakota Tribes
- Invite Tribes, federal representatives, and state representatives to a State/Tribal meeting in which the TAT Tribal IV-D Director can describe experiences

Action Step 2:

Hold quarterly consultation meetings involving the Three Affiliated Tribes IV-D office, Central IV-D office, and Regional IV-D offices.

(Mike Schwindt – September 2009)

(Goal V, continued)

Objective 5: Enhance cooperation between other programs and IV-D.

Action Step 1:

Enhance services to children through collaboration with child welfare programs.
(**Barb Siegel**, Paulette Oberst, Diane Hausmann – **December 2009**)

Tactics:

- Section 1115 grant
- Automated interface between IV-D and foster care (referrals, closings, updates)
- Early Notification
- IV-B/IV-E access to FPLS information
- Pilot changes to foster care referrals to eliminate short-term referrals, and to expand good cause in reunification and adoption situations. Assess pilot results for possible statewide implementation.

Action Step 2:

Ensure IV-D services are provided in appropriate Medicaid-only cases.

- a. In cooperation with Medicaid, identify Medicaid cases which are inappropriate for referral to IV-D.

(**Terry Peterson**, Paulette Oberst – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Consider federal issuance on this subject
- Interface (with Vision) changes
- Assess impact on OCSE 157

- b. Identify Medicaid-only IV-D cases which are appropriate for closure to IV-D.

(**Terry Peterson**, Paulette Oberst – **July 2009**)

Tactics:

- Consider federal issuance and federal final rules on this subject
- Interface (with Vision) changes
- Would need additional information on Medicaid referral to determine in which cases cooperation is required or not
- Clear and accurate information to applicants about cooperation requirements
- Assess impact on OCSE 157

Action Step 3:

Promote appropriate exchange of medical coverage information between Medicaid and IV-D.

(**Terry Peterson**, Leila Brucker – **September 2009**)

Action Step 4:

Identify optional services we can provide to Medicaid.

(**Mike Schwindt** – **July 2009**)

(Goal V, continued)

Objective 6: Enhance IV-D's position with the legal community.

Action Step 1:

Implement and refine a plan to strengthen presentation of the program's legal position with the private bar and judiciary.

(**Jim Fleming**, Diane Hausmann, John Waller – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Maintain an indexed brief bank
- Compile, and respond to, "problem" cases
- Watch for opportunities to inform judiciary, private bar, and State's Attorneys on IV-D issues
- Voluntary agreements
- Gateway project for new cases
- Draft model child support orders

Action Step 2:

Explore centralizing or specializing appeals to the Supreme Court.

(**Jim Fleming** – **March 2009**)

Tactics:

- Centralize or specialize?
- What would the role of the "original" IV-D attorney be?
- Possibly identify X number of IV-D attorneys who would take all cases to the Supreme Court

Action Step 3:

Promote use of a functional guidelines calculator for use by judges, referees, private bar, law clerks, and other interested parties.

(**Paulette Oberst** – **July 2009**)

Tactics:

- Look at existing calculators first
- If use FACES module, instructional manual would be needed
- Alternative is Supreme Court calculator – contact with Supreme Court Administrator about the possibility of document generation

(Goal V, continued)

Objective 7: Increase the quality and availability of staff support and resources.

Action Step 1:

Implement a centralized training function within the Central IV-D office.

(Mike Schwindt, (Vacant Trainer FTE) – July 2009)

Tactics:

- “Vacant” trainer FTE
- Training plan
- CBT refresher training
- Review/train by module
- Define and track training needs and determine training method
- Financial training

Action Step 2:

Develop and review a strategic plan.

(Barb Siegel – develop, at least once per year/review, at least twice per year)

Action Step 3:

Explore options for a wellness program.

(Brad Davis – September 2009)

Tactics:

- Visit with other department with such programs (e.g., DOT, DOCR)
- Get assistance from wellness coordinators

Action Step 4:

Explore possibility of securing private attorney time for specialized activities (e.g., probate, bankruptcy).

(Paulette Oberst – September 2009)

Tactics:

- Get retainer agreement

(Goal V, continued)

Objective 8: Decrease the percent of cases in the Locate function.

Target: 10% or below

(Baseline: 11.8% as of September 2008)

Objective 9: Decrease the average time a case is in the Locate function.

Target: 75% or more close in 6 months or less

(Baseline: 69.7% for 2000 – 2006, closed processes)

Action Step 1:

Add internal and external locate sources.

(**Barb Reiersen**, Leila Brucker, Brad Davis, Curt Sinness – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- Test effectiveness of new sources (variety of types of cases)
- Compare source results
- Cell phones
- Expansion of use of Accurint (HIEU)
- Automated sources
- Coordinate activities with HIEU
- With new matches consider locate data elements
- National Change of Address
- Self-employed
- 1099

Objective 10: Promote flexibility for specialized and customized case management through automation enhancements.

Action Step 1:

Further define “Monitor” cases by separating “paying” cases and “nonpaying” cases.

(**Mike Schwindt** – **September 2009**)

Tactics:

- System identification
- Need to define criteria for “paying” cases vs. “nonpaying” cases
- Could have several possible uses including: ability to “specialize” lower intervention cases to workers who could have a larger caseload, leaving a smaller caseload for those cases needing more intervention; assist in being able to better “tell our story;” assignment to new workers or workers of lower classification.

Action Step 2:

Redirect FACSES alerts (each alert or groups of alerts) to identified staff. As an alternative, or in the interim, provide the ability to search by range for entire office.

(**Leila Brucker** – **March 2009**)

Tactics:

- This would allow flexibility for Regional IV-D offices to be able to specialize actions.