



**State of Alaska
Department of Revenue
Child Support Services Division**

**Self-Assessment Review
FFY 2010**

March 23, 2011

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Executive Summary

This Self Assessment Review measures the division's compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for federal fiscal year 2010.

CSSD exceeded federal compliance requirements for all measured criteria except Expedited Processes 6-month tier. Even so, the Expedited Processes 6-month tier is within the 6% margin of error.

A stable level of performance was found in Disbursement, Medical and Review & Adjustment. The decline in Expedited Processes was statistically significant and will need a plan to correct its downward trend in performance.

Based on the previous years' results we do not think the small decline in Case Closure, Enforcement and Interstate is a problem.

Establishment and Expedited Process 12-month tier produced statistically significant increases of over seven points each reversing the downward trend of FY 2006-09.

Using statistics from the OCSE-157 Report, CSSD's active IV-D caseload grew in size from 43,915 to 46,217 (5.2% larger than in FFY 2009). The number of open cases with orders dropped to 89% (which reflects an increase in caseload size we have not experienced since FY 2004). The agency distributed \$97.3 million in child support in FFY 2010. This is about \$2.2 million less than last year, but that decline was expected. In FFY09 we collected about \$15.8 million from the state's annual Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD). This year we only collected \$10.1 million. If we removed the PFD collection factor, our annual collections from other sources actually increased.

The audit review period was October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. It included a detailed review of 503 cases (including the hard files). The sample was determined seeking a 90% confidence level and a +/- 2% maximum error of estimate. The review was conducted in accordance with 45 CFR 308.

The following table depicts the percent of cases in compliance by category:

Criterion	Cases That Required Action	Cases Compliant With Time Frames	Efficiency Rate: 2010	Federal Minimum Standard	Last Year: 2009
Case Closure	19	18	95% (+/- 8%)	90%	100%
Paternity/Establishment	91	79	87% (+/- 3%)	75%	79%
Expedited Processes within 6 months	35	26	74% (+/- 6%)	75%	79%
Expedited Processes within 12 months	33	32	97% (+/- 6%)	90%	89%
Enforcement	394	352	89% (+/- .8%)	75%	93%
Disbursement	307	302	98% (+/- 1%)	75%	96%
Medical Support Enforcement	149	130	87% (+/- 2%)	75%	89%
Review and Adjustment	259	236	91% (+/- 2%)	75%	89%
Interstate Services, Overall	113	102	90% (+/- 3%)	75%	93%
Initiating Interstate	78	70	90% (+/- 4%)	75%	93%
Responding Interstate	35	32	91% (+/- 6%)	75%	94%
TOTAL Case Actions Required	1400				

Details of the case results are in the subsequent report text. In addition, we are submitting the optional report categories titled, Program Direction and Program Service Enhancements. Note that overall audit results have a margin of error of +/- 2%, with a 90% confidence level.

Introduction

The Alaska Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) was created under the Department of Health and Social Services (H&SS) on July 1, 1976. In its first year of operation, seven employees managed a caseload of 8,800 child support cases. All support orders were established through judicial process. A year later, the agency was moved from H&SS to the Department of Revenue where it remains today. In 1978, the CSEA was empowered with administrative enforcement capabilities. In April 1981 CSEA was renamed the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED). In 2004 the name changed again to Child Support Services Division (CSSD). In 2010 CSSD has 232 full time employees who manage 46,217 active IV-D child support cases, of which 41,336 cases have support orders.

In FFY 2010 CSSD distributed \$97.3 million (as reported on OCSE Form 157), of which about \$10.1 million was from the state's annual Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD). Stock market earnings contribute the bulk of money to the Permanent Fund. When averaged over the past five years, with reduced earnings for the past two years, it results in a reduced payout to citizens. That mathematical reality combined with a windfall distribution during FFY 08-09 that was not repeated in 2010, means that our current collections from PFD return to normal historical levels (about \$10 million per year instead of \$15 million).

The PFD is a significant part of the Alaskan economy, paying about \$811 million dollars to residents in FFY 2010 (about \$1305 per applicant). The PFD itself helps all families, and for those people owing child support, it helps them pay their child support with money that does not come directly from their paychecks. The money the PFD contributes to the economy significantly affects CSSD's annual collections as it filters through local businesses and turns up as wages and assets for nearly every resident. By matching CSSD information with the data kept by the Permanent Fund Dividend Division we are also able to locate many people who owe or are owed child support.

Sampling Methodology

In accordance with 45 CFR 308, we extracted a systematic random sample of the statewide caseload. This sample gives a 90% confidence level with a +/- 2% margin of error. We perform one self assessment review per year and it is oriented on the federal fiscal year. CSSD employs two internal auditors who perform the review. Automated review tools are not used. All records are maintained by CSSD. The auditors report to the IV-D director.

We did not omit any segment of the IV-D universe from the sampling process. The population, numbering 48,854, consisted of every IV-D case that was open as of September 30, 2010, and included every IV-D case closed during the audit period, October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. For this review, we excluded all Non-IV-D cases in the population, and those interstate-limited enforcement cases associated with simply intercepting the annual PFD (instead of receiving full services).

A minimum sample of 319 cases was required. To improve our statistical accuracy we took a sample of 503 cases. The skip interval was 97. We used Microsoft Excel to generate a random starting number between 1 and 97. A system programmer extracted the audit sample from the online caseload. Of the 503 cases reviewed, 28 had no measurable actions or were excluded for other reasons. The exclusion rate was 6%.

Scope of the Review

We performed the audit in compliance with 45 CFR 308. As in the past, we held Interstate Initiating to a more restrictive standard. We did so because the CFR only requires

that a case be initiated within 20 days of receiving the information needed to complete the interstate forms. It does not set any standards for soliciting that information from the custodian of the children or answering their questions. We determined that we should measure this preliminary process as a way of determining the quality of the service we provide to the public. The following additional criteria provide a more accurate assessment of the agency's provision of Interstate services:

- A General Testimony packet, or a Registration of Foreign Order packet, should be sent to the custodial parent within a reasonable amount of time (30 days), if it is required to initiate a case.
- Follow-up actions should occur until we receive the information needed to process the case. (Such actions will include contacting the custodial parent about returning the initial paper work, or supplying any other information if the case was already initiated to another state). The time allowed for these follow up actions varies from 30 to 90 days based on whether the case was already initiated and what type of follow up action can reasonably be expected to produce a positive result.
- Timely responses should be made to other states and case parties to facilitate customer service, not just to meet CFR requirements. The CFR sets a response timeframe for Status Requests and for information requests from other states. We expanded this requirement to include contacts with case parties and attorneys, allowing up to 30 days to reply or to forward a query to the other state.

The internal auditors reviewed case record information from both online case records and physical case files. We recorded our findings in a Microsoft Access database.

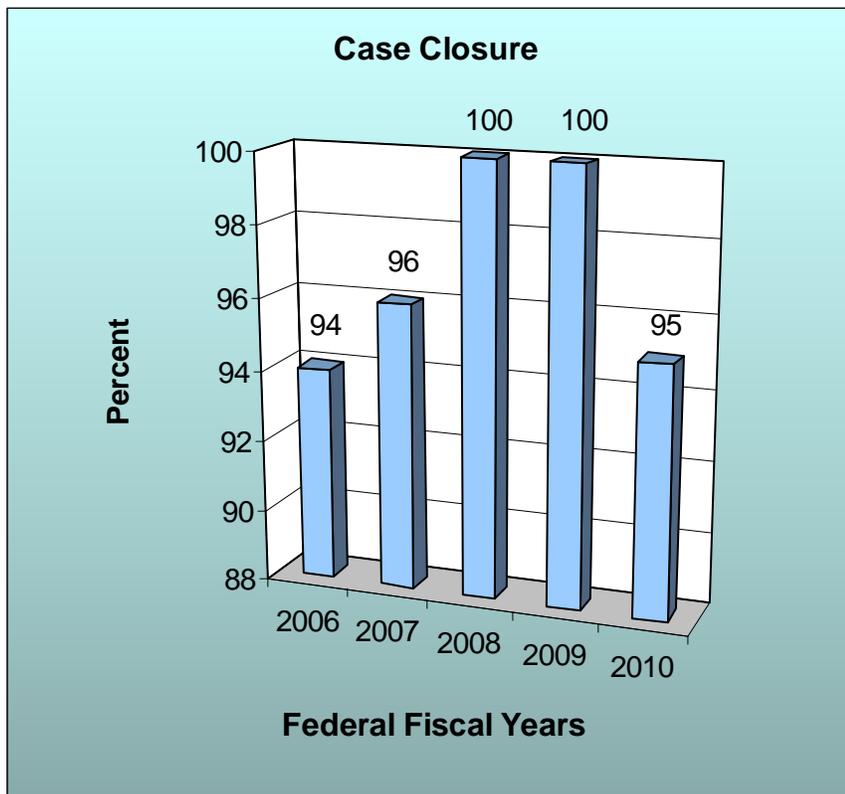
Category 1: Program Compliance

Review Criteria in Compliance

We calculated all percentages by dividing the number of cases that had no measurable errors into the total-cases-measured for the criterion. Fractional numbers were rounded up when the fraction equaled .5 or greater, and were rounded down if it was .4 or less. The charts show five-year histories to better illustrate overall performance.

Case Closure: 95% (Minimum Acceptable: 90%)

There was one error in the 19 cases measured. This criterion is compliant with an error of estimate +/- 8%. The five-year average efficiency rate remained at 97%. Management will continue training caseworkers to ensure proper closure procedures are being used.



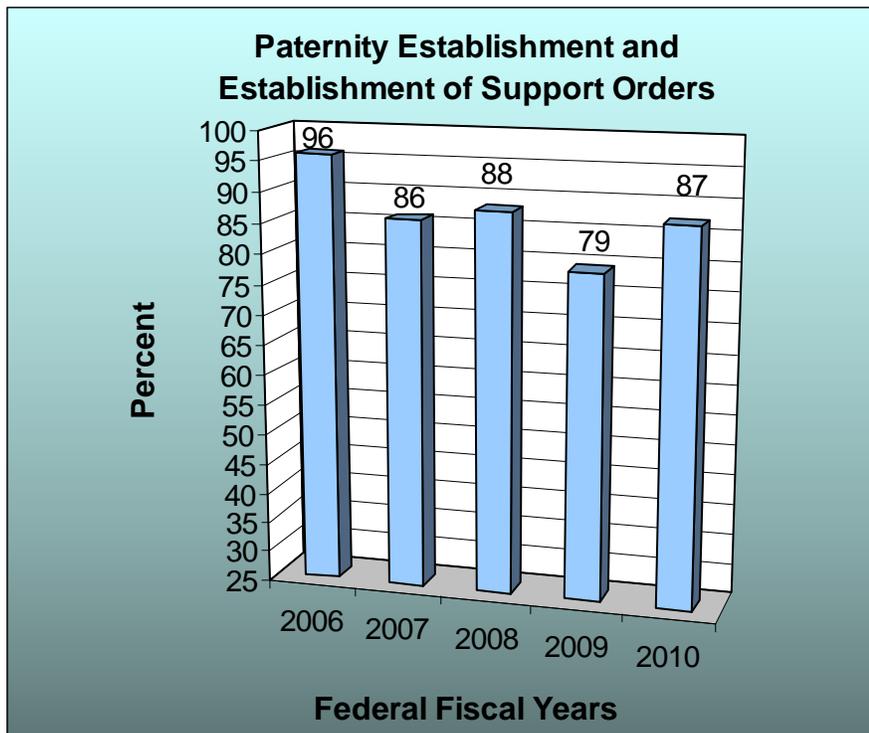
Paternity and Support Order Establishment: 87% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were twelve errors in the 91 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant with federal guidelines. The five-year average efficiency rate was 87%.

The total number of new orders established for the year was 2,444 (an increase of 211% from FY 09's 1160).

For 2009 92% of our open cases had orders, but for 2010 the ratio fell to 89%. The caseload grew by about 2300 cases (5%) from 2009 to 2010. The caseload grew faster than our ability to produce orders. We revised procedures and practices and we expect to increase order production substantially for 2011.

Alaska's goal was to achieve an annual efficiency rate of 85% for the Establishment criterion and we exceeded our goal by almost 2%. We will continue to work to attain the 94% goal for "Cases with Orders" (Line 2 on the OCSE 157).



Expedited Processes: Within 6 months: 74%; within 12 months: 97%.
(Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

The 6-month criterion was marginally non-compliant with CFR and the 12-month returned to a fully-compliant annual efficiency rate.

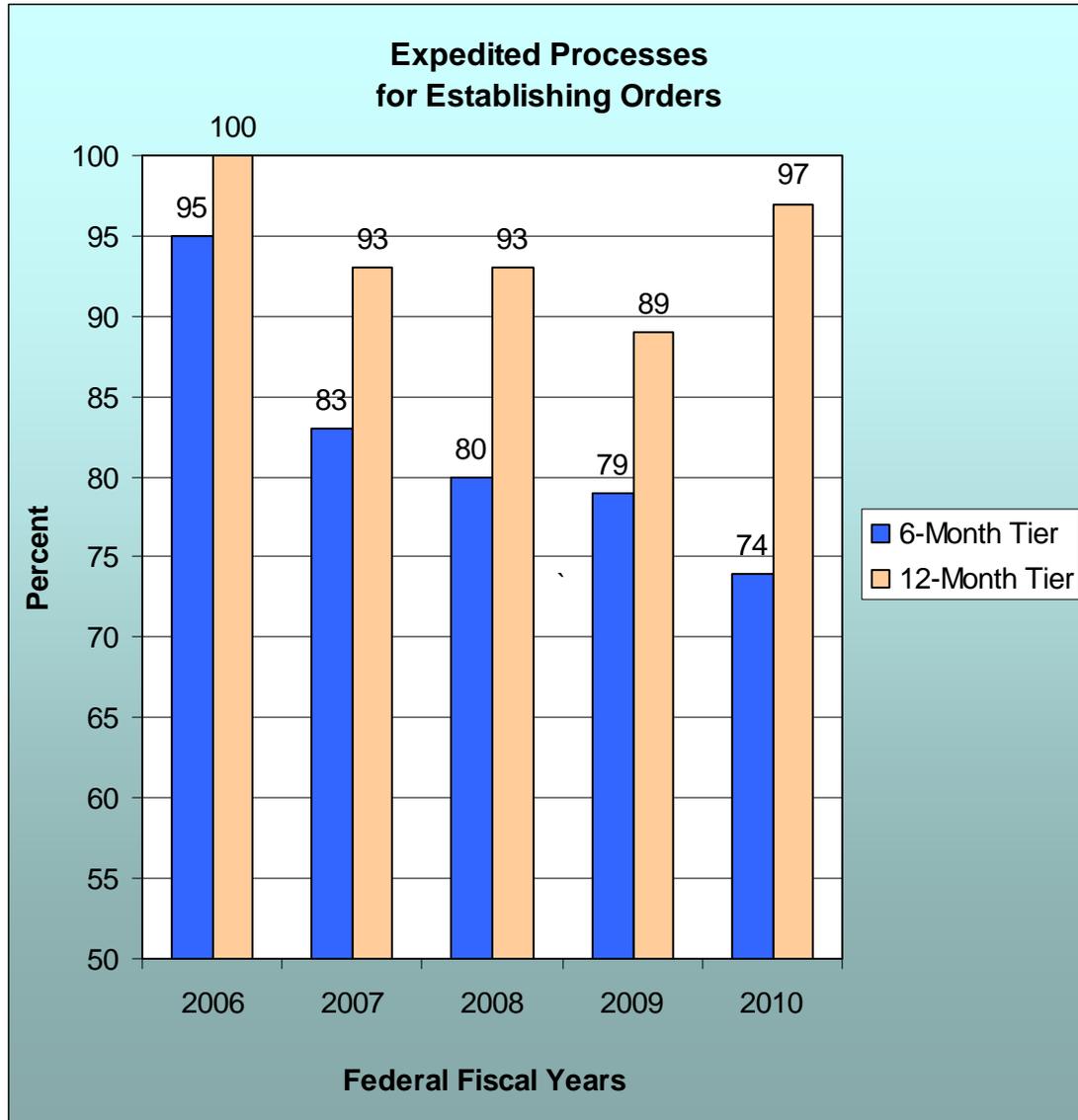
Altogether, we measured 35 cases for expedited processes. We measured 35 cases for the 6-month timeframe and 33 cases for the 12-month timeframe. At the 6-month tier, there were 9 errors. We did not meet our goal of 81% efficiency. At the 12-month tier, we found 1 error. We exceeded our goal of 94% efficiency by three points.

The five-year average for the 6-month tier was 82%. Management will continue to emphasize meeting the timelines set in 45 CFR 303.5 and 303.101 but focus more on the 6-month timeframe. The current efficiency rate was within the margin of error (+/- 6%). In early 2010, management examined the decline in Expedited Process 12-month timeframe, and the auditors conducted a focused audit. It appeared that the decline showed in the self assessment review was a sampling problem or statistical anomaly. By the end of 2010, as shown in the current review, the FY 2010 efficiency rate increased 8 points over the previous year. We now need to re-examine our processes and address the apparent decline in performance at the 6-month tier. For FFY 2011 we will set the goal of at least a 4% improvement for an annual efficiency rate of 78%, with 1% annual increases thereafter.

The five-year average for the 12-month tier was 94%. The current efficiency rate increased from 89% to 97%. The error in this criterion consisted of us serving the non-custodial parent with the paternity establishment paperwork on August 29, 2008. All indications are that this person is still residing at the same address but avoiding process service of the final child support order.

Note: The Expedited Processes criterion measures the time allowed under the CFR to establish child support orders. The timeframe measured begins with the initial service of documents on the noncustodial parent and ends with the establishment of a child support order. At least 75% of the cases must have an order established within 6 months of serving the noncustodial parent with a notice of a paternity complaint or of a duty to support a child. A minimum of 90% of the cases must have an order established within 12 months.

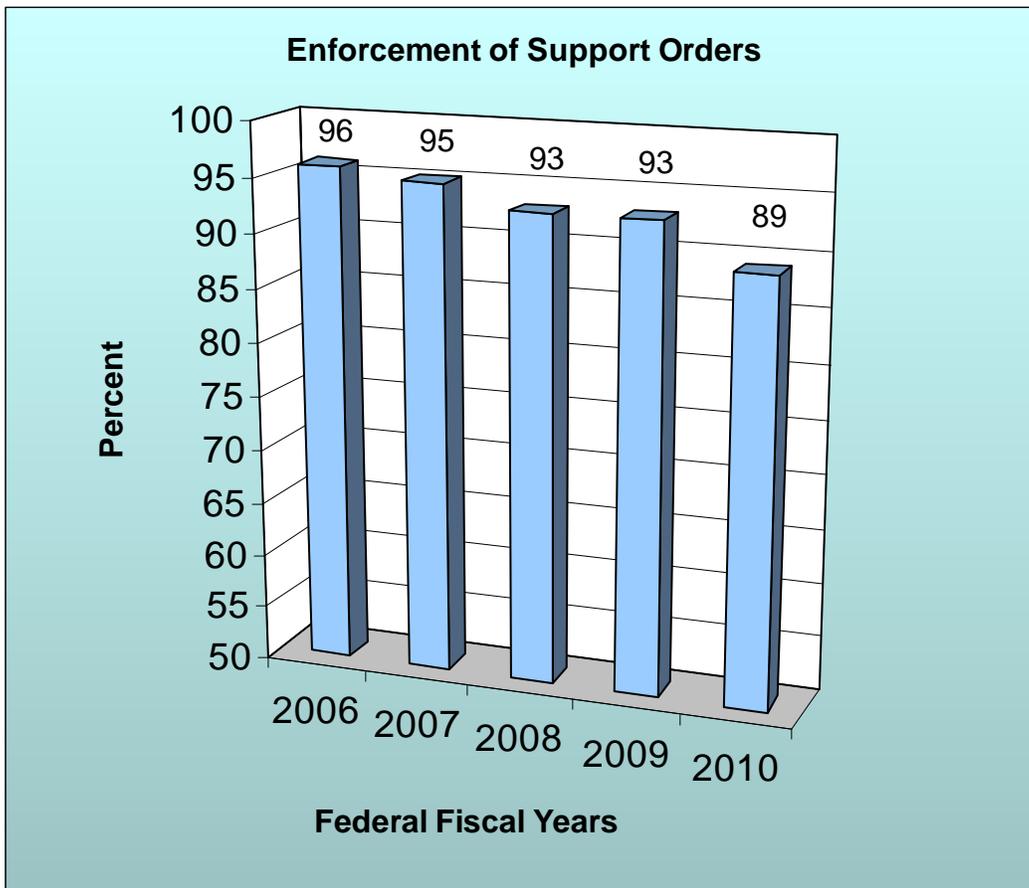
[Chart follows]



Enforcement: 89% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 42 errors in the 394 cases measured.

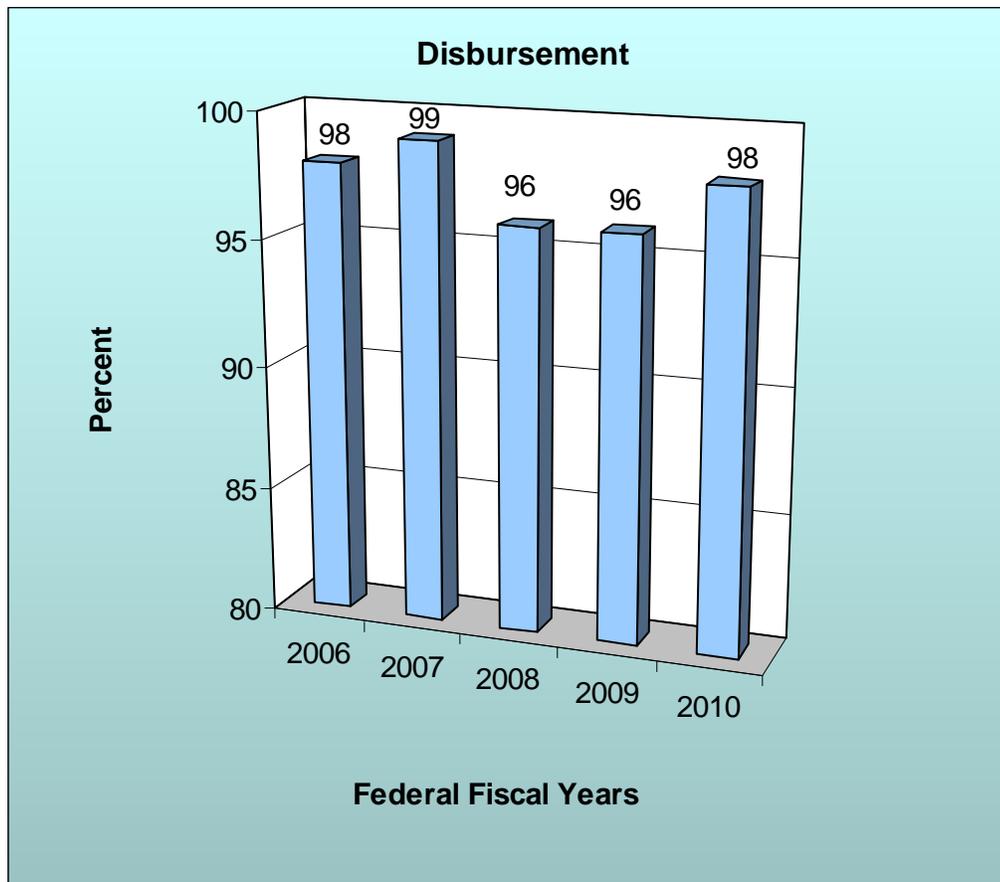
This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 93%. Not performing location activities within 75 days when necessary and not submitting cases for Federal income tax refund offset during the review period are the two main areas of noncompliance. The two remaining errors were for not issuing a withholding order within two days. Management will conduct refresher training for the enforcement staff. If we continue to show a downward trend in FY 2011, we may need to review this criterion closer at that time.



Disbursement: 98% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 5 errors in the 307 cases measured.

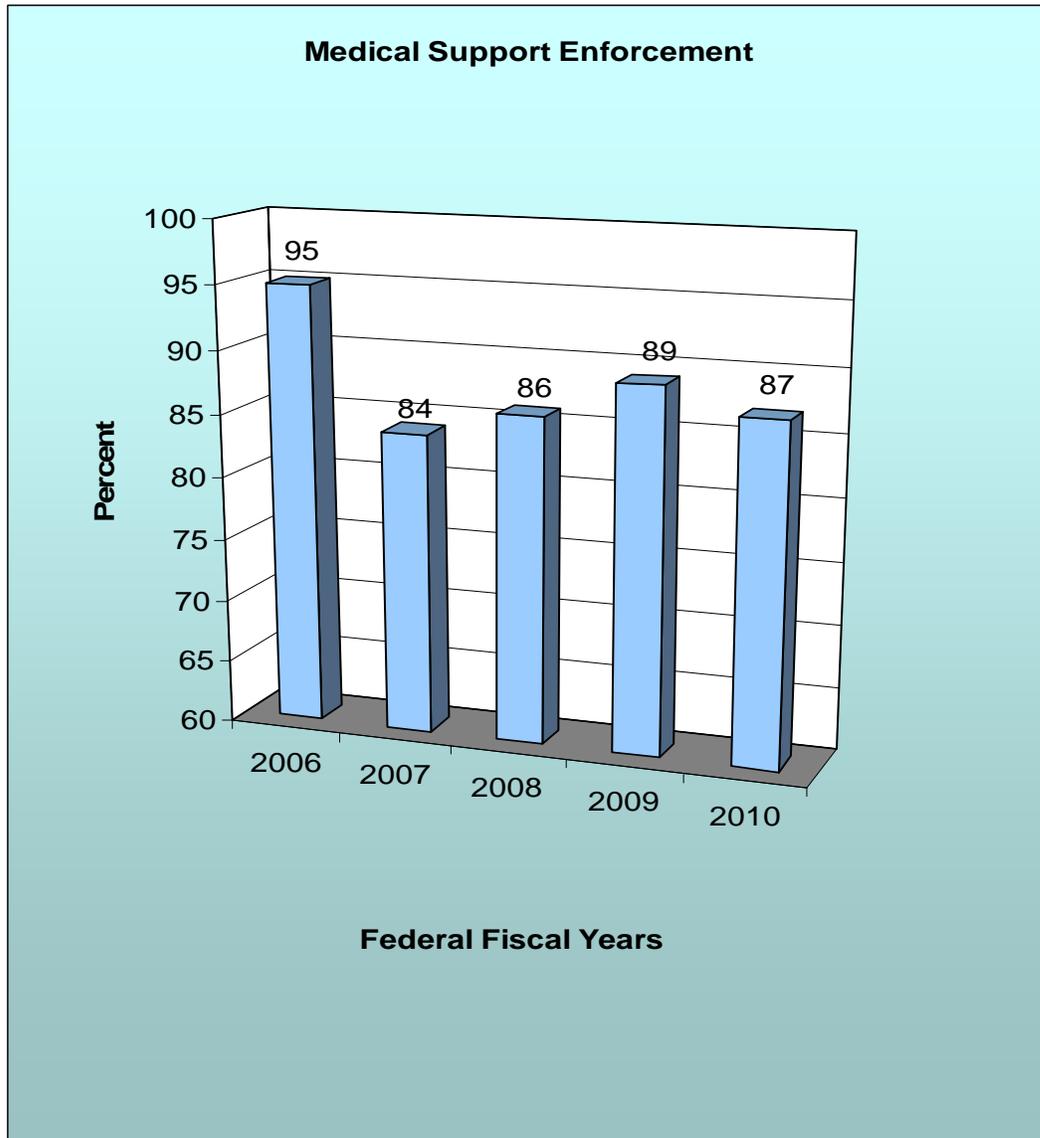
This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 97%.
The agency will work to maintain this level of efficiency.



Medical Support Enforcement: 87% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 19 errors in the 149 cases measured.

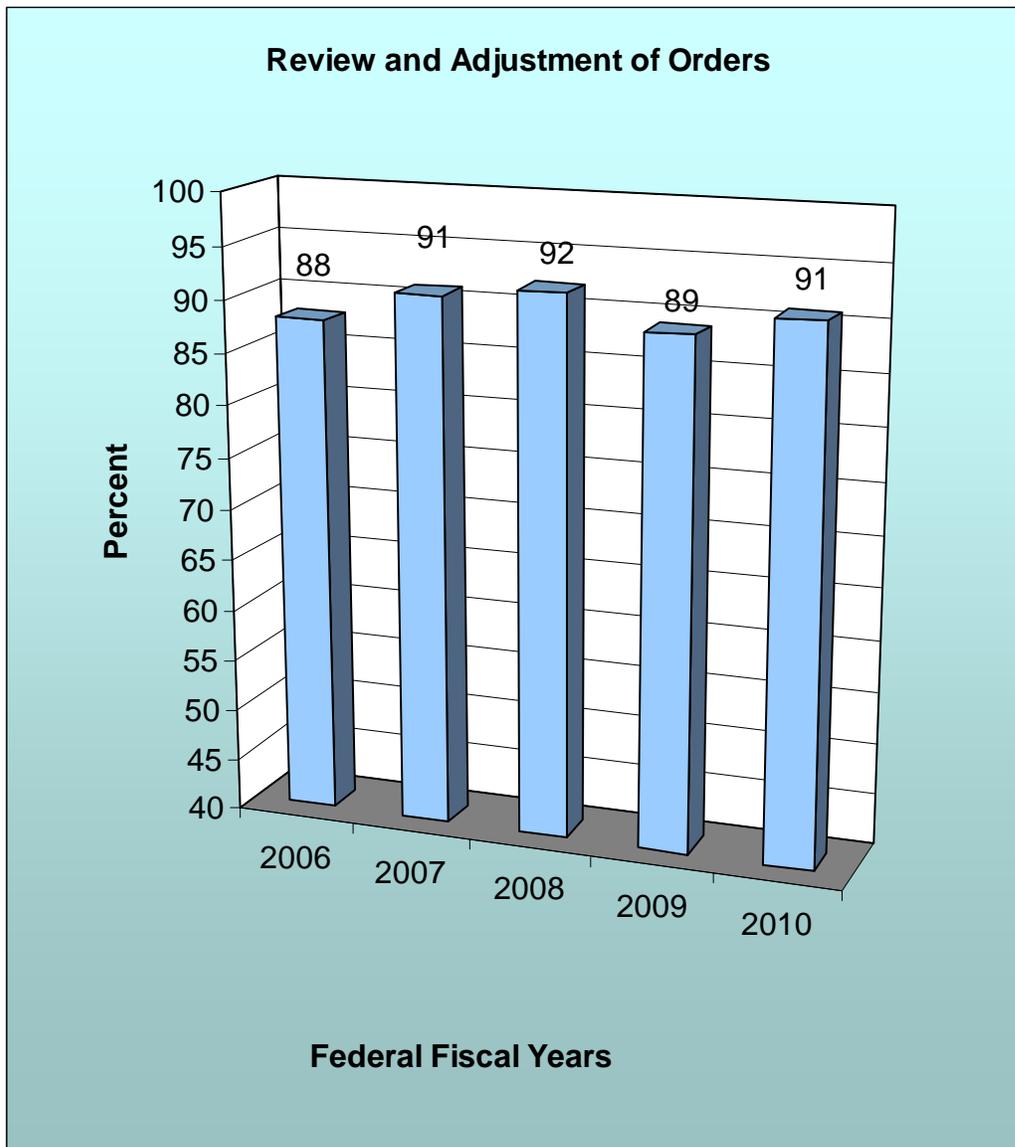
This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 88%. A goal of 88% annual efficiency is the target for FFY 2011.



Review and Adjustment of Support Orders: 91% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 23 errors in the 259 cases measured.

This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 90%. We exceeded the agency's annual target goal by 1%. Performance remained consistent. The agency's target for next year is 92%.



Interstate Services: 90% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 11 errors in the 113 cases we measured. This criterion remained compliant. Ninety percent was a performance composite for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding actions. Interstate performance remained stable.

The Initiating subcategory was 90% in compliance. There were 78 cases measured. Eight had errors. The errors were as follows:

- Five errors were because we took too long to initiate the case to another state.
- In two cases, we did not provide additional information requested by the other state in a timely manner.
- In one case, we did not provide new information to the other state within 10 days.

The Responding subcategory was 91% in compliance. Of the 35 cases measured, we found three errors.

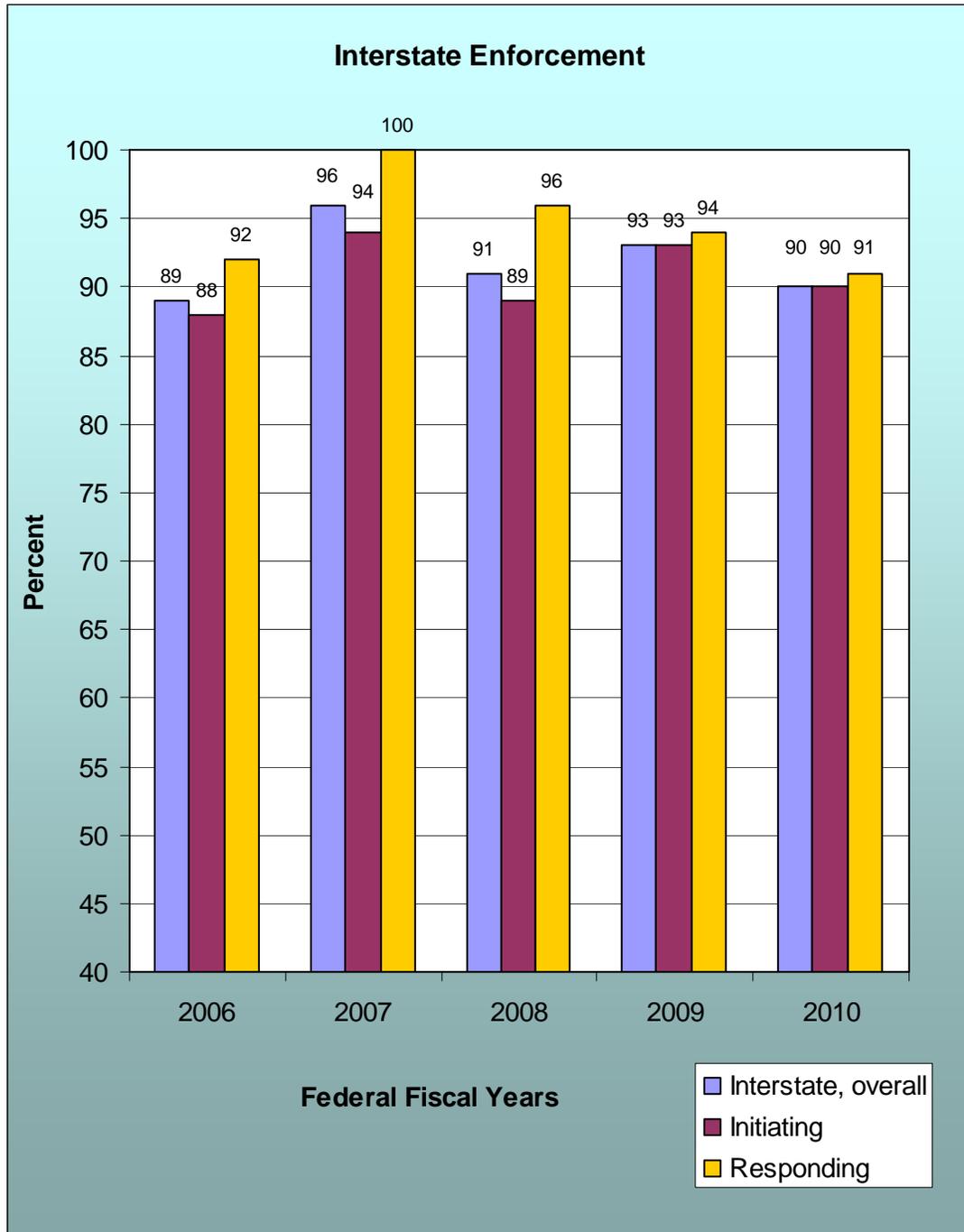
- In all three cases, we did not reply to a status request within 5 days.

The five-year averages for interstate were:

- Overall – 92%
- Initiating – 91%
- Responding – 95%

The interstate teams should set a goal of improving their performance by 1% in each area.

[Chart Follows]



Category 2: Program Direction

Introduction

A detailed discussion of each review criterion follows. We include the level of performance, prior audit findings and the current audit findings in this section. Goals and targets are also laid out here. In the event a criterion falls below the mandated minimums, a corrective action plan will also be included here.

The vacancy rate declined from 2009 (two years of decline), but we still continued to see overtime being a necessary need in order to meet basic casework needs. In 2008 vacancies peaked at 14% of our workforce, whereas the average for 2009 was about 11%. For 2010 the average was just over 6%, a significant improvement in the number of positions being filled. As a result of having more positions filled the division also saw a drop in overtime wages by 44% from \$191,000 in SFY09 to \$107,000 for SFY10.

Case Closure: 95%. (Minimum Acceptable: 90%)

Of 19 cases measured, there was one error.

Prior Audit Findings. The division will work to maintain this level of compliance. Supervisors will ensure that all employees are aware of the importance of performing these actions correctly.

Current Audit Findings. The five-year average performance remained at 97%. The annual efficiency rate fell by 5% from FY 2009. The error consisted of a case being closed when it did not meet a case closure criterion. This criterion remained compliant with federal guidelines. For FY 2011 our goal is to maintain this level of performance.

Paternity and Order Establishment: 87%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Of 91 cases measured, twelve had errors.

Four teams make up the Establishment Section: Intake, Paternity, Support Order Establishment, and Modification. The Section did not keep up with the number of cases needing order establishment, even though they more than doubled the number of new administrative orders established during the year. Corrective action was taken with regard to the backlog of registry and IV-A cases needing to be set up; however, the changes came too late in the fiscal year to reflect in this report, and likely will take 12-18 months to meet the goal having every case (including non-IV-D cases) set up within 20 days. By the end of the fiscal year we were focused on getting new IV-A referrals reviewed and their cases setup within the prescribed time frame. All IV-A referrals are logged in and tracked for case set up, additional review and completion. Once a case setup is completed, the case is moved from the Intake team to the Paternity or order Establishment teams. The process for handling cases needing a new order was adapted to speed initial case set up and move more duties from the Intake team to the regular caseworkers, but the overall workflow will remain under review to ensure the changes are solving the backlog problem.

We reviewed all incoming mail to determine the volume of work staff faced, as well as the staffing levels required. Over a thousand documents were received each month, and several hundred were either new applications or referrals from the IV-A and IV-E agencies, but the majority were associated with existing cases.

The vacancy factor for the Establishment section previously reached a high of 22% but the section was fully staffed at the start of the fiscal year. About 17-18% of their workers were still in training at the beginning of this fiscal year.

In FY 09 fewer than 1200 new administrative orders were established, but in FY 10 we created more than 2400 orders. We expect the revised processes to show an increase over this 2400-order level during the next review period. The establishment section should set a goal of achieving 89% compliance with CFR requirements.

Paternity and Support Order Establishment			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Exceeded 90 day limit to serve Obligor; original order modification not involved	7	58%	58%
Over 20 days to open case	5	42%	100%
TOTAL	12	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. The Establishment section failed to meet our goal of 90% set in last year's report. Our accuracy and timeliness for order establishment declined 9%. A breakdown of the measured actions is as follows:

- 41% of all the cases with any measured actions had an order established during the audit review period. In 2008, we saw 48% with orders established, while 2007 had only 35% of the measured cases had new orders.
- One error occurred because we did not open a case within 20 days.
- We had ten errors because we did not serve a notice of financial responsibility within 90 days (this is seven more than last year and amounts to 17% of the measured establishment cases). This directly resulted in the agency's poor performance in the expedited processes criteria.
- There was one error for not performing locate functions within 75 days.

Current Audit Findings. Our two-year goal was to raise the annual 79% efficiency rate to the five-year average of 88%. We raised it to 87% within one year. Last year we measured 58 cases for this criterion and this year it was 91 cases. A breakdown of the measured actions is as follows:

- 34% of all the cases with any measured actions had an order established during the audit review period. In 2009 it was 41%. In 2008, we saw 48% with orders established, while 2007 had only 35% of the measured cases had new orders.
- Seven errors occurred because we did not serve the Obligor within 90 days of case opening. In 2009 we had ten errors.
- Five errors occurred because we did not open a case within 20 days. This is an increase from only one error in 2009 but it may be attributed to more cases being opened overall.
- There were no errors in performing locate functions within 75 days.

We found no errors for the locate criterion, which has only happened once before. Our review showed that in each case needing locate services, the caseworker timely performed the required functions. It is plain that the procedures used by the Establishment team are working well. The fact that the Enforcement teams are seeing increases in Locate errors suggests that the Enforcement section should adopt and follow the locate procedures employed by the Establishment section.

The cases we reviewed had fewer problems in getting documents served than the prior year. When compared to our findings for Expedited Processes (which measures the final result of obtaining a support order) we conclude that getting documents served is not necessarily the main problem faced by the Establishment team; rather, it seems that the follow-up work is causing the slow down and as a result a backlog of cases. (The follow-up work includes collecting information from case parties, performing guideline calculations for support and issuing administrative review decisions. Many of the cases had delays in the process that stretched to over six months.)

Management determined that inherent problems in the establishment of orders and in expedited processes warranted a change in supervision and guidance for the section, as well as a comprehensive revision to the procedures and workflow among the Intake, Paternity, Establishment and Modification teams. The changes will be described fully under the corrective action plan for Expedited Processes (see next section, below).

Expedited Processes: 6-Month Tier 74%; 12-Month Tier 97%.
(Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

CSSD may have passed both criteria in this audit. The statistical margin for error is large enough that we must find the agency marginally non-compliant at the 6-month tier and compliant at the 12-month tier. We measured 35 cases for the 6-month timeframe and 33 for the 12-month timeframe. This sample is small and has a +/-6% margin of error. The agency auditors performed a focused audit in 2010 to determine a more reliable efficiency rate. The focused audit from 2010 reconfirmed the results of our 2004 focused audit: the 6-month criterion achieved 83% efficiency and the 12-month achieved 97% efficiency. The current sample in this audit is small, and therefore susceptible to variable results. Our

focused audit is detailed in our Current Findings, below, and will defend our conclusion that although we have room for improvement, we are meeting the requirements for expedited processes.

Prior Audit Findings. Of the nine total errors in six cases, two errors on one case were the result of not getting an order at all. That case was a federal foster care case undergoing our administrative process to obtain an order. The reason for the delay is not apparent, so we ascribe it to caseworker error and not extenuating circumstances. One error was due to the length of time it takes to proceed through the courts when the parties file the initial action and both paternity disestablishment and establishment are added to the divorce process. We had four administrative cases with six total errors. One case saw a long delay (11 months) after the service of paternity paperwork where the parent avoided service of later documents. Two cases saw delays of 8 months and 10 months to commence the establishment process; these must be counted as worker errors, with a possible mitigating factor being the growing backlog of cases.

It appears that most of these errors were due to vacancies or inadequately trained employees. The establishment section has 44 authorized fulltime employees and supervisors, and like 2008 there were a large minority of staff in training, on loan to another section, or on leave. In all, the vacancy factor for 2009 was about 22% while in 2008 it was about 26%.

The five-year average for performance at the 6-month tier was 87% and at the 12-month tier it was 95%. The primary goal for the team should be to eliminate the backlog of cases awaiting initial service of process and those cases awaiting reissue of the order documents. The secondary goal should be to improve the efficiency rate by 4% in each criterion to 83% and 93%. This level of performance has been shown to be achievable and sustainable in the past.

Prior 6-Month Tier Analysis (FFY 09)

We examined the 6-month tier to see if a broader pattern existed. In FFY 2008 our ability to establish an order within six months diminished to the lowest level since 2001, and now 2009 is lower yet. The downtrend is certain. Management should continue the process

review; it may be necessary to either reassign staff on a long-term basis or change the duties and workflow for the staff in the establishment section.

Three of the six cases with errors failed primarily because of mishandled files or the long delays between an unserved notice's return and the reissue for process service. In one case, we started to take action after three months, but then stopped for 8 months before resuming. In one case, we served the paternity paperwork but had trouble serving the child support order for 11 months. The court case was an action filed by the parties to disestablish paternity, reestablish paternity and then get a divorce with support order. A missed timeframe in this case is understandable and unavoidable (at 10 months start to finish, we may characterize that case as having a rather quick resolution, considering what the parents tried to accomplish).

It was apparent from the large number of files waiting to be reissued for service or the new files waiting their turn to have original paperwork prepared, that delays of 6-7 months (as of the end of the review period) were the norm. In January of 2010 a count of the cases still waiting for action dated back to early August, 2009 and numbered approximately 700. Though most (about 80%) of the cases were new or had recently had paternity established; many were waiting for a caseworker to reissue them for process service or service by certified mail.

FY 2009 Data:

Expedited Processes 6-Month Tier			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Lack of action in a timely manner	4	67%	67%
Paternity service was followed by an evasive NCP who delayed the final order	1	17%	84%
Court case took 10 months to resolve	1	16%	100%
TOTAL	6	100%	

Prior 12-Month Tier Analysis (FFY 09)

All three errors measured under the 12-month criterion were due to mishandling the cases. Delays introduced by caseworkers, which might also be described as the backlog, show that it is common for 3-6 months to pass from first receiving a case until positive action is taken to issue the notices and serve them. Those cases not served by certified mail on the first attempt are then destined for the file cabinets where they await reissue, locate or process service; a wait that increased from about 4 months to 6 months over the course of the review period.

FY 2009 Data:

Expedited Processes 12-Month Tier			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Files waited extended periods of time to have notices issued or served	3	100%	100%
TOTAL	3	100%	

For 2008 the section saw about 36% of the staff either new or only partially trained. By the end of the 2009 audit period, only four staff members were still in training (about 9%). This factor alone should allow the teams to reduce the back log of cases awaiting service of process.

Current Audit Findings. The goals from last year were not met. Performance at the critical 6-month tier declined instead of increased and the backlog of cases needing action was not eliminated. Overall performance was not a failure however.

Of the ten total errors in nine cases, the error on one case was the result of not getting an order at all. We served the non-custodial parent with the paternity establishment paperwork on August 29, 2008. All indications are that this person is avoiding process service of the final child support order. Without serving the support order, Alaska's rules of

due process preclude the establishment of a child support order. (Our paternity process is a separate action under statute.) The order is currently out for process service.

We had nine administrative cases with errors at the 6-month tier. 32 of the 35 cases had orders established within 12 months. In two cases the audit period ended prior to the 12-month timeframe expiring.

The five-year average for performance at the 6-month tier was 82% and at the 12-month tier it was 94%.

FY 2010 Data:

Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Lack of action in a timely manner	6	67%	67%
Court case took 10 months to resolve	3	33%	100%
TOTAL	9	100%	

Our 2010 focused audit measured a sample of 92 cases where an order was obtained, or service of process was successful. (The original sample was 102 cases, but 10 were excluded because we were unable to confirm certain facts regarding dates of service, the order was vacated in the review period, the case was not a IV-D case at the time, or we were registering a foreign order.) Sixty-nine cases were administrative and 23 were judicial in origin. These 92 cases were selected from a universe of 1738 cases where 1268 were administrative and 470 were judicial. Our sample yielded a 95% level of confidence with a standard error of 4.3%. A similar audit was performed in 2004 with nearly identical results (71 cases were measured; the confidence interval was 90% with a standard error of 4%).

In 2004 we found that 83% of cases met the 6-Month tier, and 97% met the 12-month tier; for 2010 the 6-month tier was compliant 83% of the time and the 12-month tier scored 97%. When we look at the average scores for the last 12 years, we find the 6- and 12-month tiers at 82% and 94% respectively. This level of consistency, especially when compared to our running 5-year average, indicates that our performance meets or exceeds the CFR minimums.

Although a corrective action plan may not appear to be needed, the agency noted that several problems existed that warrant immediate intervention (and the development of a corrective action plan). Some corrective actions were started in mid-fiscal year, while others were implemented after 9/30/10.

First, work flow inhibited speedy case set up and saw a duplication of effort between the caseworkers who set up cases and those who issued paternity and establishment documents.

Second, backlogs in excess of six months existed at the time of this audit. The backlogs affected new cases needing orders, service of older documents to obtain an order, administrative reviews of parental information and modifications of orders. (Modifications are not generally considered part of this criterion, but Alaska CSSD places the Establishment and Modification teams in the same part of the organization, and functions are generally the same.)

Third, cases were monitored for actions to be taken within mandated timeframes, but not all of the timeframes were correctly identified.

The corrective action plan does the following:

- The Intake team was directed to perform fewer tasks and more quickly refer the case file to the caseworker. Certain locate and research tasks were removed from the Intake worker and placed on the caseworker; previously both workers performed those tasks. This duplication of effort was eliminated in mid-FY 10.
- Caseworkers were set daily/weekly quotas for work volume. This was intended to see a production of about 3 to 4 orders per day per worker.
- New tracking tools were created with emphasis on CFR timeframes. (The start and end dates for CFR timeframes were revised to correctly reflect CFR requirements.) Different documents that entered the tracking tool were also given different priorities based on whether service of process was already completed and which timeframe was next to be met (e.g., Locate, Expedited Processes, or issuing a final support order).
- For paternity cases, instead of placing a case back to the end of the line once paternity was finished, the case is now moved to the head of the list. This should

address the problem with meeting the 6-month timeframe for obtaining a final support order.

- Certain functions were consolidated with fewer workers. Namely, the administrative review of parental documents and issuance of the decision that becomes the final order. Specialists have been designated to perform this task. This should allow the other caseworkers to focus on issuing basic documents used to contact obligors, solicit information and initiate orders.
- Deadlines were set to address the backlogs. A certain number of cases in the backlog must be worked daily/weekly in addition to keeping up with new cases recently received. The current deadline to eliminate the backlog is April 1, 2011.
- Emphasis is placed on getting orders served by mail, or sent to a process server as soon as locate is resolved. The goal is to have all cases served within 90 days and this process is monitored in the new tracking tools used by the supervisors.
- Some caseworkers were reassigned to different duties to take advantage of their skills and knowledge.
- During FY 10 some workers were temporarily assigned to the Modification backlog. Management believes this part of the problem has been solved. We anticipate these cases to be within CFR timeframes by April 1, 2011.
- Once all backlogs are eliminated, management will review caseworker assignments and determine whether workers should be moved to other tasks. In addition, some tasks may be consolidated with a few caseworkers instead of being spread over several people.

The goals for the next year are similar to last year. The primary goal for the team should be to eliminate the backlog of cases awaiting initial service of process and those cases awaiting reissue of the order documents. The secondary goal should be to improve the efficiency rate 4% in at the 6-month tier and to maintain their compliance level at the 12-month tier.

Note: The Expedited Processes criterion measures the time allowed under the CFR to establish child support orders. The timeframe measured begins with the initial service of

documents on the noncustodial parent and ends with the establishment of a child support order. At least 75% of the cases must have an order established within 6 months of serving the noncustodial parent with notice of a paternity complaint or of a duty to support a child. A minimum of 90% of the cases must have an order established within 12 months.

Enforcement: 89%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 394 cases, and found 42 errors. The five-year average efficiency rate was 93%. 116 cases “passed” due to wage withholding payments during the last quarter and an additional 123 passed as a result of other collections during the review period.

Enforcement of Support Orders			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to complete asset/employer locate	27	64%	64%
Case not submitted for federal offset/IRS	13	31%	95%
Withholding order not issued to employer within two days	2	5%	100%
TOTAL	42	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Locate issues were again the biggest factor in case failures; 15 errors this year compared to 12 last year. Other criteria saw failure rates common to recent years. The second most common error was miscoding a case and preventing a submission to the IRS for tax refund offset. In third position was failing to issue a withholding order within two days. This last problem is only partially the result of order processing delays from the establishment section.

The most common reason for the locate errors appeared to be that the caseworker did not recognize that a locate action was needed or the Morning Mail (a system-based reminder that prompts the worker to look at a case) reminders had been closed out so nothing prompted the worker to resume locate efforts. In one case the locate reminder was assigned

to an inactive/vacant position so no one checked the morning mail. Locate errors accounted for 47% of all the errors in the enforcement category. It seems likely the only way to reduce this error rate is to provide additional refresher training to staff.

Of the seven cases that failed the requirement to issue a withholding order in two days, one was because of delays getting the new order set up and transferred to the enforcement team. The other six were the result of caseworkers not taking action or having the reminder coded wrong so morning mail did not prompt a follow-up action. Overall, the error rate is not worrisome, but it might be reduced if management provides refresher training to caseworkers regarding address and asset locates as well as reviewing cases where the noncustodial parent is incarcerated.

Current Audit Findings. Locate issues remained the biggest factor in case failures; 27 errors this year compared to 15 last year. Miscoding a case preventing a submission to the IRS for tax refund offset was the second most common error; 13 errors this year compared to 9 last year. In third position was failing to issue a withholding order within two days. The errors for not issuing a withholding order declined; we found 2 errors compared to 7 last year.

A key recommendation for Enforcement is to look at the process used by Establishment for handling Locate tasks. Establishment has reduced their error rate steadily and in FY 10 had no locate errors. If Enforcement uses the same procedures, they should likewise reduce their error rate substantially.

IRS/FOP submission errors can only be corrected by detailed review on the part of the caseworkers. Detailed review takes time and a knowledgeable staff, so the improvements to be found in this area are smaller than can be found for less effort in the locate arena. Management should examine procedures currently in use and see if they can be improved to increase our efficiency in submitting cases to the FOP, but this should be a secondary task to changing the procedures for performing locate actions.

Disbursement: 98%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 307 cases, and found 5 errors. Average performance over the past 5 years was 97%.

Disbursement			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Hold because receipt amount is less than \$5.00. Not cost effective to cut a check.	1	20%	20%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending research. Obligor had multiple cases.	1	20%	40%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending TANF Assistance status.	1	20%	60%
Change of receipt type.	1	20%	80%
Seized money held for 30 days.	1	20%	100%
TOTAL	5	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. We have no new findings to report. In reviewing our disbursements as reported on our annual 157 report, we do note, however, that the agency is maintaining its efficiency rating even as the amount of money collected has grown from \$92 million in 2004 to nearly \$100 million in 2009.

Money on hold was \$415,000. This is an acceptable amount and is being managed properly by accounting staff.

EFT accounted for about 55% of dollars collected and disbursed. For individual transactions (payments) the incoming numbers show that EFT was slightly less than half, while nearly 58% of transactions outbound were via EFT. About 2400 employers send money to us by EFT. 2873 people currently collect their support via a debit card.

Current Audit Findings. We have no new findings to report. Our disbursements as reported on our annual 157 report declined slightly from FY 2009. The decline is attributed to receiving less PFD garnishments (\$10.1 million compared to \$15.8 million). If the PFD garnishments were removed from collections for both years, we would have actually reported an increase in collections for FY 2010 by \$3.5 million. The agency’s goal is to maintain its efficiency rate.

Money on hold was \$333,500. The State Disbursement Unit worked diligently and reduced the money holding by 20% from the previous year. The amount on hold is an acceptable amount and is being managed properly by accounting staff.

Currently 3211 individuals receive their child support via debit card accounts. About 7% more employers forward collected funds via EFT this year (a total of 2549 employers as of 9/30/10) and more than half of all agency financial transactions are electronic now.

Medical Support Enforcement: 87%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 149 cases, and found 19 errors. Average performance over the past 5 years was 88%.

Medical Support Enforcement			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
We did not determine if insurance was available	12	63%	63%
We did not notify the Medicaid agency of insurance.	7	37%	100%
TOTAL	19	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Procedures put into effect in 2007 appear to be working as intended. Steady improvement in compliance is shown for the past 3 years. All errors this year were due to not issuing the national medical support notice. Seven of the nine errors appear to be directly attributable to caseworkers not reviewing case facts and taking action; two errors were due to exclusionary “flags” or codes on the case that prevented the NMSN from being issued or prevented the caseworker from getting a prompt to review the case for medical support action.

The goal for the agency in 2010 should be to attain an efficiency rate of 91%.

Current Audit Findings. An increase in errors caused a small decline in apparent performance. The current efficiency rate is approximately equal to the 5- and 12-year averages, but may indicate that staff are not properly following casework procedures. Management should conduct refresher training on medical enforcement procedures, and ensure that when new insurance information is received, it is entered to the system.

Review and Adjustment: 91%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Of 259 cases measured, there were 23 errors (19 for the failure to send Notices of Rights to Request a Review triennially - (NRRR)). This is a 25% decrease in errors and returns performance to a normal level compared to the past 5 to 10 years. The average score for the past 5 years is 90%.

We conducted a focused audit of this area in April of 2010. We looked closely at the time it takes to modify an order and what steps we might take to speed up the judicial process. We only examined cases that were reviewed and modified, or the review was denied for cause. (We did not examine cases that lack the NRRR language as we have determined it is a manageable problem requiring no special action. Nor did we look at cases that were still in the review process.) Consequently, the audit would not compare exactly

with our Self Assessment Audit. The focused audit was intended to illuminate the practical problems surrounding order modifications and suggest ways to improve our service to the public. We are of the opinion that if we can improve our service to the public, our compliance with CFR will likewise improve.

We took a sample of 303 cases and measured 262. Forty-one cases had to be excluded for various reasons. One hundred-five cases were administrative and 157 were judicial actions. CSSD and the Alaska courts modified the child support obligations in 112 cases and denied modifications in 150 cases. Of the 112 modified cases, only 35 were done within 180 days (31.3%). Of the denials, 85 were timely (56.7%). The combined score works out to 45.8% that were done within 180 days. It should be noted of course, that we were not counting a case with a modification during the review period as a “successful outcome” as it is described in 45 CFR 308.2 (f)(1). We were strictly looking at meeting the 180 day timeframe.

When we compared this to a similar focused audit conducted in 2004, we found that compliance declined from 81% then, to 46% now. In the older audit the most common reason for delays in administrative cases were caused by backlogs of cases needing follow-up action once the review commenced (the delays tended to be between 60 and 70 days). In the newer audit similar backlog delays lasted in excess of 6 months. In the past, judicial processes generally took longer than administrative methods. In this review however, we found that administrative processes took slightly longer: 216 days on average, compared to 202 days.

Cases waiting to be worked generally had very few or no notes appended to the record, therefore the auditors could not categorize the reasons why cases were not worked. To outward appearances it seemed that cases were in “wait to work” status whether information was still needed to work them or not.

As a result of the audit in 2010 management undertook a complete revision to the work process associated with order modifications. The corrective action plan was outlined and work re-assignments started, and timelines to commence remedial actions were set. By the middle of FFY 11 it is expected that all plans will be in action.

The core of the plan is to closely monitor timeframes and maintain caseworker reminders on cases so they do not fall through the cracks or sit without action. Training of

staff and reassignment of some duties are still being done. Addressing the problems began in earnest part way through the audit period and accelerated near the end of the year. Caseworkers are expected to keep up with new cases coming in first, and then work on older cases each day. The success of the plan will likely be learned over the course of the next two self assessment audits.

Average performance over the last five years was 90%.

Review and Adjustment of Orders			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to issue Notice of Right to Request Review every three years	19	83%	83%
Modification was improperly denied	1	4%	87%
Failed to perform locate as needed	3	13%	100%
TOTAL	23	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Current efficiency is acceptable.

Nineteen of the 280 cases measured had orders modified or reviews conducted that resulted in denials of a modification. Twelve of the 19 cases (63%) were modified, or denied a modification, within 180 days (as required by 45 CFR 303.8). In order to validate these findings and research the delays found in the review process, the agency will perform a focused audit on review and adjustment cases during 2010. We had nine administrative and three court cases that were completed within 180 days of the request; three administrative and four court cases required from 7 to 15 months to reach resolution.

Current Audit Findings. Current performance is technically acceptable under 45 CFR 308. However, the extensive delays in handling cases were substantially affecting the service we provided to the public and may affect our future compliance adversely.

Accordingly, the modification team should reprioritize their casework. Denials should be issued within 30 days of the agency imposed deadline to provide information. The compliance rate for issuing denials can reasonably be expected to meet or exceed 90%. If no other change were made to the current audit numbers, the compliance rate for these cases would have been 65% (compared to the reported performance of 46%). Among the body of cases where orders were modified, if another 30 out of the 112 had been completed in a timely manner, the overall compliance for this subset of Review cases would have exceeded 75%.

The auditors recommend that management revise work priorities, workflow and staff assignments, as needed, so that 90% of Denials are issued within 30 days of the date set for hearing, and that 65% of completed reviews have the order adjusted within 180 days of the date of the request for review. If those targets are met, we should see timely completion of 75% of all cases needing a review.

Interstate Services: 90%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Ninety percent is the performance composite for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding cases. Of the 113 cases measured, 11 had errors.

Initiating Interstate			
Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to initiate to other state within 20 days.	5	63%	63%
New information not provided to other state.	1	12%	75%
Provide add'l information within 30 days.	2	25%	100%
TOTAL	8	100%	

Responding Interstate Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Error	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Over 5 days response to status request.	3	100%	100%
TOTAL	3	100%	

For the review period, we found no errors in issuing general testimonies to custodians, or soliciting necessary information from case parties.

Prior Audit Findings. Overall performance is acceptable and improving, and the interstate teams should make efforts to maintain this level of performance. For 2010, the agency should set the goal of 93% compliance for the interstate category. The prior year's goal of 90% was met. The five-year average for all interstate actions was 92%.

Current Audit Findings. Current performance is acceptable, but supervisors should ensure that new mail coming into the teams is quickly reviewed and prioritized for caseworker action. The auditors will monitor Interstate performance as the economy improves to see if performance likewise improves. If it does not, a review of casework practices will be in order. At present, declines in performance are within the margin for error of the audit.

Initiating Interstate Analysis

This subcategory was 90% in compliance. This five-year average was 92%.

Of the 78 cases measured, 8 had errors. The errors can be attributed to case handling errors. Management should remind staff of the tight timeframes associated with the CFR requirements for interstate cases.

Responding Interstate Analysis

This subcategory was 91% in compliance. This five-year average was 95%.

Thirty-five cases were measured. Three errors occurred as noted above.

Performance in this area is acceptable and consistent with past years. Management should reinforce the need to respond to status requests within 5 working days.

Optional Criteria Reviewed

In addition to the criteria in 45 CFR 308, we measured actions that are necessary to process an initiating case successfully. Such actions include sending appropriate documents (such as the General Testimony, and Paternity Affidavits) to the custodial parent within a reasonable timeframe (30 days is considered a reasonable span of time to take such actions). The team must also provide follow up support as necessary, and respond to inquiries from case parties to facilitate customer satisfaction. Responding interstate caseworkers will strive to maintain the current level of performance.

Management Issues:

The Deficit Reduction Act mandated changes to distribution. Those programming changes were made in 2009. The result was a slightly faster growth in our current support collections compared to our arrears collections. We are now receiving federal SVES interface data from the Social Security Administration and developing procedures for using that information to issue withholding orders for retirement and disability benefits that we currently do not garnish. Oklahoma published a review of their first year's efforts with the program and showed that the program added 3% to their annual collections. If we can duplicate that level of success, we should be able to collect an extra \$3 million for families served by CSSD.

We are still working on ways to improve data reliability for medical support enforcement. One benefit is that we will be better able to enforce medical support orders and obtain insurance for children. This is an ongoing process and we anticipate reporting on it in the future.

Management decided on a new approach to address the backlogs in the Establishment section. A new manager was moved into the oversight position and a comprehensive review of the processes for Intake, Paternity, Establishment and Modifications was started. Changes to work flow, prioritization and monitoring time frames were implemented near the end of the fiscal year. Benchmarks and a timeline for improvement were set, but they will not come due until the second quarter of the year. This key area must be observed to ensure new case backlogs are reduced and modifications are completed within the 180 day time limit.

Otherwise, casework and performance are acceptable. The vacancy rates are at a normal level as well. This should mean that performance can improve when new employees are fully trained.

Category 3: Program Service Enhancements

CSSD took several steps to improve services to child support clients:

- During FFY 2010 our Anchorage Customer Service Reception area and our Phone Bank handled 75,154 phone calls and over 10,100 walk-ins. Our field offices in Juneau, Fairbanks and Wasilla handled approximately 15,300 phone calls plus 10,400 walk-ins. Division wide (including all of our caseworkers not already counted above) we normally take or make around 140,000 phone calls per year. CSSD continues to offer extended hours for our Anchorage Customer Service Center. This includes sample collection for genetic testing, in-house process service and notarization of state documents. Improved customer service should increase the number of orders served on noncustodial parents and decrease the time it takes to get a final support order.
- People within the Division who speak, read or write foreign languages, and are willing to volunteer their skills, were organized into an in-house translation service (for informal needs, not for court testimony). At present, we have people who can communicate in German, Pidgin, Polish, Russian, Samoan, Tagalog, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.
- We commenced a new program that partners with school districts in Alaska to bring education on child support issues to the young people who need to hear the message. The program is called “Think About It.” Interactive learning tools help to explain the relationship between a person’s income and how much child support they would have to pay; and conversely, the custodian’s real world costs of buying formula, diapers, clothing etc. Bringing context to the notion of having a baby is designed to open the eyes of teens about the true costs of parenthood. Agency staff make trips out to local and rural schools to address classes that might not otherwise get access to comprehensive child support materials until after a pregnancy.

- Our Outreach Program is still in place and working well. CSSD staff traveled to eight communities and met with people who have little or no opportunity to meet a caseworker. Staff traveled approximately 6,000 miles to visit these towns. Outreach is especially valuable in Alaska where cultural differences and isolation make it harder to help case parties. In past years we visited more than a dozen remote towns and villages, and will serve many of them again in 2011. Our representative also takes genetic test samples for paternity cases which saves CSSD money because we do not have to fly the families to a hub city for testing.

- The towns visited in FFY 2010 were:
 - ⇒ Barrow
 - ⇒ Bethel
 - ⇒ Dillingham
 - ⇒ Fairbanks
 - ⇒ Juneau
 - ⇒ Kenai & Soldotna
 - ⇒ Kotzebue
 - ⇒ Nome

- CSSD's outreach program is our first point of contact for all 236 federally recognized tribes in Alaska, and for all Tribal Programs that affect child support. CSSD presently has two people working outreach to remote areas. They are the primary face we show to many of our clients, some of whom have little contact with modern life and may speak English poorly or not at all. This type of direct contact is far more effective with village residents than trying to do business over the phone or by mail. We are presently offering our assistance, as needed, to the following tribal entities.
 - ⇒ Bristol Bay Native Association, Cook Inlet Tribal Corporation, Tanana Chief's Conference, Central Council Tlingit-Haida, Association of Village Council Presidents and Kodiak Area Native Association operate Tribal TANF programs.

- ⇒ The IV-D program operated by Central Council Tlingit-Haida is in its fourth year now. Cooperation between CSSD and this tribe is working well and they have over 700 cases active.
 - ⇒ Aleutian-Pribilof Island Association
 - ⇒ The Association of Village Council Presidents and Tanana Chief's Conference are still considering IV-D programs.
 - ⇒ Tribal Courts - We track tribal child support orders that affect our cases and we serve as the central registry for their orders.
 - ⇒ Native Village of Barrow uses our services to pursue non-custodial parents when children are in tribal foster care.
 - ⇒ Kenaitze Indian Tribal Court
- Recurring local outreach meetings in and near Anchorage help address the needs of civic and military organizations and case parties in Alaska's core population area. The primary places we target for outreach services are:
 - ⇒ Brother Francis Homeless Shelter
 - ⇒ Operation Stand Down (for veterans who need help)
 - ⇒ Alaska Federation of Natives annual Conference (in Fairbanks)
 - ⇒ Rural Small Business Conference
 - ⇒ AWAIC (for women in crisis) – we provide indirect assistance as requested
 - ⇒ Alaska Family Law Self Help Center (where the public gets help with child support matters without needing an attorney)
 - ⇒ Matanuska Susitna Family Services Fair
 - ⇒ Cook Inlet Tribal Council's (Correctional Center) Bridge to Success Reentry Program
 - ⇒ Veterans Administration Domiciliary
 - ⇒ Victims for Justice – we provide indirect assistance as requested
 - In FFY 2010 CSSD maintained partnerships with agencies and individuals in the private sector to present "Town Hall" clinics in rural areas and around Anchorage. Getting

more of our stakeholders involved in their child support cases and making them aware of the vital issues is critical to improving services to the many children of those parents.

The following are partners with CSSD:

- ⇒ Alaska Native Justice Center
- ⇒ Disability Law Center of Alaska
- ⇒ Alaska Legal Services
- ⇒ Alaska Business Development Center
- ⇒ Veteran's Administration Domiciliary (for homeless or in-need veterans)
- ⇒ Various local shelters for people in need
- ⇒ Alaska Dept. of Corrections, Probation Office

- State correctional facilities are on our list of places to visit as often as is practicable (which may be once per year or once every other year):

- ⇒ Anvil Mountain in Nome
- ⇒ Fairbanks Correctional Center
- ⇒ Lemon Creek in Juneau
- ⇒ Palmer Correctional Center (monthly visits)
- ⇒ Highland Mountain Women's Facility in Eagle River
- ⇒ Cook Inlet Correctional Complex in Anchorage
- ⇒ Point MacKenzie Correctional Farm
- ⇒ Matanuska-Susitna Pre-Trial Facility
- ⇒ Wildwood Correctional Center in Kenai
- ⇒ Yukon Kuskokwim Correctional Center

- We advertise our outreach efforts via local newspapers, radio shows, respond to open radio forums, public service announcements, flyers to other government offices and our website.

- CSSD continues to circulate specialized booklets, brochures and video for the public. Materials distributed include:
 - ⇒ Child Support for Children in State Custody
 - ⇒ OCSE DVD explaining paternity establishment (provided to hospitals & birthing centers)
 - ⇒ Video produced by Alaska CSSD: “Building a Healthy, Happy Child”
 - ⇒ Electronic Funds Transfer for Employers
 - ⇒ Child Support If You Are Incarcerated
 - ⇒ Employers' Guide to Wage Withholding (including a special section on the National Medical Support Notice)
 - ⇒ Judicial Reference Guide for Judges, Magistrates and Masters in Alaska Courts
 - ⇒ Direct Deposit of Child Support, For Individuals
 - ⇒ Review and Adjustment of Orders (including the forms to make a request for a modification)
 - ⇒ How to contact and do business with CSSD (by phone, on line or in person)
 - ⇒ Brochures about establishing paternity and why it is important to children
 - ⇒ Child Support a Guide for Parents
 - ⇒ New Hire Reporting Informational Guide (for employers)
 - ⇒ How noncustodians can make child support payments via Western Union
 - ⇒ Child Support Services FAQ and list of contacts

- CSSD and the Alaska Court System continued to maintain the *pro se* support order modification service, which we implemented in 2001. This collaboration enables the public to take a more direct hand in getting their support orders modified in court. The court system maintains their customer service center in order to help people help

themselves. Anecdotal evidence indicates the public continues to be very happy with this service.

- In 2010 the Alaska Supreme Court was ready for final testimony on the revision to our support guidelines. Cash Medical Support (CMS) was a main topic for one sub-committee. CSSD provided staff time to the sub-committee. Their final recommendation was that Alaska law already adequately provides for CMS, and therefore all we need to do is expand and clarify definitions for reasonable cost and accessibility to services. Our support guidelines rule should see those finite changes when the Supreme Court makes its ruling. Final testimony has not been heard as of this writing however.
- CSSD cooperates with state and local police agencies to get child support collections from people who are arrested. Following the arrest, and if the person is carrying cash, the police contact CSSD to see if a child support debt exists. Then CSSD serves a withholding order on the police department for the money being held. In FFY 2010 nearly \$159,000 was collected via cash and property withholding orders, which is up \$91,000 from last year.
- The division had three investigators who worked on criminal and difficult to enforce cases. As a result of “passport releases” we were able to compel parents to pay over \$155,000. At the end of FY 2010, the investigators were transferred from agency control to departmental control and assigned broader duties. They will continue to investigate child support cases (primarily for criminal non-support). We do not foresee a degradation of service.
- Currently 3211 individuals use debit cards issued by JP Morgan as their means to receive child support payments (an increase of almost 12% from last year). In 2004

about 100 individuals used debit cards. Employers sending payments by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) increased 7% to 2,549. EFT and the banking system's Automated Clearing House (ACH) are the preferred methods for accepting and issuing payments. We continue to advocate wider use of EFT in our daily contacts with the public and those employers with whom we deal. For FFY 2010, outgoing EFT/ACH transactions were 61.2% of our total disbursements and incoming transactions were 55.1% EFT/ACH.

- In 2010 the agency continued with enhancements to the Stellent Case File Imaging system (CFI). The usefulness of this technology continues to grow and staff have come to rely on it. Stellent allows orders and other documents to be scanned and then viewed online by all caseworkers. We consider the addition of imaging technology to be an unqualified success. For 2011 we are preparing to image old records and case files in their entirety. If this works out as anticipated, we should be able to shred more than 90% of the paper we currently store. The savings-over-time from that will be far greater than the cost to purchase and implement the CFI system.
- The agency has taken part in quarterly meetings with the Division of Public Assistance and Division of Health Care Services (Medicaid) over the past two years. These meetings serve to keep open lines of communication and ensure that management and workers can get to know our counterpart stakeholders. It also helps to develop improvements to our system interface and over all policy.
- Since the implementation of the IV-E interface in 2008, and subsequent enhancements in 2009-10, CSSD caseworkers have benefited from faster delivery of information and are able to set up foster care cases faster. Although the interface could still be improved, it is already showing that the work put into it was worth the cost.
- Our Systems staff implemented several web-based applications over the years for us, such as an employee database to help us find names and phone numbers for coworkers we may not know personally. One of the more widely useful tools is the online

guidelines calculator that staff, the public and the courts can use to calculate/estimate the amount of child support that should be paid (based on the income of the obligor). The tool also interfaces nightly with our mainframe system to upload caseworker-originated calculations, and the uploaded data is then used to generate forms for orders and modifications.

- The Alaska Court System is moving its paper records to an online web site. At present the documents are abstracted for the public to view. The “Court View” website allows a person to research court filings, hearings, orders and such from any computer.

- CSSD maintains a web site with numerous features including:
 - ⇒ Links to state and federal web sites
 - ⇒ A directory of employees to help clients contact us by fax or email
 - ⇒ A summary of CSSD services
 - ⇒ News covering child support related events and issues
 - ⇒ Online forms availability where numerous forms, including an application for services, may be ordered from a home computer
 - ⇒ A support guidelines calculator (to estimate child support)
 - ⇒ Recent case payment information (individuals may inquire on their own case)
 - ⇒ Information for employers about new Hire Reporting, child support laws and income withholding orders
 - ⇒ Frequently asked questions
 - ⇒ Employer information
 - ⇒ Press releases
 - ⇒ CSSD regulations
 - ⇒ CSSD publications
 - ⇒ News about CSSD staff visiting remote towns and villages

Our web site, <http://childsupport.alaska.gov>, continually evolves to provide more and better service to the public and to agency workers. We saw about 15% more traffic on the webpage in 2010. There were 181,000 unique visitors. We had 649,000 visits and 1 million page views for the year. Over 26% were new visitors. A total of 123 countries or territories are represented as website visitors. Of interest this year is the sharp rise in people accessing our website from mobile devices. There were 54,133 visits - 10% of total visits. About 45,000 were from iPhones and Androids. Laptops, iPads and similar devices accounted for about 5000 visits. The rest were from other brands of smart phones.

The website also has online statements available for clients to obtain payment information directly (and this appears to have reduced phone call volume, though other factors were also at work).

Conclusion

Alaska's Child Support Services Division can once again report that it has substantially met the federal requirements for basic performance. The self assessment review also shows improvements in some areas but declines in others. For those categories where we did not meet our goals, the division will review our processes and work to correct the shortcomings.