



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

**Self-Assessment Review  
FFY 2011**

**March 23, 2012**

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# Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
SAMPLING METHODOLOGY .....	4
SCOPE OF THE REVIEW.....	4
<b>CATEGORY 1: PROGRAM COMPLIANCE .....</b>	<b>6</b>
REVIEW CRITERIA IN COMPLIANCE.....	6
<i>Case Closure</i> .....	6
<i>Paternity and Support Order Establishment</i> .....	7
<i>Expedited Processes</i> .....	8
<i>Enforcement</i> .....	9
<i>Disbursement</i> .....	10
<i>Medical Support Enforcement</i> .....	11
<i>Review and Adjustment of Support Orders</i> .....	12
<i>Interstate Services</i> .....	13
<b>CATEGORY 2: PROGRAM DIRECTION.....</b>	<b>15</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	15
<i>Case Closure</i> .....	15
<i>Paternity and Support Order Establishment</i> .....	16
<i>Expedited Processes</i> .....	19
<i>Enforcement</i> .....	27
<i>Disbursement</i> .....	29
<i>Medical Support Enforcement</i> .....	31
<i>Review and Adjustment of Support Orders</i> .....	33
<i>Interstate Services</i> .....	36
MANAGEMENT ISSUES: .....	40
<b>CATEGORY 3: PROGRAM SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS .....</b>	<b>41</b>
CONCLUSION.....	49

## Executive Summary

This Self Assessment Review measures the Alaska Child Support Services Division's (CSSD) compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011.

For this audit period, CSSD exceeded federal compliance requirements for all measured criteria. Expedited Processes at the six-month tier was marginally compliant last year but fully compliant this year. It scored 82%. This is an eight point improvement over last year.

Paternity and Support Order Establishment saw steady improvement over the last three federal fiscal years. Enforcement, Disbursement, Review and Adjustment, Interstate Services and Case Closure were all stable compared with recent years. However, Medical Support Enforcement has experienced a three-year decline and is now at its lowest compliance rate in the last five years (though it still exceeds the mandated minimums). A second area of concern is in Initiating Interstate Enforcement where a downward trend in compliance shows performance was two percentage points below the five-year historical average.

Case count and financial statistics come from the OCSE-157 Report. For last year, CSSD's active IV-D caseload grew in size from 46,217 to 47,037. The number of open cases with orders increased from 41,336 to 43,163. The agency distributed \$101.5 million in child support in FFY 2011. This is about \$4.2 million more than last year. Collections from the state's annual Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) increased from \$10.1 to \$10.8 million.

The audit review covered the period from October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011. It included a detailed review of 501 cases.

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

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Cases That Required Action</b>	<b>Cases Compliant With Time Frames</b>	<b>Efficiency Rate: 2011</b>	<b>Federal Minimum Standard</b>	<b>Last Year: 2010</b>
Case Closure	15	15	<b>100%</b> (+/- 9%)	90%	<b>95%</b>
Paternity/Establishment	83	76	<b>92%</b> (+/- 4%)	75%	<b>87%</b>
Expedited Processes within 6 months	50	41	<b>82%</b> (+/- 5%)	75%	<b>74%</b>
Expedited Processes within 12 months	50	50	<b>100%</b> (+/- 5%)	90%	<b>97%</b>
Enforcement	420	398	<b>95%</b> (+/- .6%)	75%	<b>89%</b>
Disbursement	315	302	<b>96%</b> (+/- 1%)	75%	<b>98%</b>
Medical Support Enforcement	270	216	<b>80%</b> (+/- 1%)	75%	<b>87%</b>
Review and Adjustment	233	210	<b>90%</b> (+/- 2%)	75%	<b>91%</b>
Interstate Services, <b>Overall</b>	105	95	<b>90%</b> (+/- 3%)	75%	<b>90%</b>
Initiating Interstate	68	59	<b>87%</b> (+/- 4%)	75%	<b>90%</b>
Responding Interstate	37	36	<b>97%</b> (+/- 6%)	75%	<b>91%</b>
TOTAL Case Actions Required	1541				

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 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 to Child Support Services Division (CSSD). In 2011, CSSD had 227 full time employees who managed 47,037 active IV-D child support cases, of which 43,163 cases had support orders.

In FFY 2011, CSSD distributed \$101.5 million (as reported on OCSE Form 157), of which about \$10.8 million was from the state's annual Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD).

The PFD is a significant part of the Alaskan economy, paying about \$783 million dollars to residents in FFY 2011 (about \$1,281 per applicant). The PFD helps all families, and for those people owing child support, it enables 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 PFD Division, we are also able to locate many people who owe or are owed child support.

## **Sampling Methodology**

In accordance with 45 CFR 308, the auditors extracted a systematic random sample of the statewide caseload. This sample gives a 90% confidence level with a +/- 2% margin of error. CSSD employs two internal auditors who report to the IV-D Director. A self assessment review is performed annually based on the federal fiscal year. Automated review tools are not used. All records are maintained by CSSD.

The complete IV-D universe was sampled. The population, numbering 49,670 consisted of every IV-D case that was open as of September 30, 2011, and included every IV-D case closed during the audit period, October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011. All Non-IV-D cases in the population and all 'limited-services' cases associated with intercepting the PFD instead of receiving full services were excluded.

The auditors selected a sample of 501 cases using a skip interval of 99. The auditors used Microsoft Excel to generate a random starting number. Of the 501 cases reviewed, 23 had no measurable actions or were excluded for other reasons. The exclusion rate was 5%.

## **Scope of the Review**

The audit was performed in compliance with 45 CFR 308. As in the past, Interstate Initiating was held to a more restrictive standard. This was done because the CFR only requires that a case be initiated within 20 days after receiving the information needed to complete the interstate forms. It does not set any standards for soliciting the information from the custodian of the children or answering their questions. We decided to measure this preliminary process as a way of determining the quality of service provided to the public.

The following additional criteria ensure 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 the information needed to process the case is received. Such actions 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. This requirement was expanded to include contacts with case parties and attorneys, allowing up to 30 days to reply or to forward a query to the other state.

There have been changes in the Medical Enforcement criterion. In 2010, CSSD revoked access to protected medical records by the Divisions of Public Assistance and Health Care Services as required by the IRS. Medical insurance information is provided manually to those offices. More errors will result since the process requires caseworker intervention.

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.

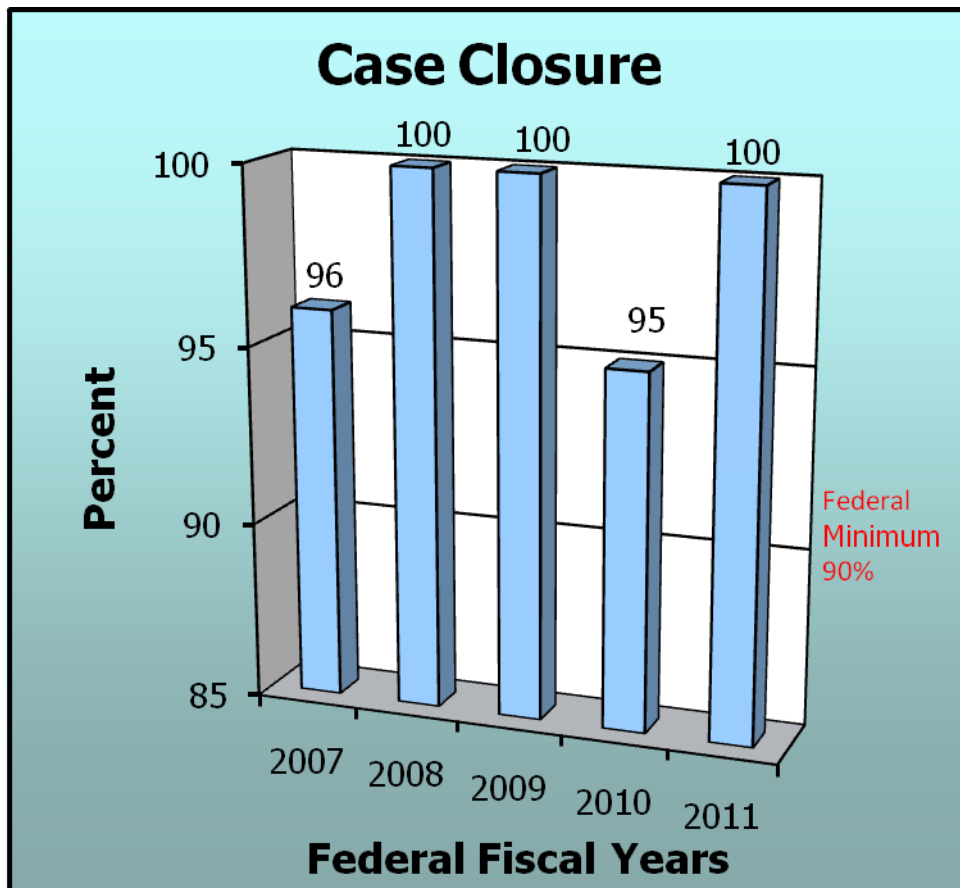
## Category 1: Program Compliance

### Review Criteria in Compliance

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

**Case Closure:** 100% (Minimum Acceptable: 90%)

There were 15 cases measured. This criterion was compliant. The margin of error was +/- 9%. The five-year average efficiency rate increased to 98%. In three out of the last five years this criterion has rated at 100%.

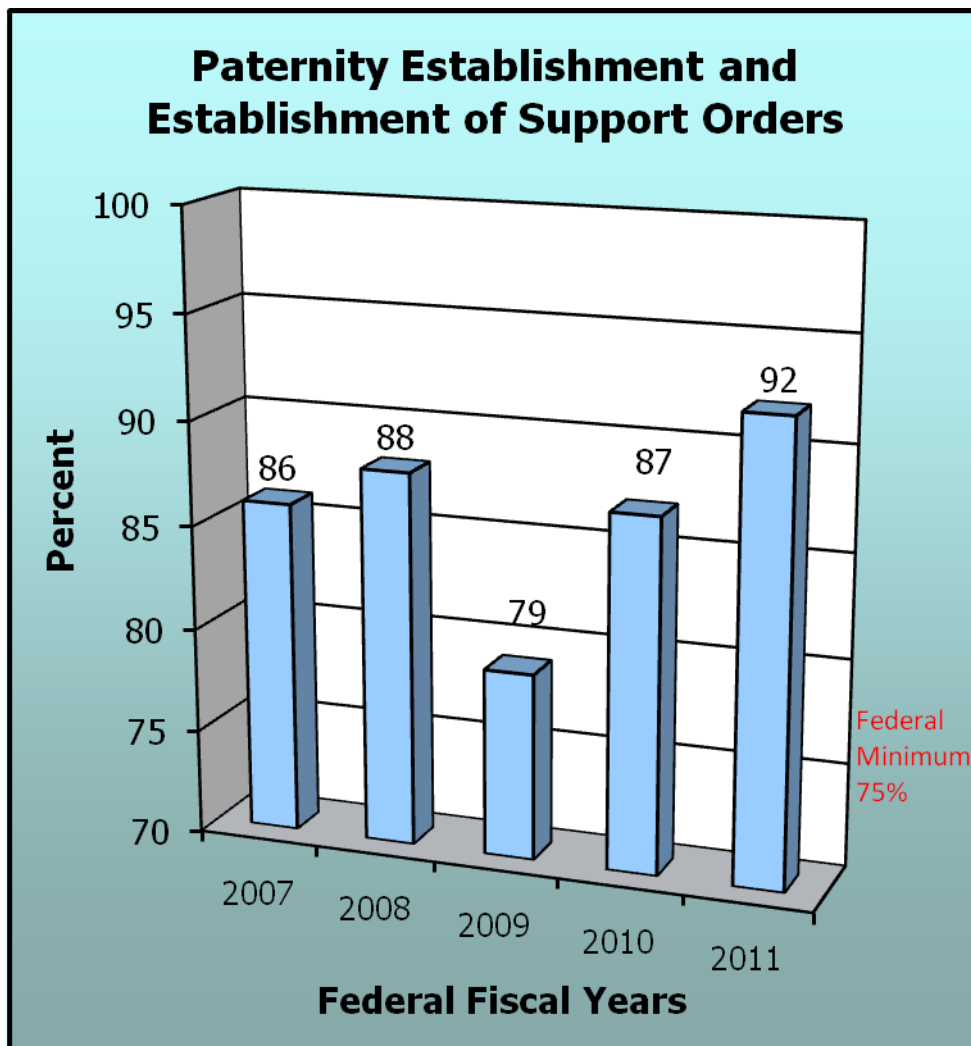




**Paternity and Support Order Establishment:** 92% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were seven errors in the 83 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant with federal guidelines. The five-year average efficiency rate was 86%.

The total number of new orders established increased 44% from 2,444 to 3,521 (as reported on OCSE Form 157).

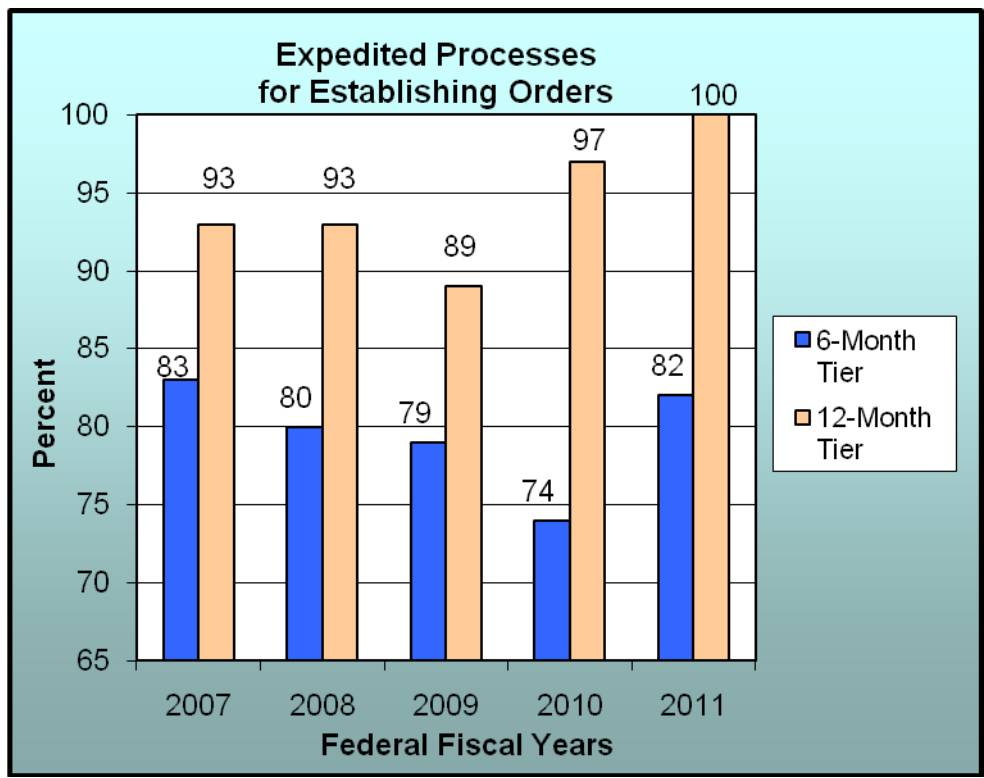


**Expedited Processes:** Within six months: 82%; within twelve months: 100%.  
 (Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

The six-month criterion was brought back into full compliance with CFR and the twelve-month tier reached 100%. Altogether, 50 cases were measured for expedited processes at both the six and twelve-month tiers. At the six-month tier, there were nine errors. At the twelve-month tier, no errors were found.

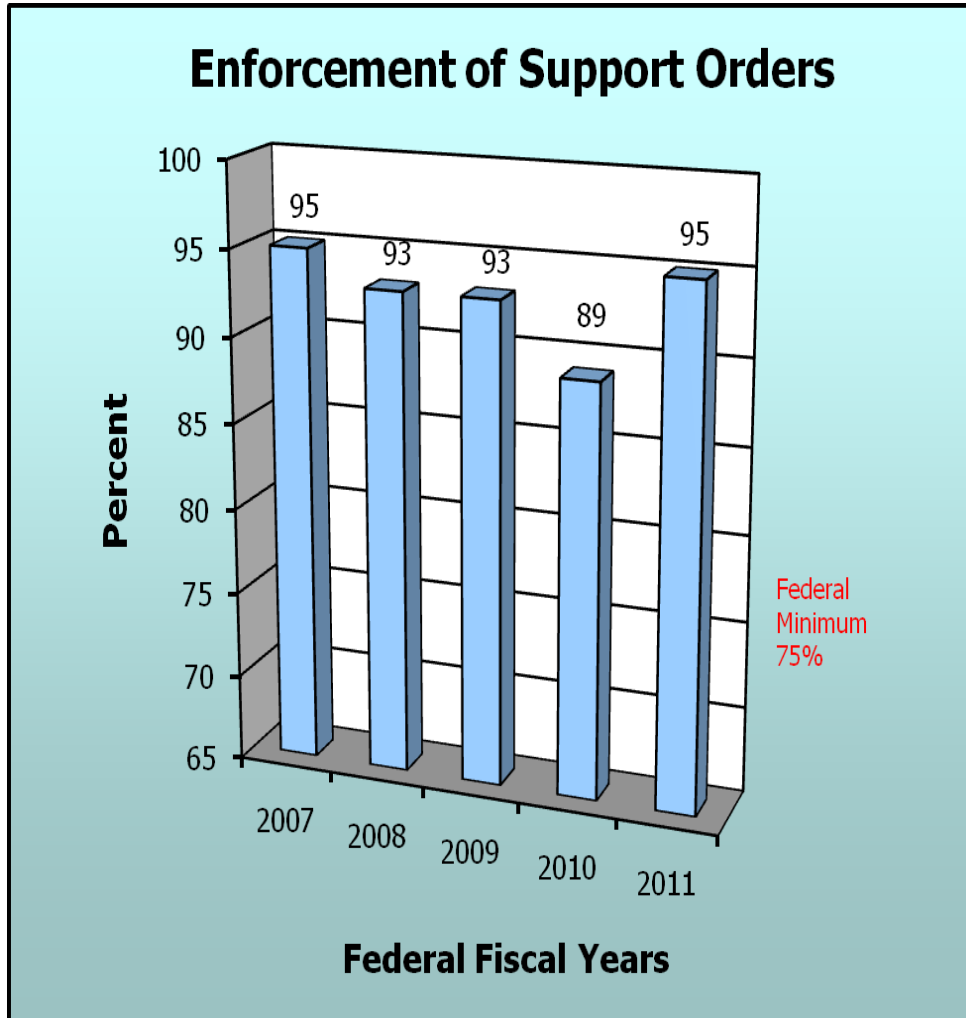
The five-year average for the six-month tier was 80% and for the twelve-month tier was 94%.

*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 six 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 twelve months.*



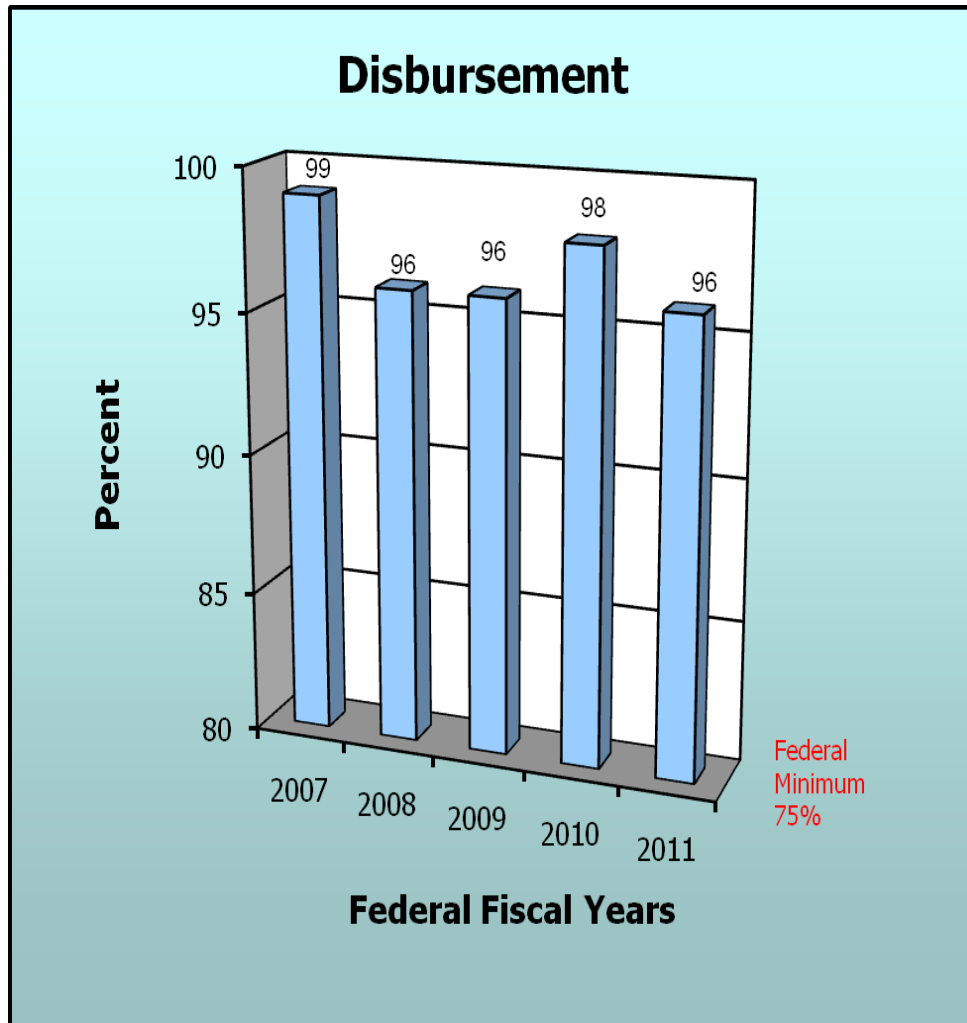
**Enforcement:** 95% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 22 errors in the 420 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 93%. Most Enforcement errors were due to not performing locate research within 75 days.



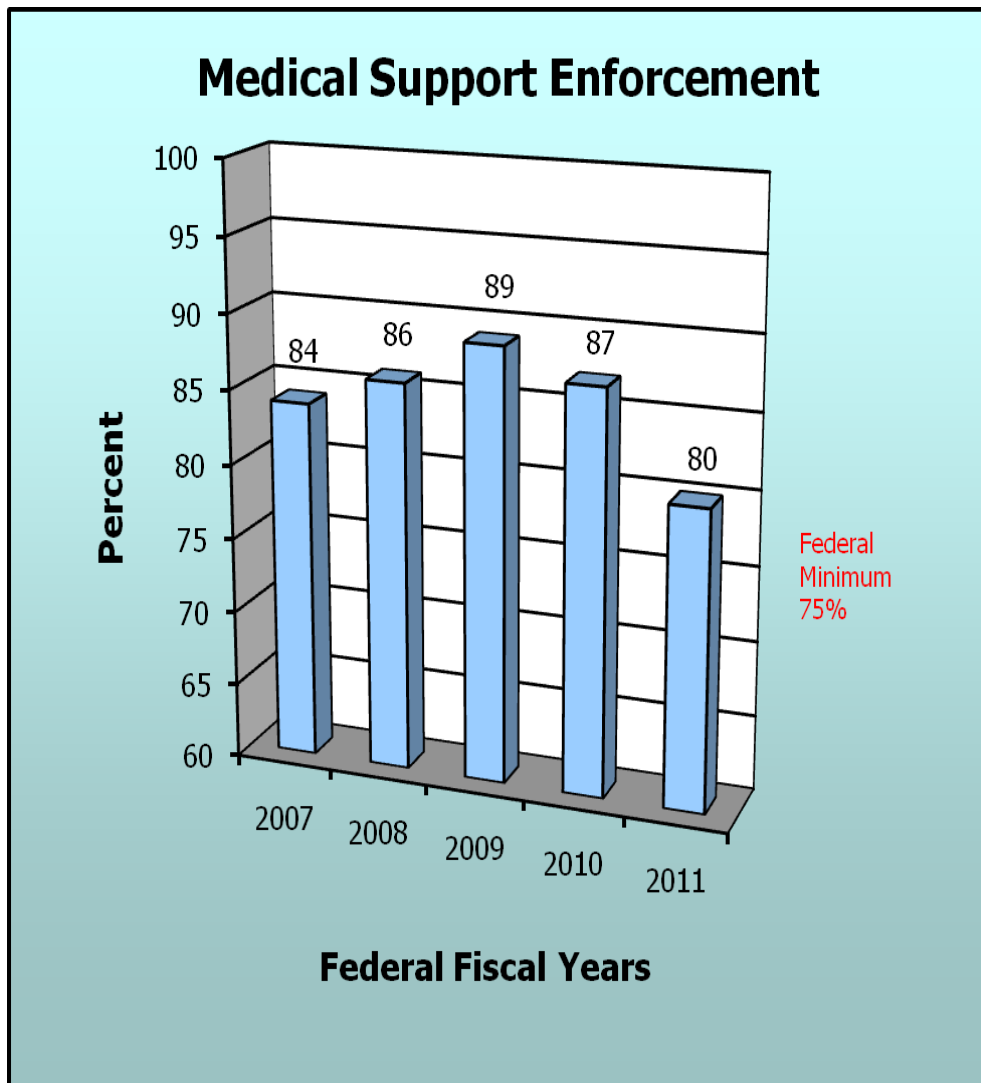
**Disbursement:** 96% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 13 errors in the 315 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 97%.



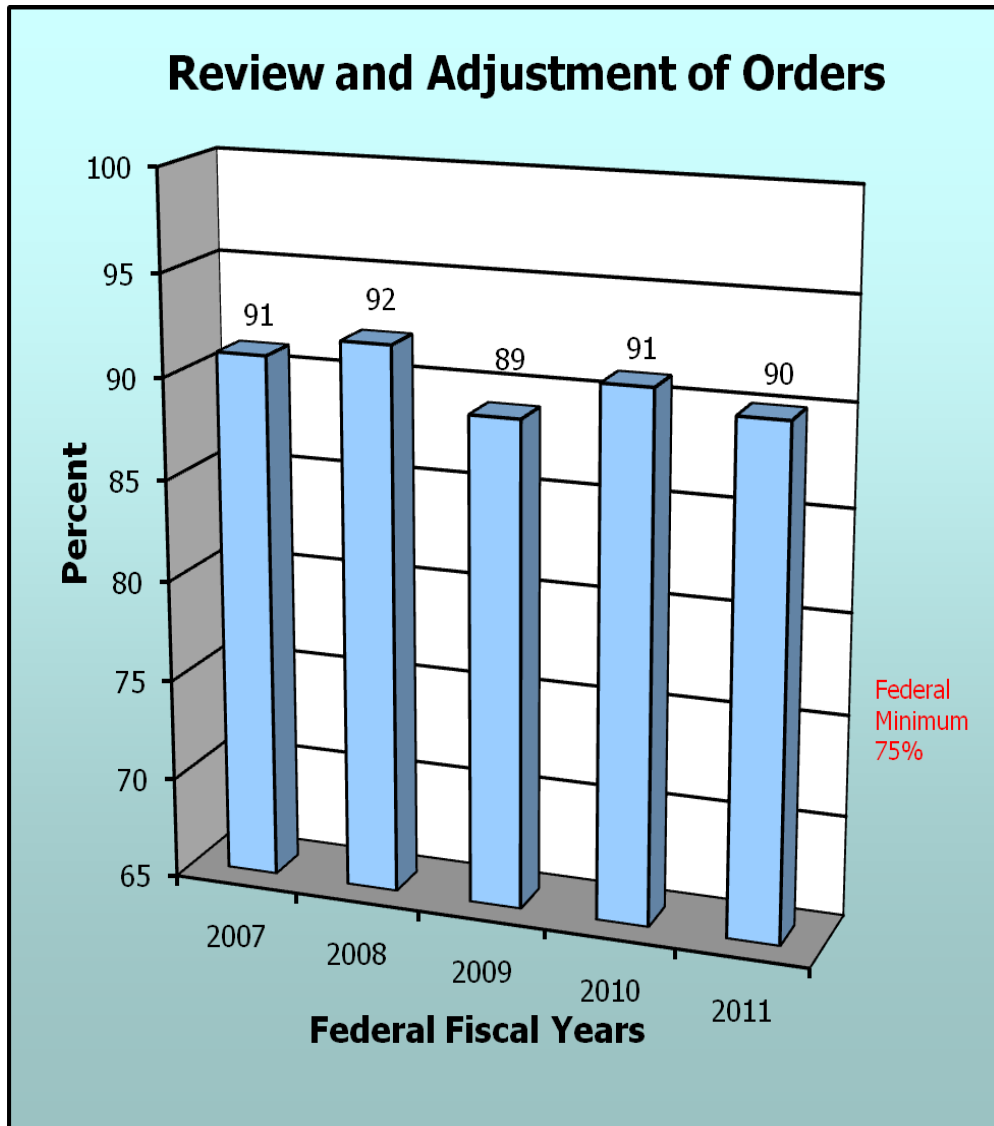
**Medical Support Enforcement:** 80% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 54 errors in the 270 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 85%. Performance fluctuated by over 9% in the last five years. This is discussed further in the Program Direction section of this report.



**Review and Adjustment of Support Orders:** 90% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 23 errors in the 233 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance was 91%. Performance remained consistent.



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

There were 10 errors in the 105 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. Ninety percent was a composite for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding actions. Interstate performance remained stable.

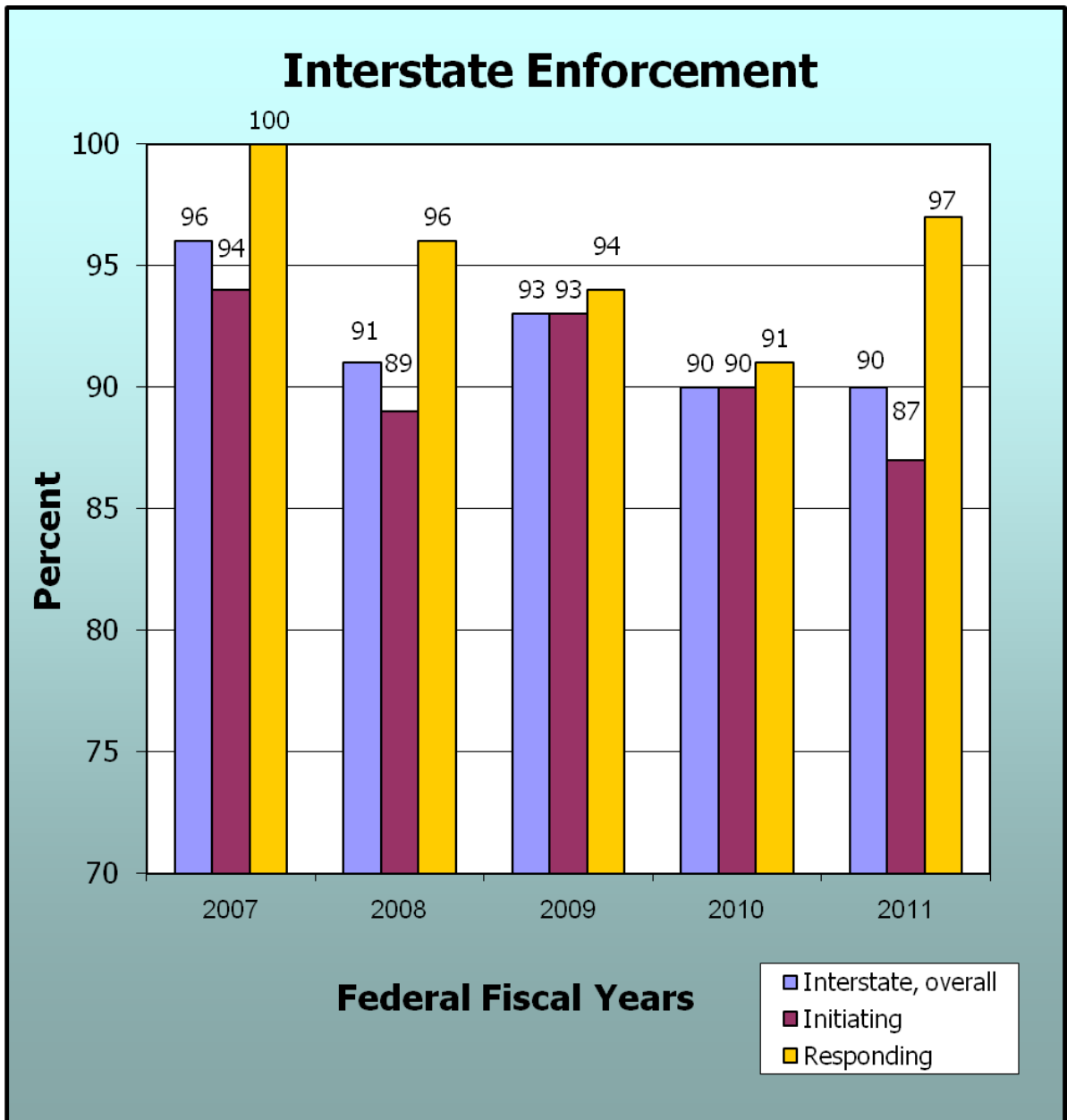
**The Initiating** subcategory was 87% compliant. There were 68 cases measured. Nine had errors. The errors are discussed further in the Program Direction section.

**The Responding** subcategory was 97% in compliance. Of the 37 cases measured, one error was found.

**The five-year averages for interstate were:**

- Overall – 92%
- Initiating – 91%
- Responding – 96%

[Chart Follows]





## Category 2: Program Direction

### Introduction

A detailed discussion of each review criterion follows, including levels of performance, prior audit findings and current audit findings. Goals and targets are also laid out here. In the event a criterion falls below the mandated minimums, a corrective action plan is also included here.

**Case Closure:** 100%. (Minimum Acceptable: 90%)

There were no errors found in the 15 cases measured.

**Prior Audit Findings.** The five-year average performance remained at 97%. The annual efficiency rate fell by 5% from FFY 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. The goal for FFY 2011 is to maintain this level of performance.

**Current Audit Findings.** The efficiency rate was 100%. The five-year average increased to 98%.

We have no new findings to report in this review. The Division will work to maintain this level of compliance. Supervisors will continue to emphasize the importance of performing these actions correctly.

**Paternity and Order Establishment: 92%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)**

Of 83 cases measured, seven had errors. This sample has a +/- 5% margin of error.

Four teams make up the Establishment Section: Intake, Paternity, Support Order Establishment, and Modification. Once a case is set up, the case is moved from the Intake team to the Paternity or Support Order Establishment team. FFY 2011 marks the second consecutive year showing an increase of IV-D cases. In FFY 2009, 92% of cases had a support order. In FFY 2010, the caseload grew faster than our ability to produce orders and the percentage fell to 89%.

In the prior two years the Establishment section experienced numerous staff vacancies. In FFY 2009, the vacancy rate reached 22%. By FFY 2010 the section was fully staffed but about 17-18% of the workforce remained in training. For FFY 2011, the new staff achieved basic competency or better. Supervisors set performance standards and quotas, reassigned some Case Intake duties to caseworkers, streamlined the Locate process, and created new tracking tools to monitor work output. As the year progressed, some staff duties were altered to increase the degree of cross-training and to prepare for a reorganization of staff and duties planned for after the end of the review period. Through revised procedures and practices, the Division increased the percentage of Cases with Orders to FFY 2009's 92% level.

There are still some problems with issuing proposed orders and getting them served, but they should decrease as caseworkers gain experience and backlogs of new cases are pushed through the process.

Below is the breakdown of errors for Paternity and Support Order Establishment.

FFY 2011 Data

Paternity and Support Order Establishment Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Exceeded 90-day limit to serve the obligor	4	57%	57%
Exceeded 20 days to open a case	2	29%	86%
Proper locate was not performed	1	14%	100%
TOTAL	7	100%	

**Prior 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).

**Current Audit Findings.** The efficiency rate was 92%. The audit revealed seven errors from the 83 cases measured for this criterion. The five-year average was 86%.

- 60% of cases with any measured actions for this criterion had an order established during the audit review period. This is an improvement over FFY 2010's 41%.
- Four errors were due to not serving the obligor within 90 days.
- Two errors occurred because we did not open a case within 20 days.
- The last error was for not performing locate functions within 75 days.

The division will work to maintain an efficiency rate above 90%.

**Expedited Processes:** Six-Month Tier 82%; Twelve-Month Tier 100%.  
(Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

We measured 50 cases for both the six-month and the twelve-month timeframes. This sample has a +/-5% margin of error. Below is a breakdown of FFY 2011 errors for Expedited Processes.

FFY 2011 Data: Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier

Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Lack of timely action taken to calculate an order amount	5	56%	56%
Lack of timely action taken for genetic testing	2	22%	78%
Lack of timely action taken for process service	2	22%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Expedited Processes Twelve-Month Tier for FFY 2011 did not have any errors to chart. This criterion is 100% compliant.

**Prior 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 Errors	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%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100%</b>	

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 1,738 cases where 1,268 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.

### **Current Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier Analysis**

The efficiency rate improved by almost eight percentage points at the six-month tier. It is now 82%. Cases must have the final support order ready to enforce within six months of serving the initial notice on the obligor parent. The number of cases measured increased from 35 to 50. There were nine errors. All were due to not taking action in a timely manner. A breakdown of the measured actions is as follows.

The majority of the errors (five, or 56%) were due to taking too long to calculate a child support order after serving the notice of paternity upon the obligor. In one of the five cases, the obligor admitted paternity. After the paternity order was issued, it took 217 days before a child support amount was calculated. It took between 107 and 196 days to calculate the child support amount in the remaining four cases. These cases could have been compliant if support calculations were made in a timely manner.

The other 44% of the errors (four cases) were also caused by taking too much time to accomplish the next required action. Two errors were due to delays in genetic testing and two were because of delays in process service.

- Genetic testing delays following the Notice of Paternity:

It took 63 days for the first case. This consumed one-third of the available time to complete the support order. It frequently takes time to arrange the travel schedules of parents and children and that introduces unavoidable delays in the genetic testing process. However, once these delays are noted, the case worker should address the problem by raising the case's priority for the next action.

The second case was opened due to a third party application. The putative father was tested within 36 days but it took 104 days to test the mother, leaving only 76 days to complete the support order. This error may have been unavoidable as a result of the mother's lack of cooperation, but again, the caseworker should have moved it to the top of the list for issuing a support order.

- Process service of the administrative support order after locating the obligor parent:

In both cases the initial service by certified mail was unsuccessful and the parties had to be process served. An enforceable child support order must be established within six months of initial service.

In the first case, it took 298 days from the initial service action to an enforceable support order. We exceeded the allowed timeframe for establishing a support order by 118 days. Ninety days passed between obtaining a final paternity order and calculating a child support order. The child support order was returned unclaimed and then sent out for process service after 55 days. It was excessive to wait 145 days to calculate the child support amount and send the order out for process service. The case could have passed had the caseworkers taken 27 days or less instead of 145 days.

The second case was due to a third party application and both parents had to be served with Notice of Paternity paperwork and a final child support order. The Alaska State Troopers served the father with paternity paperwork beginning the six-month timeframe to obtain an enforceable child support order. It took an additional 154 days to serve the mother. It took 319 days from Notice of Paternity to having an enforceable child support order. It is unlikely this case could have been compliant under circumstances existing at the time.

Each of these instances is a repeat finding from our last report, but performance still improved by almost eight percentage points in this general criterion. The FFY 2010 corrective action plan produced a positive outcome.

- The Intake Team simplified the case set-up process. Management reorganized staff and functions of the team, however we have not seen an increase in the number of cases set up. For FFY 2011, there was an average of 650 cases per month (including Non-IV-D Registry-only, Intact Family and Non-Federal Foster Care cases). When compared to the total number of cases opened in prior years, the averages were:
  - FFY 10 = 750 cases per month;
  - FFY 09 = 560 per month;
  - FFY 08 = 430 per month.
- Management set quotas for work volume with an intended average production of three to four orders per day per worker. On average, each worker only produced two orders per day. Backlogs have been nearly eliminated for Intake and Order Establishment, and most cases are now queued in the process where they should be.
- Locate work is now done by administrative assistants rather than by caseworkers which should save time and money.
- The new tracking tools allow supervisors to monitor case work for Intake and Order Establishment. The paternity tracking tool had technical problems and is being reconstructed.
- Paternity cases were to be expedited once a paternity order was obtained. This appears to be working; the cases are now being worked in the correct order. Previously a resolved paternity case went to the end of the line to await an administrative order calculation; now they are placed at the front of the line.
- One specialist caseworker now handles all of the administrative reviews of initial administrative orders. This caseworker is staying current with work requirements and three other workers are trained to support the role.
- Following the audit period, reorganization resulted in widespread reassignment of duties for caseworkers and administrative assistants. This is the final part of the plan that was intended to be implemented in FFY 2011. Streamlined duties should result in faster case openings, establishment actions and modifications of orders. This will be examined in the FFY 2012 audit.

One goal of the corrective action plan was to improve the efficiency rate at the six-month tier by 4%. This goal was achieved. The corrective action plan is still in effect.

### **Current Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Twelve-Month Tier Analysis**

The efficiency rate improved by three percentage points at the twelve-month tier to the current efficiency rate of 100%. The number of cases measured for the twelve-month tier increased from 33 to 50 cases. There were no errors found for Expedited Processes twelve-month tier.

In summary, CSSD's goal for the six-month tier should be a 2% improvement. The twelve-month tier goal is to maintain the current efficiency rate.

*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 six 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 twelve months.*

**Enforcement:** 95%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 420 cases, and found 22 errors. One hundred forty-six cases received at least one wage withholding payment during the last quarter of the review period and an additional 129 cases received at least one payment during the entire review period.

FFY 2011 Data

Enforcement of Support Orders Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to complete asset/employer locate	16	72%	72%
Case not submitted for federal offset/IRS	3	14%	86%
Withholding order not issued to an employer within two days	2	9%	95%
Not taking an appropriate enforcement action when wage withholding is not applicable	1	5%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Prior 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 FFY 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, which takes time and a knowledgeable staff. It is likely that 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 look for ways to increase efficiency in submitting cases to the FOP, but this should be secondary to changing the procedures for performing locate actions.

**Current Audit Findings.** The efficiency rate was 95%. The five-year average is 93%. The sample size increased by 26 cases but errors decreased from 42 to 22 for FFY 2011. There were four types of errors:

- Locate issues were again the biggest factor in case errors but we reduced the number of errors by eleven from the previous year (41% improvement).
- The second most common error was miscoding a case and preventing a submission to the IRS for tax refund offset. Miscoding errors were reduced by ten from FFY 2010 (77% improvement).
- The third type of error resulted from failing to issue a withholding order within two days.
- The fourth type of error was a result of not completing an appropriate enforcement action when wage withholding was not applicable to the case. It appears the problems from last year were addressed.

In FFY 2010, the auditors recommended that Enforcement look at the locate actions taken by Establishment. Establishment has two triggers to start locate actions: when there is no address; or when mail is returned due to a bad address. Enforcement uses a sixty-day no-payment report to inform them when a case needs locate actions. The Enforcement morning-mail message is triggered after forty-five days. The Internal Auditors now recommend that management shorten it to thirty-five days.

The goal for the agency is to maintain an efficiency rate of 95%.

**Disbursement:** 96%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 315 cases, and found 13 errors.

FFY 2011 Data:

Disbursement Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Hold because receipt amount is less than \$5.00. Not cost effective to cut a check.	6	46%	46%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending research. Obligor had multiple cases.	2	15%	61%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending review of the assistance status.	1	8%	69%
Proper distribution was uncertain due to dependent placement.	1	8%	77%
Adjustment was required for proper distribution.	1	8%	85%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending further research.	1	8%	93%
Seized money held for 30 days.	1	7%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Prior 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 CSSD's financial transactions are electronic now.

**Current Audit Findings.** Current efficiency rate was 96%. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance is 97%.

There are no new findings to report. The number and nature of errors are the same as found in previous years, and are manageable.

The disbursements as stated on the annual 157 report increased by 4%, or \$4.2 million, from the previous year.

Money on hold was \$317,000. The accounting staff reduced the amount holding since FFY 2010 by 24% (FFY 2010 had \$415,000 holding).

EFT accounted for about 60% of incoming transactions and 56% of dollars collected. Nearly 64% of transactions outbound were via EFT, and amounted to 62% of dollars disbursed. About 4,000 employers send money by EFT. Currently 3,023 people receive their collected support via debit card.

Performance remained stable over the last decade. The agency will work to maintain this level of efficiency and continue to reduce the money on hold.



**Medical Support Enforcement:** 80%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 270 cases, and found 54 errors. The following table breaks down the errors.

FFY 2011 Data:

Medical Support Enforcement Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to determine if insurance was available	28	52%	52%
Failed to notify the Medicaid agency of insurance	24	44%	96%
Medical petition not in the order	2	4%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Prior 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 caseworkers 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.

**Current Audit Findings.** The sample size increased by 81% and the total number of errors increased from 19 to 54. Current efficiency rate is 80%. Medical Support Enforcement has experienced a three-year decline and is now at its lowest compliance rate in the last five years, although it still exceeded the mandated minimums. The average performance over the past five years was 85%.

For both FFY 2010 and FFY 2011, more than 96% of the errors belong to two categories:

- Failure to determine if insurance was available.
- Failure to notify the Medicaid agency when insurance is provided.

In FFY 2011, the first category improved by about 11%. In the second category errors increased because of a procedural change. In 2010, CSSD revoked access to our medical records by the Divisions of Public Assistance and Health Care Services staff, as per IRS requirements. As a result, medical insurance information is now provided manually. Errors for not notifying the Medicaid agency increased from seven to 24.

Not all of the available medical information was entered into the system. This is a concern. Last year the auditors noted that data entry needed to be complete and consistent. Management took steps to train staff with the expectation that the number of errors would decline over time. For example, if a caseworker learns Indian Health Service benefits are available, they must update the system. In addition, NSTAR requires that insurance coverage dates be entered and a coverage indicator flag be coded 'Yes', in order to correctly report medical services provided. When an employer responds to a National Medical Support Notice and provides the insurance information, the caseworkers must update the medical information. In cases where insurance is in place but the party providing the insurance changed employers, the caseworker must review and update the database with the current medical insurance (i.e., is it still in place or not?). Failing to update all the medical fields caused 41 errors. We recommend that management provide corrective training.

In addition, two errors for not having a medical provision in the child support order were found. Alaska has standard judicial and child support order templates that include medical provisions. The first error was because the courts did not use their standard template but instead had a custom-drafted child support order. Currently the case is being reviewed for closure because the non-custodial parent is deceased. The second case error was a South Carolina order. The order indicated that medical coverage was not available through the defendant's employer at a reasonable cost, but it did not further stipulate future coverage by either parent. The child emancipated in March 2011 and the case was closed.

Over the last five years the efficiency rate fluctuated by over 9% and has been steadily declining since FFY 2010. Management must ensure that caseworkers are fully trained for medical enforcement, emphasizing data entry for insurance information. The agency should improve compliance by at least 2% in the next fiscal year.

**Review and Adjustment:** 90%. (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Of 233 cases measured, there were 23 errors. Failure to send Notices of Rights to Request a Review triennially accounted for 21 errors. The average efficiency rate for the past five years is 91%.

The Internal Auditors conducted a focused audit of Review and Adjustment in April of 2010. We looked closely at the time it takes to modify an order and what steps might be taken to speed up the judicial process. This audit was intended to illuminate the practical problems surrounding order modifications and suggest ways to improve service to the public. It revealed that the main cause of delay was the time it takes to process an action through the Superior Court.

One improvement that came out of that review was a simple procedural change for paternity cases. Paternity establishment is required in some cases prior to a modification. Previously, after obtaining a paternity order the case was placed back at the end of the line of new cases needing a review. Now the case is put next in line to issue an administrative child support order. This saves significant time that would otherwise count against the Expedited Processes timeframe.

The court process was discussed with our lawyers at the Attorney General's Office. They reexamined their workflow and found points where filing a court action or supplemental brief could be expedited. It remains to be seen whether these changes will significantly reduce the time it takes to obtain orders through the courts.

In this self assessment audit, 35 of the 233 cases measured for Review and Adjustment could be measured against the 180-day timeframe for completing a modification. Thirty cases had a modification completed or a denial issued in 180 days or less. This amounts to an 86% compliance rate. Of those 35 cases, 34%, or 12 cases, were administrative actions.

FFY 2011 Data:

Review and Adjustment of Orders Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to issue Notice of Right to Request Review every three years	21	91%	91%
Modification process exceeded 180 days	2	9%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**Prior 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.

**Current Audit Findings.** The current level of performance is acceptable; however, management should closely monitor the time it takes to complete a Review and Adjustment of an order, and should determine if the number of administrative actions is falling while judicial actions are rising. The existing corrective action plan remains in effect and its effectiveness will be examined in greater detail in the next self assessment review.

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

The performance composite for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding cases is 90%. Of the 105 cases measured, ten had errors. CSSD holds Interstate Initiating to a more restrictive standard than CFR requirements. One of the ten errors was a result of this restrictive standard. The five-year average is 92%.

FFY 2011 Data: Initiating Interstate

Initiating Interstate Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to initiate to other state within 20 days	8	89%	89%
Not sending paperwork in a timely manner	1	11%	100%
TOTAL	9	100%	

FFY 2011 Data: Responding Interstate

Responding Interstate Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Over 5 days response to status request	1	100%	100%
TOTAL	1	100%	

**Prior Audit Findings.** Current performance is acceptable, but supervisors should ensure that new mail coming into the teams is timely reviewed and prioritized for caseworker action. Interstate performance will be monitored as the economy improves to see if there is a correlation. If one is not indicated, 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. The 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.

**Current Audit Findings.** The Overall Interstate criterion remained compliant at 90% for the second year. The five-year efficiency rate is 92% as in the previous year.

**Initiating Interstate Analysis**

This subcategory was 87% in compliance. The five-year average is 91%.

We measured 68 cases and found nine errors. Eight of the nine errors were due to not initiating the case to another state within 20 days of locating an obligor outside of Alaska. A decision is needed on a case to either initiate to another IV-D agency or to directly enforce the case. Errors included the following:

- One case was transferred from domestic enforcement to interstate but no alert was entered for a caseworker to take the next appropriate action.
- One case the worker failed to take action as required.
- One case had the alert assigned to the wrong caseworker.
- Two cases the caseworker took too long to take action.

- Two cases the address was provided; one by the obligor and the other by application, but action was not taken in a timely manner.
- One case had a confirmed address for the obligor but postal verifications were reissued instead of either initiating or enforcing the case.

In one case, the error would not be considered out of compliance per CFR requirements but the auditors measured it out of compliance based on our stricter standards (See **Optional Criteria Reviewed**). A General Testimony packet (GT), or a Registration of Foreign Order packet, should be sent to the custodial parent within 30 days of determining that an interstate action is needed (only if it is required to initiate a case; in some State-Only cases, the GT is not needed). The caseworker determined the case needed to be initiated prior to the postal confirmation of the obligor's address. The obligor's address was confirmed but 94 days elapsed before a general testimony was sent to the custodial parent. The GT should have been sent out as soon as the address was confirmed.

### **Responding Interstate Analysis**

This subcategory was 97% in compliance. The five-year average was 96%.

Out of 37 cases measured one error was found. This criterion remained compliant. The error was due to not responding to a status request within five working days. The initiating state requested status on a withholding order and it took 23 days to respond that we were still awaiting a response from the employer.

### **Overall recommendations and goals:**

While we are meeting the twenty-day requirement for initiating cases to other states, there was a decline in performance over the last three years. We recommend that training be conducted and case handling practices be reviewed. All cases that require an interstate initiation should be acted upon within 20 calendar days as required by 45 CFR 303.7.



As a goal, the Interstate Initiating team should post a 2% gain in efficiency for the next year. Responding Interstate workers should maintain their current level of performance.

***Note: Optional Criteria Reviewed***

*In addition to the criteria in 45 CFR 308, the Internal Auditors measured actions that are necessary to successfully process an initiating case. These include sending appropriate documents (such as the General Testimony, and Paternity Affidavits) to the custodial parent within a reasonable timeframe (30 days). The team must also provide follow-up support as necessary, and respond to inquiries from case parties to facilitate customer satisfaction.*

## **Management Issues:**

We reviewed the processes for Intake, Paternity, Establishment and Modifications in 2010. Changes to work flow, prioritization and monitoring time frames were implemented near the end of the fiscal year. Benchmarks and timelines for improvement were due in the second quarter of the year. The findings in this audit, specifically the increase in the number of orders established by the agency, indicate that improvements in these three functions are likely. Focused audits on these areas will need to be performed to be certain. Due to time constraints, some will not be undertaken until 2013.

### Category 3: Program Service Enhancements

- ❖ During FFY 2011, the Anchorage Customer Service Reception area and Phone Bank handled 83,350 phone calls and over 9,200 walk-ins. Field offices in Juneau, Fairbanks and Wasilla handled approximately 14,000 phone calls plus 7,500 walk-ins. CSSD continues to offer additional services in the Anchorage Customer Service Center. This includes sample collection for genetic testing, verifications of child support received, email responses, 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.
  
- ❖ Staff 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, Russian, Samoan, Ukrainian, and Tagalog. We will acquire a translator at agency expense for the client within ten days upon request.
  
- ❖ In FFY 2011, A program called, “Think About It” focusing on teenage pregnancies was implemented. “Think About It” is a combination of engaging presentations, interactive student activities and real life scenarios with a focus on Alaska’s child support program. Its goal is to demonstrate how paying child support as a teen would affect their lives now, and in the future. The presentation provides information about paternity establishment, child support and medical support orders, and the enforcement tools used to collect child support payments. The program enhances the general educational curriculum and provides awareness of parenthood responsibilities. The kick-off introduction to the program started with the Anchorage School District in early December of 2010. Comments received from the teachers and students were positive and the overall evaluations were rated at the top of the chart.

- ❖ The Outreach Program is still in place and working well. CSSD staff traveled to eight communities to meet with clients who otherwise have little or no opportunity to meet a caseworker. Staff traveled approximately 6,100 miles to visit these towns. Outreach is especially valuable in Alaska where cultural differences and isolation make it difficult to help case parties. In past years more than a dozen remote towns and villages were visited. Genetic test samples for paternity cases are also taken during these visits, which saves money for the obligor and the agency by not having to fly families to a hub city for testing.
  
- ❖ The towns visited in FFY 2011 were:
  - ⇒ Bethel
  - ⇒ Dillingham
  - ⇒ Fairbanks
  - ⇒ Juneau
  - ⇒ Kenai & Soldotna
  - ⇒ Ketchikan
  - ⇒ Kotzebue
  - ⇒ Nome
  - ⇒ Petersburg
  - ⇒ Sitka
  
- ❖ CSSD's Outreach Program is the first point of contact for all 236 federally recognized tribes in Alaska, and for all tribal programs that affect child support. Two employees work in the Outreach Program. They represent the agency 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. CSSD offers assistance to the following tribal entities:

- ⇒ Aleutian-Pribilof Island Association
  - ⇒ Kenaitze Indian Tribal Court
  - ⇒ Bristol Bay Native Association, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Maniilaq Tribal TANF Program, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Central Council Tlingit-Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Association of Village Council Presidents and Kodiak Area Native Association operate Tribal TANF programs.
  - ⇒ Native Village of Barrow uses our services to pursue non-custodial parents when children are in tribal foster care.
  - ⇒ 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 serve as the central registry for their orders.
- ❖ 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 targeted for outreach services are:
- ⇒ Operation Stand Down (for veterans who need help)
  - ⇒ 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)
  - ⇒ Cook Inlet Tribal Council's (Correctional Center) Bridge to Success Reentry Program and the Fatherhood Program
  - ⇒ Veterans Administration Domiciliary
  - ⇒ Victims for Justice – we provide indirect assistance as requested
  - ⇒ Local middle and high schools
- ❖ In FFY 2011 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 visited as often as is practicable:

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

❖ Outreach efforts are advertised via local newspapers and radio shows; and open radio forums as requested; public service announcements are published on the CSSD 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
  
- ❖ The Department of Revenue, on behalf of 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 departmental investigators to see if a child support debt exists. Then CSSD serves a withholding order on the police department for the money being held. Nearly \$90,000 was collected via cash and property withholding orders in FFY 2011.

- ❖ The Division contracts three investigators from the Department of Revenue who work on criminal and difficult to enforce cases. As a result of “passport releases” 63 obligors paid over \$143,000. The Criminal Investigation Unit successfully prosecuted multiple cases. Five obligors charged with criminal non-support were processed in FFY 2011 resulting in a payment agreement, a plea agreement and an incarceration. The fourth obligor is in the final stages of appeal and the last obligor is awaiting a hearing. Additionally, an obligor’s spouse was indicted for aiding in the nonpayment of child support after providing employment to her then-husband, enabling the obligor to avoid paying his support obligation for children from a previous marriage. Her case was resolved with a guilty plea, restitution and one year probation.
  
- ❖ Currently, 4,000 individuals use debit cards as their means to receive child support payments. In 2004, about 100 individuals used debit cards. Employers sending payments by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) increased 16% to 3,023 in FFY 2011. EFT and the banking system's Automated Clearing House (ACH) are the preferred methods for accepting and issuing payments. Wider use of EFT is advocated in daily contacts with the public and employers. For FFY 2011, outgoing EFT/ACH transactions were 64% of our total disbursements and incoming transactions were 60% EFT/ACH. EFT/ACH enrollment forms and informational links are on the CSSD website for clients, employers and other state agencies. Additionally, EFT/ACH enrollment forms are occasionally inserted with check disbursements. We also reach out to employers via telephone and mail.
  
- ❖ Over the past year, great strides were made in moving towards a more digital workplace where information is stored and shared via electronic media rather than paper. Documents which must be retained in case files have been implemented in our Imaging system. As a result, approximately 90-95% of all incoming documents are now being scanned upon receipt by the Division’s Mail Distribution Center (MDC). Once scanned, these documents can then be routed to the necessary workers and stored in the Content Management system as TIF files, rather than



- routing/storing the actual paper documents. As a precaution, the hardcopies are temporarily stored for 30 to 90 days, depending on type, for correction of any errors in imaging. A major goal is the conversion of all “paper” files to digital “virtual” files. This process has begun, but as cleaning, organizing, and preparing each file to be converted is a fairly labor-intensive process, it is proceeding slowly. Although digital file conversion is an important long-term goal, it cannot be prioritized over imaging and processing of current incoming mail and ongoing daily operations. Thus, it is being worked on an “as time allows” basis. As procedures are refined, we expect to make virtual file conversion an embedded part of the File Center/MDC daily workflow, and set realistic goals for a timeline on converting all files currently existing in physical form. This is expected to be a long term project, due to the sheer volume of information to be converted (estimated at several million documents).
- ❖ Web-based applications are the wave of the future. One of CSSD’s more widely used tools is the Online Guidelines Calculator that the 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 the mainframe system to upload caseworker-originated calculations. 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. This process is nearly complete as of 2011.
  - ❖ 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
- ⇒ Online financial statements for all payees and payers

CSSD maintains an extensive website, <http://childsupport.alaska.gov>, providing information for new clients, existing clients, employers and other states. From FFY 2009 to 2010 we saw a 15% increase in webpage visitors. From FFY 2010 to 2011 the increase jumped by 45%. There were 262,000 visitors in FFY 2011 compared to 181,000 in FFY 2010. Overall visits almost doubled to 1.2 million and the pages viewed more than doubled to 2.3 million. A total of 126 countries or territories are represented as website visitors. People are using mobile devices more often to access our website. Last year 5% of the visits were via mobile devices. This year it was up to almost 15%. The most visited page was the 'kidsonlineinfo' page, where an existing client can enter their member number and retrieve the last payment information for all their cases.

## Conclusion

Alaska's Child Support Services Division can once again report that it has met all the federal requirements for basic performance. The self assessment review also shows that improvements in some areas are consistent and that goals, plans and expectations for all sections of the agency are likely to be met in the future.

