



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

**Self-Assessment Review
FFY 2013**

March 18, 2014

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	3
SAMPLING METHODOLOGY	4
SCOPE OF THE REVIEW	5
CATEGORY 1: PROGRAM COMPLIANCE	6
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>Intergovernmental Services</i>	13
CATEGORY 2: PROGRAM DIRECTION.....	15
INTRODUCTION	15
<i>Case Closure</i>	15
<i>Paternity and Support Order Establishment</i>	17
<i>Expedited Processes</i>	20
<i>Enforcement</i>	28
<i>Disbursement</i>	31
<i>Medical Support Enforcement</i>	33
<i>Review and Adjustment of Support Orders</i>	37
<i>Intergovernmental Services</i>	40
MANAGEMENT ISSUES:	45
CATEGORY 3: PROGRAM SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS	46
CONCLUSION.....	51

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) 2013. For this audit period, CSSD exceeded federal compliance requirements for all measured criteria. The active IV-D caseload grew by eight-tenths of a percent (0.8%). We had no change in the number of staff. The Self Assessment Review shows improvements are consistent and that goals, plans and expectations for all sections of the agency are likely to be met in the future.

Case Closure continued to measure between 95% - 100% compliant as in the previous five years. Paternity and Support Order Establishment, Enforcement, Disbursement, Medical Support Enforcement, and Review and Adjustment either met or surpassed their five-year-average efficiency rates. In Expedited Processes, which measures how quickly we obtain an order, our performance was stable compared with recent years. Our cooperative efforts with other states and countries, which we refer to as intergovernmental child support services, experienced a three percent improvement to 93%.

Our program enhancements are successful. In 2010, the first year of our teen outreach program, we visited ten schools. Last year we added events at juvenile detention centers and in total conducted seventy presentations. The number of Kidsline calls nearly doubled compared to the prior year. Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) usage continues to increase. Changes to the administrative appeal processes saved over \$100,000.

For last year, CSSD's active IV-D caseload grew from 47,844 to 48,222. The number of open cases with orders increased from 43,190 to 44,409. The agency distributed \$103.5 million in child support in FFY 2013. This was about \$500,000 less than last year. Case count and financial statistics came from the OCSE-157 Report.

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

Criterion	Cases That Required Action	Cases Compliant With Time Frames	Efficiency Rate: 2013	Federal Minimum Standard	Last Year: 2012
Case Closure	65	62	95%	90%	100%
Paternity/Establishment	70	66	94%	75%	92%
Expedited Processes within 6 months	32	25	78%	75%	76%
Expedited Processes within 12 months	32	30	94%	90%	96%
Enforcement	427	413	97%	75%	94%
Disbursement	327	321	98%	75%	97%
Medical Support Enforcement	170	164	96%	75%	81%
Review and Adjustment	278	272	98%	75%	90%
Intergovernmental Services, Overall	122	113	93%	75%	90%
Intergovernmental Initiating	68	63	93%	75%	85%
Intergovernmental Responding	54	50	93%	75%	98%
TOTAL Case Actions Required	1523				

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. The audit review period was October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013.

Introduction

Background

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 2013, CSSD had 227 full time employees who managed 48,222 active IV-D child support cases, of which 44,409 cases had support orders.

The Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) is a significant part of the Alaskan economy, paying about \$536 million dollars to residents in FFY 2013 (\$878 per applicant). Dividend payments decreased 25% from the previous year. For the year under review, CSSD collected and disbursed \$7.4 million of PFD money. The PFD helps all families, and for those people owing child support, it enables them to 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.

In 2013, the Alaska population was 736,399, of which 54% resided in the Anchorage/Mat-Su Economic Region. The unemployment rate not seasonally adjusted was 6.5%. Alaska is expected to add 38,749 jobs between 2010 and 2020, an increase of 12%. Health care and the social assistance industry is projected to grow by 31%.

Sampling Methodology

In accordance with 45 CFR 308, the auditors extracted a systematic random sample from the statewide caseload. This sample size has 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 including every case that closed during FFY 2013. In addition, this year we included Non-IV-D cases closed during the year. We wanted to confirm that closed Non-IV-D cases are reporting correctly. The population, numbering 74,585 consisted of every IV-D case that was open as of September 30, 2013, and included every case closed during the audit period, October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. We included all cases that changed from IV-D to Non-IV-D during the year and included Non-IV-D cases closed during the year. 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. We performed a detailed review of 511 cases.

The auditors selected a sample of 746 cases using a skip interval of 100. The auditors used Microsoft Excel to generate a random starting number of 46. Of the 746 cases reviewed, 235 had no measurable actions, were Non-IV-D or were excluded for other reasons. The exclusion rate was 32%.

Scope of the Review

The audit was performed in compliance with 45 CFR 308. As in the past, Intergovernmental Initiating was held to a more restrictive standard. The CFR requires a case be initiated within twenty days after receiving the information needed to complete the intergovernmental forms. It does not set time-standards for soliciting 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 Intergovernmental services:

- Sending a General Testimony packet, or a Registration of Foreign Order packet, to the custodial parent within a reasonable amount of time (30 days), if it is required to initiate a case.
- Following-up on the return of the required documentation. Contacting the custodial parent, 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.
- Expanding the requirement for timely responses to include contacts with case parties and attorneys, allowing up to 30 days to reply or to forward a query to the other tribunal. Timely responses should be made to other intergovernmental agencies and case parties to facilitate customer service, not just to meet CFR requirements. The CFR sets a response time frame for status requests and for information requests from other states.

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.

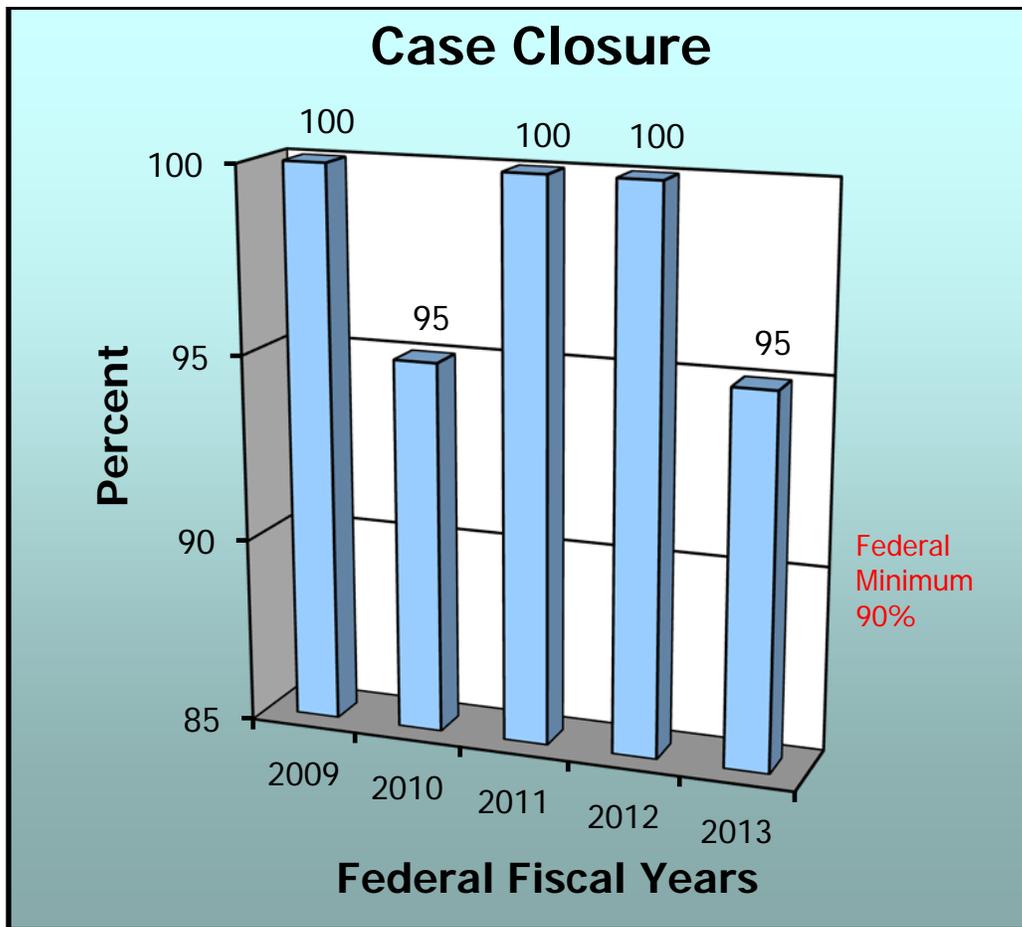
Category 1: Program Compliance

Review Criteria in Compliance

Percentages were calculated by dividing the number of cases with no measurable errors by the total-cases-measured for each 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.

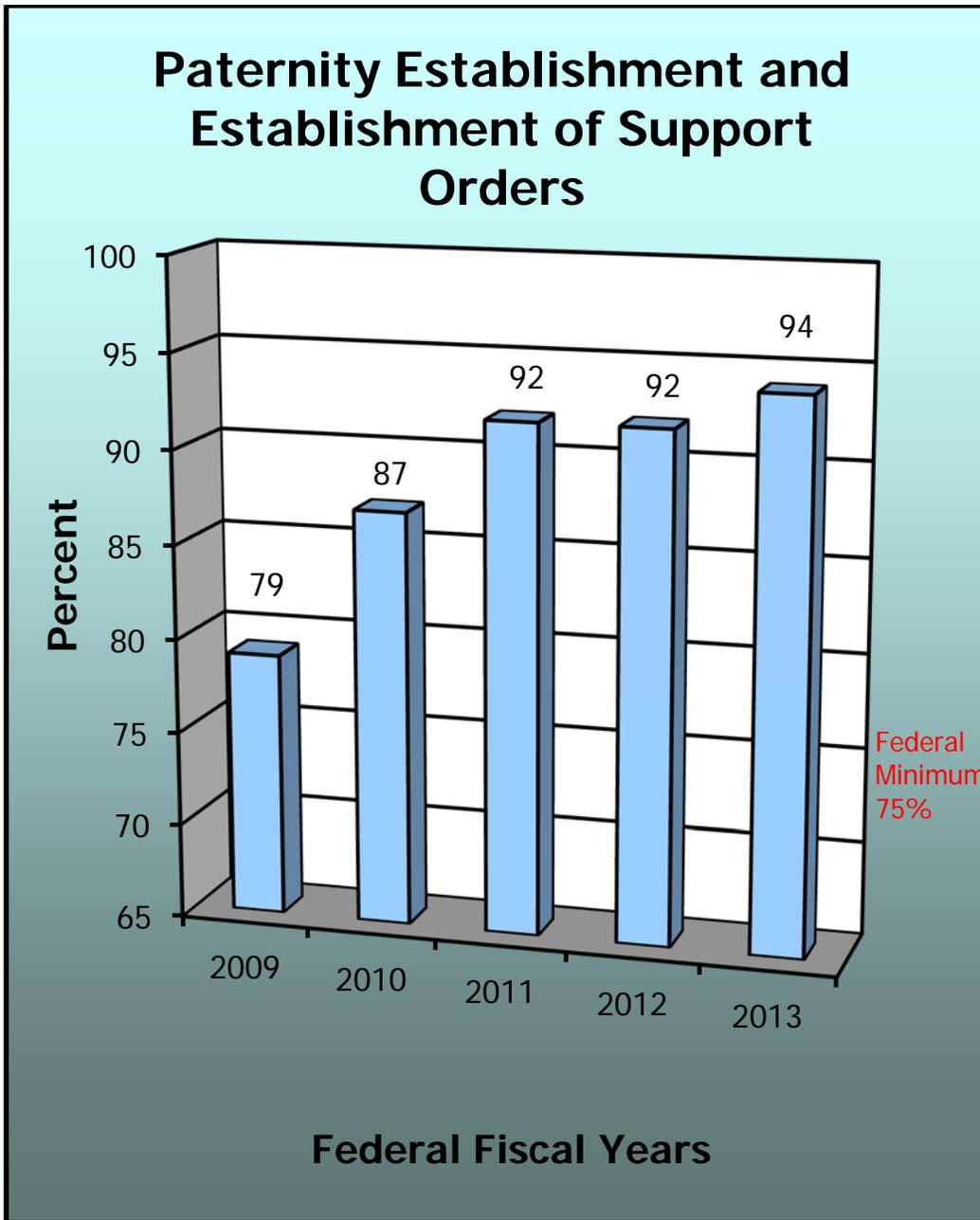
Case Closure: 95% (Minimum Acceptable: 90%)

There were 65 cases measured. There were three errors. This criterion was compliant. The five-year average efficiency rate was 98%.



Paternity and Support Order Establishment: 94% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were four errors in the 70 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant with federal guidelines. The five-year average efficiency rate increased to 89%.

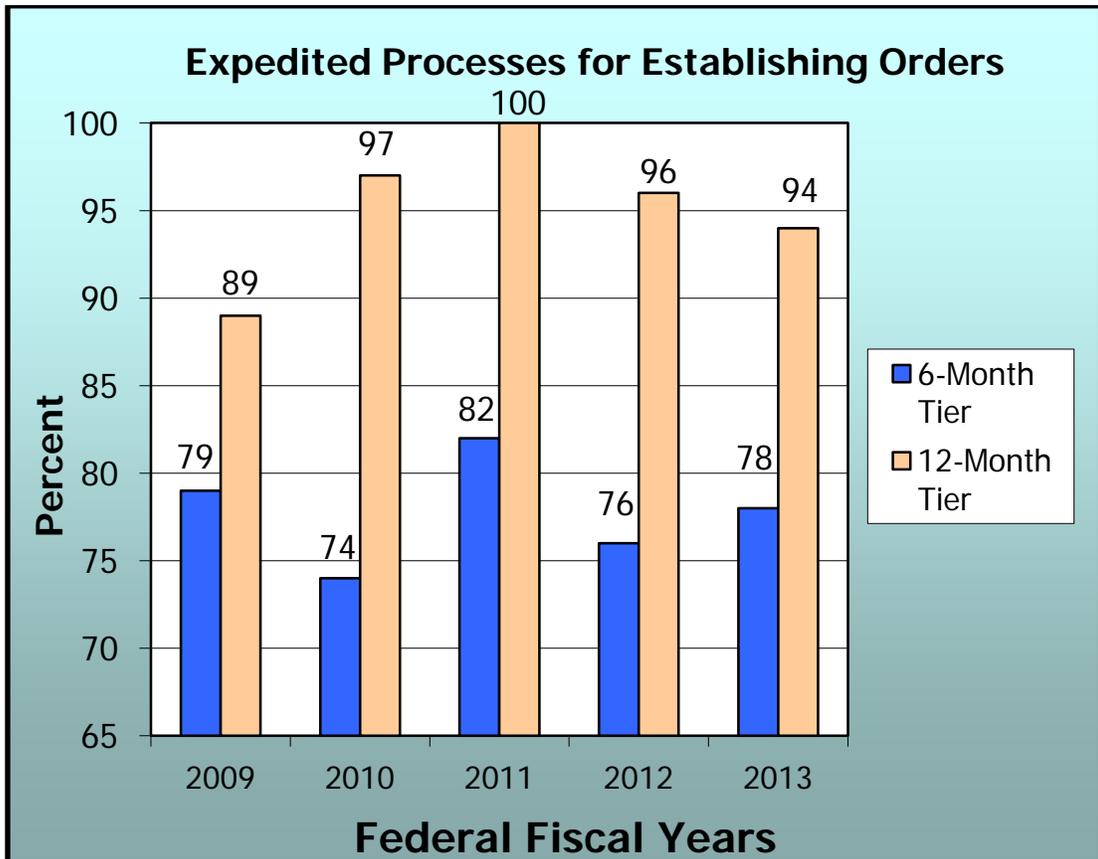


Expedited Processes: Within six months: 78%; within twelve months: 94%.
 (Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

Altogether, 32 cases were measured for expedited processes at the six-month tier and the twelve-month tier. At the six-month tier, there were seven errors. At the twelve-month tier, there were two errors. Both tiers remained compliant.

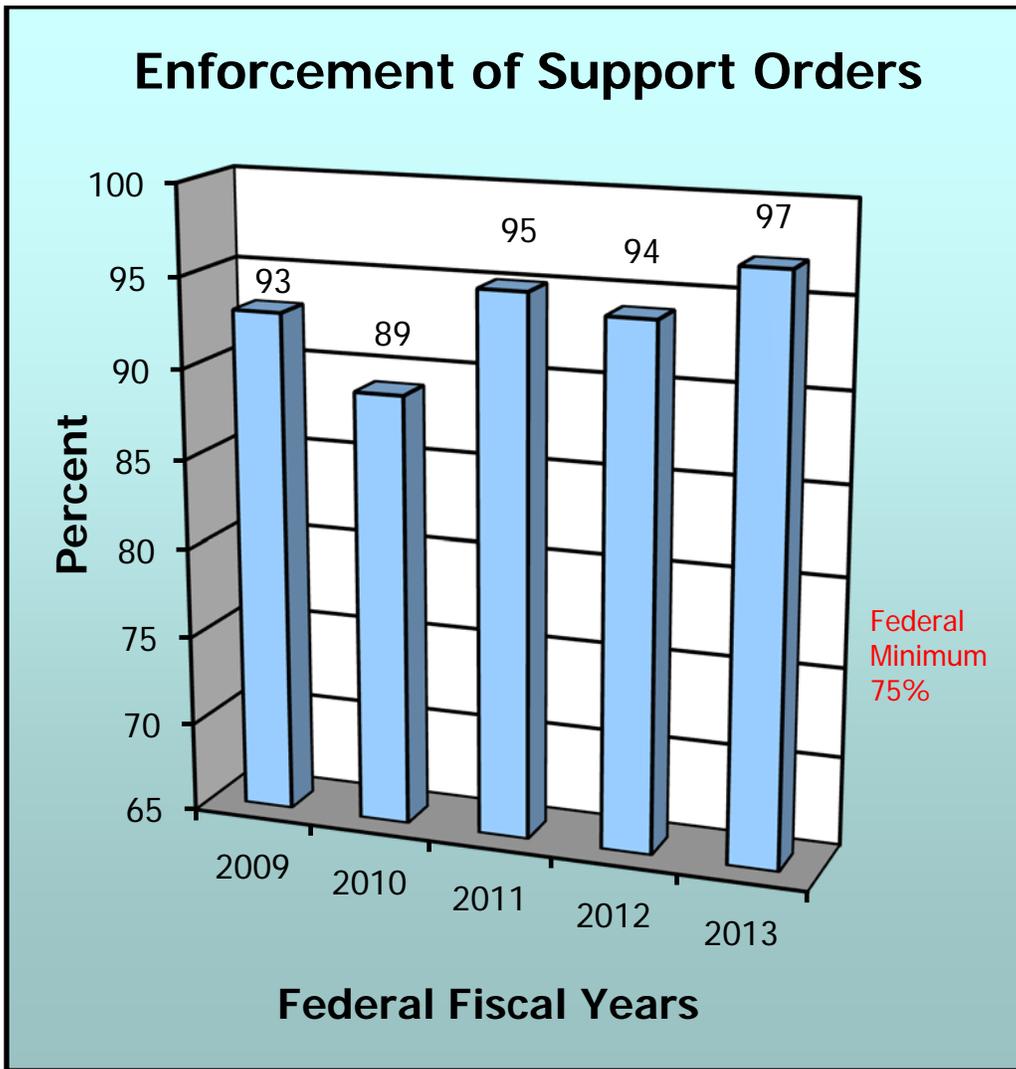
The five-year average for the six-month tier remained at 78%. The five-year average for the twelve-month tier remained at 95%.

Note: The Expedited Processes criterion measures the time allowed under the CFR to establish child support orders. The time frame 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.



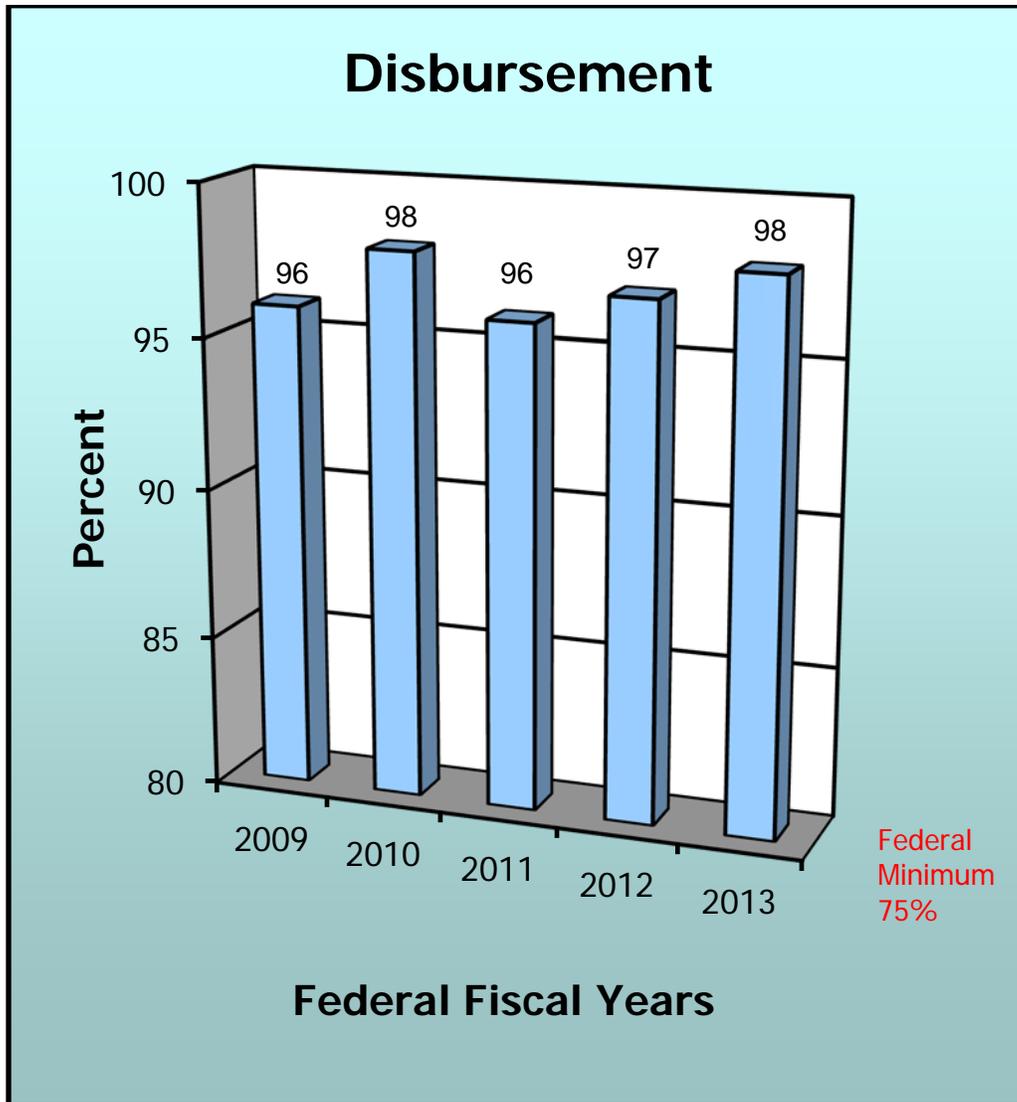
Enforcement: 97% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were 14 errors in the 427 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. Most enforcement errors were due to not performing locate research within 75 days. The five-year average performance increased to 94%.



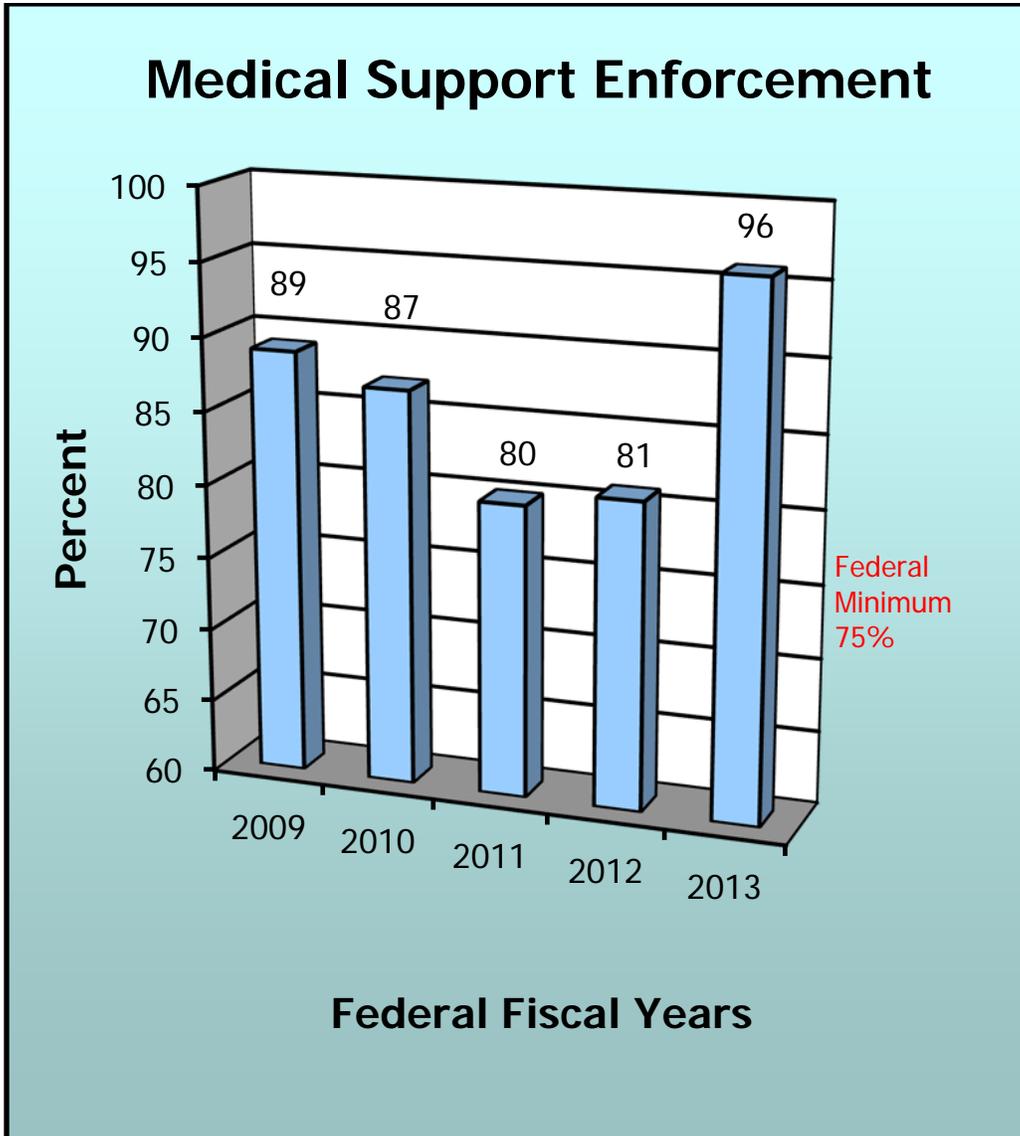
Disbursement: 98% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were six errors in the 327 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance remained at 97%.



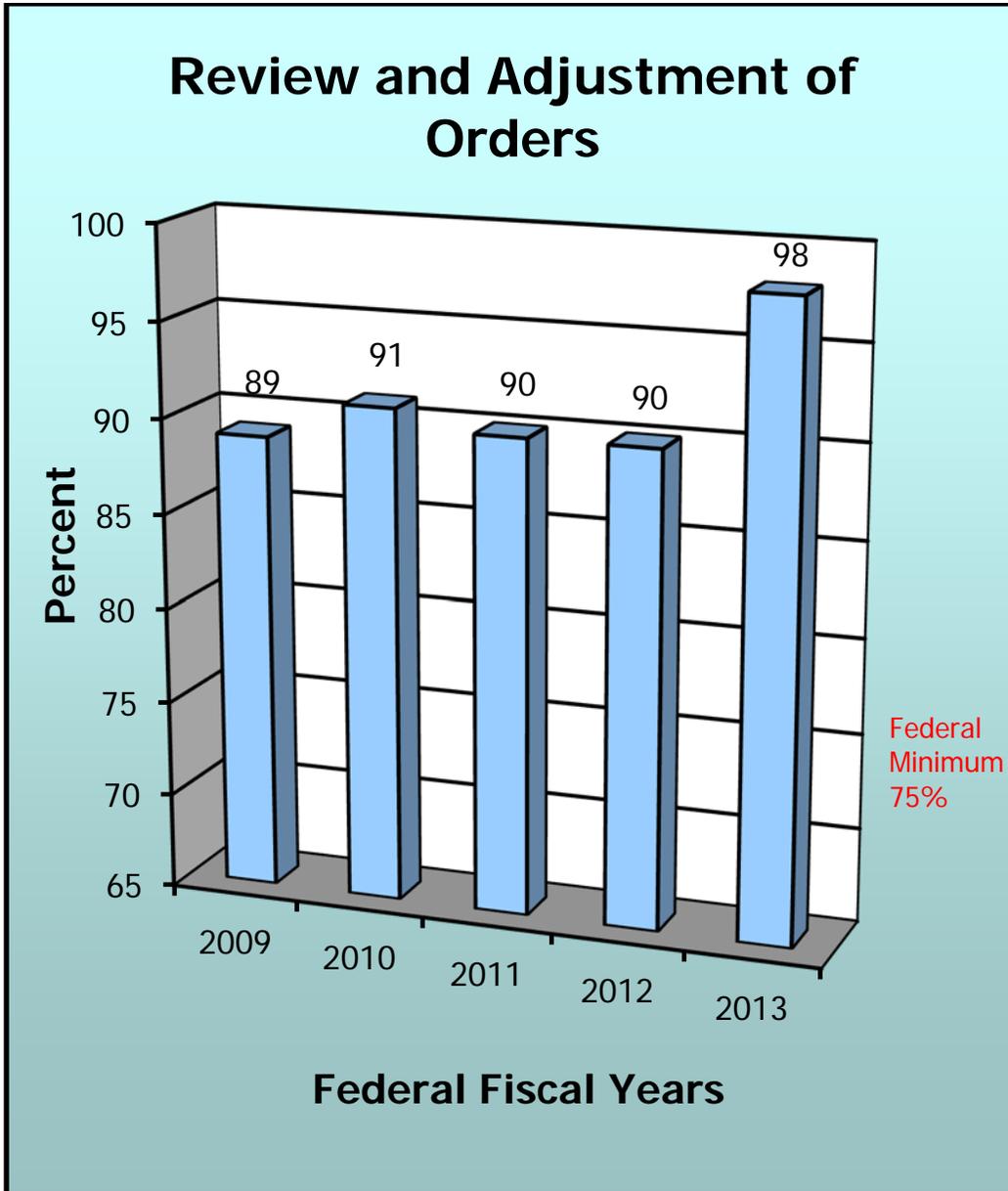
Medical Support Enforcement: 96% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were six errors in the 170 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. Performance increased 15% from last year. The five-year average performance was 87%.



Review and Adjustment of Support Orders: 98% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were six errors in the 278 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. Performance remained consistent. The five-year average performance increased to 92%.



Intergovernmental Services: 93% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

There were nine errors in the 122 cases measured. This criterion remained compliant. Ninety-three percent was the composite efficiency rate for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding actions. Intergovernmental five-year average performance remained stable at 91%.

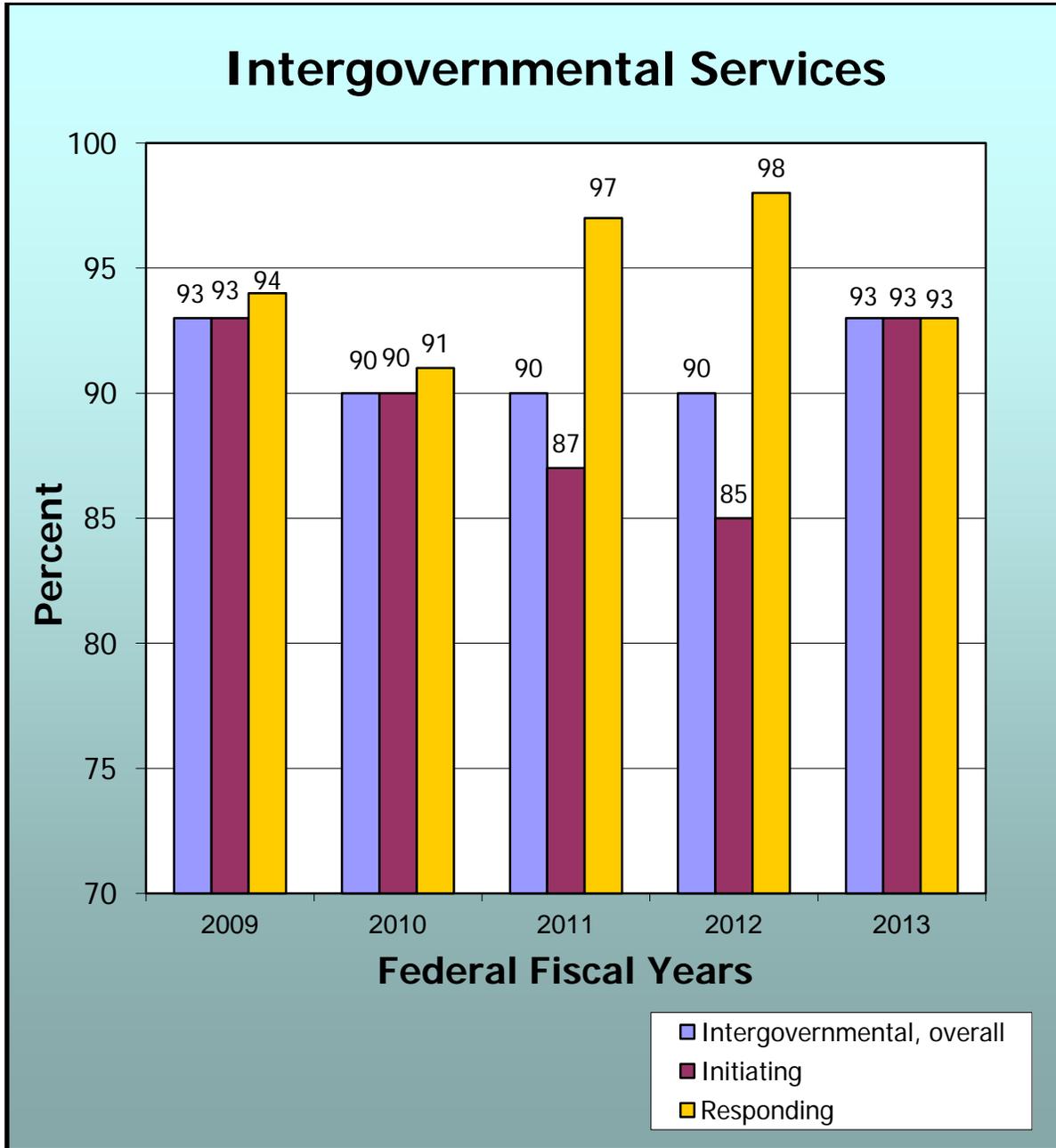
The Initiating subcategory increased to 93% compliant. There were 68 cases measured. Five had errors. The errors are discussed further in the Program Direction section. This subcategory was compliant.

The Responding subcategory was 93% in compliance. Of the 54 cases measured, four errors were found. This subcategory was compliant.

The five-year averages for intergovernmental were:

- Overall – 91%
- Initiating – 90%
- Responding – 95%

[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 fell below the mandated minimums, a corrective action plan is included. Each criterion remained compliant and no corrective action was needed.

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

There were three errors found in the 65 cases measured. This sample had a +/- 4% margin of error. Below is the breakdown of errors for Case Closure.

FFY 2013 Data

Case Closure FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Not meeting a case closure criteria	2	67%	67%
Not sending the 60 day notice as required	1	33%	100%
TOTAL	3	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. The efficiency rate was 100% for the second consecutive year. The five-year average increased to 99%. The division will continue 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 95% compliance rate is less than last year's rate but it remains within compliance standards and historical rates. The ten-year average was 97% and the five-year average was 98%. The FFY 2013 audit revealed three errors in 65 cases measured:

- Two errors were for closing a case not meeting a closure criterion.

The first case was closed inappropriately for custodial parent non-cooperation. Good Cause was no longer in effect. The welfare grant remained open. The custodial parent was put into non-compliance status for not returning the required forms. Case closure process started and the case was closed in error.

The second case was closed inappropriately under the presumption that the non-custodial parent had no assets or ability to pay. The non-custodial parent's other case remained open with a garnishment notice issued. Subsequently, two payments were received on the non-custodial parent's open case. We incorrectly assumed there were no assets or ability to pay when we closed the case.

- One error was caused by not sending the required 60-day closure notice.

The case was paid in full December 14, 2012 and a refund issued. The case was permanently closed April 8, 2013 but we failed to issue the 60-day closure notice.

Staff should be reminded of the proper reasons for closing a case, and to make sure closure notices are sent on cases being properly closed. We will maintain this level of efficiency.

Paternity and Order Establishment: 94% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Of 70 cases measured, four had errors. This sample had a +/- 4% margin of error.

Four teams make up the Establishment Section: Intake, Paternity, Support Order Establishment, and Modification. Once a case is set up, it is moved from the Intake team to the Paternity or Support Order Establishment team. In FFY 2013, the number of open IV-D cases increased slightly from 47,844 to 48,222. The number of IV-D cases with orders increased by 1,219 cases. Ninety-two percent of the open IV-D cases had a support order. The number of IV-D cases requiring the establishment of an order decreased from 4,682 to 3,815. Below is the breakdown of errors for Paternity and Support Order Establishment.

FFY 2013 Data

Paternity and Support Order Establishment FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Service not within 90 days/no diligent locate efforts	2	50%	50%
Locate requirement not met	1	25%	75%
Over 20 days to open case	1	25%	100%
TOTAL	4	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. The efficiency rate was 92%. The audit revealed four errors from the 53 cases measured for this criterion. The five-year average increased to 88%. Fifty-five percent of cases with any measured actions for this criterion had an order established during the audit review period.

- Two errors were due to not serving the obligor within 90 days. The success rate for cases with proper locate/service attempts within 90 days was 80%.

The first error case opened because the custodial parent and dependent opened a Medicaid grant. We began the process of establishing an order. The custodial parent subsequently withdrew from our services. A note was entered in April 2012 that we will complete a child support order with the monthly support obligation suspended. No further action was taken until after the fiscal year.

The second case went 231 days with no action taken. Income information was requested in March 2012. The case was not worked until after the fiscal year.

- Two errors were for not performing locate functions within 75 days. The success rate for cases with proper locate/service actions was 78%.

Both cases had a request for locate which was closed without being completed. It is noted that the locate requests were reviewed with one case erroneously stating 'locate in process' and the other case had a new locate request entered to be completed in the following year. CFR locate requirements were not met in either case.

With the increased number of establishments required, the division will strive to maintain an efficiency rate above 90%.

Current Audit Findings. The efficiency rate increased to 94%. The FFY 2013 audit revealed four errors from the 70 cases measured for this criterion. The five-year average increased to 89%. Forty-one percent of cases with any measured actions for this criterion had an order established during the audit review period. The breakdown of the errors for FFY 2013 was:

- Two errors were for not serving an order within 90 days or diligently trying to locate the putative father.

One case failed for no actions taken in FFY 2013. We had a good address but kept sending postal locate requests to alternative addresses which returned a negative responses.

We also reviewed a pending postal request (six times) without taking action by sending a new postal locate request.

The second case had a good address for the obligor but we continued attempting service to an alternate address. Paternity paperwork was process served and a default paternity order established. A child support order sent by certified mail and later by process service returned as unsuccessful service. During the attempted service, we obtained an address from a seafood processor employing the obligor as a seasonal worker. The employer provided paystubs showing the obligor's address. We did not attempt service to the provided address.

- One error was caused by not performing locate actions as required.

This is the same case measured for Case Closure error. The custodial parent was noncompliant for not returning the paternity questionnaire. The welfare grant remained open. Even though we only had a name for the putative father and did not have a date of birth or a Social Security number, we are still obligated to perform diligent locate efforts instead of closing the case.

- One error was caused by not opening a case within 20 days.

The welfare grant reopened March 4, 2013 but the child support case did not reopen. Prior case notes from 2011 indicated the parents had an agreement that neither is responsible for child support. There was no indication an order existed confirming this claim. We should have reopened the case.

Performance is consistent. The prior two years were 92% compliant. We increased compliance to 94% for FFY 2013. Ongoing training should continue to maintain the present compliance level.

Expedited Processes: Six-Month Tier 78%; Twelve-Month Tier 94%.

(Minimum Acceptable: 75% and 90% respectively)

We measured 32 cases for both the six-month and the twelve-month time frames. This sample had a +/-6% margin of error at each tier. Below is a breakdown of FFY 2013 errors for Expedited Processes at each tier.

FFY 2013 Data: Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier

Expedited Processes 6-Month Tier FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Certified mail service unsuccessful followed up with successful process service	2	29%	29%
Certified mail service unsuccessful, process serve unsuccessful, followed up with successful certified mail service	1	14%	43%
Awaiting court actions to be completed	1	14%	57%
Amended order followed up with Formal Hearing decision	1	14%	71%
NCP avoiding service	1	14%	86%
NCP avoiding genetic testing	1	14%	100%
TOTAL	7	100%	

FFY 2013 Data: Expedited Processes Twelve-Month Tier

Expedited Processes 12-Month Tier FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
NCP avoiding genetic testing	1	50%	50%
NCP avoiding service	1	50%	100%
TOTAL	2	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier Analysis

In the last five years, the efficiency rate ranged from 74% to 82%. This year it was 76%. The five-year average efficiency rate was 78%. Cases must have the final support order ready to enforce within six months of serving the initial notice on the obligor. We measured 29 cases for this criterion. There were seven errors. All were due to not taking action in a timely manner. Paternity was an issue in each error case. The seven errors are broken down into five subcategories with only one or two cases for each:

- Unclaimed certified mail not processed in a timely manner in two cases.

Two cases had an administrative order sent for service via certified mail. It took 50 days to log the order as unclaimed before attempting service by process server in the first case. In the second case it took 39 days to log the order as unclaimed. Each case had multiple service attempts bringing the cases outside the six-month time frame for having a final enforceable support order.

- The non-custodial parent was avoiding service in two cases.

An order was sent certified mail and returned unclaimed in the first case.

Subsequent process service was unsuccessful. A manual locate was performed according to CFR standards but no new information was obtained. Process service notes indicated the non-custodial was living with a female possibly helping him avoid service. The obligor was eventually served and then requested genetic testing. From service of the paternity paperwork to the end of the fiscal year took 294 days. Currently we are waiting for the genetic test results and do not have an enforceable order.

The second case initially needed paternity establishment. The obligor was served paternity paperwork August 22, 2011. The Bureau of Vital Statistics added the father to the dependent's birth certificate. We issued requests for income information in September. In October we performed a full locate with negative results. In December we calculated an obligation amount and sent the order via certified mail. It was returned as undeliverable. The obligor was served at the end of March by a process service after the fifth attempt.

- One error for not scheduling genetic testing in a timely manner.

The putative father was served with paternity paperwork in March 2011 and his request for genetic testing was logged April 11th. He was not scheduled for testing until 31 days later. It is noted that in some rural clinics, paternity testing is only performed monthly. A paternity order was issued in June and served September 27, 2011. The order became enforceable in the audit review period on October 27, 2011. It took 226 days from paternity paperwork being served to having an enforceable support order.

- One error for not calculating a support obligation in a timely manner.

Paternity actions were completed with an order in February 2010. A support obligation was not calculated until 230 days later. We lost contact with the obligor and performed a full locate with negative results in November 2010. The process server attempted service seven times by January 2011. A new address was found but service was unsuccessful in May 2011. Process servers successfully served the obligor in jail on October 10, 2011. It took 653 days from the paternity order being served to having an enforceable child support order, of which 230 days elapsed because no action was taken after the obligor was determined to be the father.

- The last error was not completing a review of the administrative order in a timely manner.

The obligor was served paternity paperwork on April 12, 2011. A support obligation was calculated June 2nd and was served August 4th. On August 24th we received the obligor's request for a review of the support order. It took the caseworker 64 days to issue a decision. This case was out of compliance by only fifteen days which could have been avoided if the review decision had been issued in a timely manner.

In FFY 2010 we implemented changes to improve performance.

- The intake team went from setting up an average 560 cases per month in FFY 2009 to 670 cases per month in FFY 2012. This included every case in our universe: IV-D cases, Non-IV-D Registry-only, Intact Family and Non-Federal Foster Care cases. This production level appears to be satisfactory.

- Management set work volume quotas.
- Locate work was transferred from caseworkers to administrative assistants. This appears to have had no impact on accuracy but may have helped increase production.
- New tracking tools for monitoring case work.
- Paternity cases were expedited once a paternity order was obtained. Every error case for Expedited Processes started with a paternity action but only one case was found in error for not having genetic testing scheduled in a timely manner. Further review is needed to determine if the shortfalls were due to paternity establishment or subsequent actions to establish a support order.
- In FFY 2012 we implemented new changes to the administrative review process. The reviews were removed from the Establishment caseworkers' duties and assigned to the Formal Hearing workers. This may have contributed to increased production.

Changes in FFY 2010 improved performance for FFY 2011 but performance declined in FFY 2012. Intake continues to set up more cases on average per month. Locate errors caused by administrative assistants in Establishment have already been addressed and new guidance issued. Responsibility for administrative reviews was transferred to more experienced workers. We will continue to monitor Establishment and Expedited Processes to refine procedures for improved efficiency.

Our goal is for a two percent improvement next year.

Prior Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Twelve-Month Tier Analysis

Last year we had no errors for this criterion. This year we measured 28 cases and found one error. Efficiency rate was 96%.

The error case required paternity action. Paternity was established in February 2010. A support obligation was not calculated until 230 days later. We lost contact with the obligor and performed a full locate with negative results. Later, the obligor was found in

jail and process served on October 10th, 2011. It took 653 days from the initial paternity paperwork being served to having an enforceable child support order of which 230 days elapsed because no action was taken after the obligor was determined to be the father. Even had the 230 day delay been avoided, the case would have been out of compliance by 243 days.

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

Current Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Six-Month Tier Analysis

Expedited Process at the six-month tier was an audit consideration in 32 cases. To be considered in substantial compliance, 75% of the cases reviewed must have an order established within six months from the date of service of a paternity action, if paternity is an issue, or from the date of service of a child support order if paternity is not an issue. Once an order is served, we must wait 30 days before enforcement so the parties have their due process to contest the order.

FFY 2013 Expedited Process at the six-month tier increased compliance to 78%. We measured 32 cases for this criterion. There were seven errors for taking longer than six months to obtain an enforceable child support order. The seven errors are broken down into six subcategories.

- Two errors were caused by having to process serve an obligor after unsuccessful service via certified mail.

One case needed an add-a-kid modification as of September 11, 2012 but then the existing administrative order was vacated. Calculations for a new order were performed October 29, 2012 and sent certified mail. It was returned unclaimed 43 days later and sent for process service. The order was served January 25, 2013 and a corrected order issued February 25, 2013; enforceable March 27, 2013. It took 196 days from knowing an additional dependent needed to be added to the order to having a fully enforceable order.

The second case required paternity action before a child support order could be established. The putative father was served with paternity paperwork November 8, 2012. We took 91 days to establish a default paternity order on February 7, 2013. We then calculated a child support order on February 11, 2013 and sent it out certified mail service the next day. We did not review the case until 86 days later on May 9, 2013. The order was sent by process service the same day and served June 1, 2013; enforceable July 1, 2013. From serving the paternity paperwork to having an enforceable order took 235 days.

- One case was out of compliance for unsuccessful service by certified mail and unsuccessful process service, followed up with successful certified mail service.

Paternity was an issue. Paternity paperwork was served on the putative father October 4, 2012. We had trouble serving the custodial parent her paternity paperwork. We sent it process service on November 28, 2012, followed up on April 16, 2013 and involved trooper service on May 6, 2013. It was finally served May 8, 2013 and a paternity order was obtained June 5th, 2013. The administrative child support order was served certified mail August 8, 2013; enforceable September 7, 2013. From serving the paternity paperwork to having an enforceable order took 338 days.

- One case was out of compliance due to pending court actions.

The obligor was served an administrative order on November 3, 2012. A review of the order was requested and court actions were proceeding simultaneously. The child support agency was not a participant in the court actions. The parties obtained an interim court order on May 14, 2013. On June 12, 2013 we vacated the administrative order due to having a court order. Measuring from service of the administrative order on November 3, 2012 to having an enforceable court order on May 14, 2013 took 192 days. This case would have been in compliance had there not been any court proceedings.

- One case was out of compliance because the obligor requested a Formal Hearing.

Paternity was an issue. The putative father was served with paternity paperwork on December 15, 2012 and a paternity order was issued February 4, 2013. The child needed to

be added to an existing child support order. Calculations for a new order were performed on March 11, 2013 and the child support order was served March 18, 2013. The obligor requested an administrative review on March 22, 2013. The order was recalculated March 26 and April 1, 2013. The obligor appealed adding the new child to the child support order but his appeal dated January 30, 2013 was misplaced. The case was sent to Formal Hearings on May 7, 2013 and a decision was issued July 22, 2013. From serving the paternity paperwork to having an enforceable order took 219 days. This case may have been in compliance if we processed the obligor's appeal in a timely manner.

- One error case was due to the putative father avoiding service of a child support order.

Paternity is an issue. The putative father was served paternity paperwork on August 30, 2012 and has since been avoiding service of a paternity order. We cannot proceed with a child support order until paternity has been resolved.

- The last error case was due to the putative father avoiding genetic testing.

Paternity is an issue. The putative father was served paternity paperwork on September 8, 2012. The custodial parent has been uncooperative. The putative father requested genetic testing in a phone call on March 19, 2013 but did not show up for his scheduled appointment. Samples were taken from all parties on May 13, 2013 and a paternity order was obtained June 18, 2013. During this process, we became aware of having to add a second child to the case. Paternity was not an issue for the second child. We lost contact with the obligor and have him in locate. We still need to establish a child support order.

Team leaders need to maintain focus on eliminating internal delays that prevent a case from moving forward. Routing incoming mail efficiently, timely follow-up to case actions and immediate referral of documents to a process server remains critical for success in the expedited processes criteria.

Current Audit Findings. Expedited Processes Twelve-Month Tier Analysis

Expedited Process at the twelve-month tier was an audit consideration in 32 cases. To be considered in substantial compliance, 90% of the cases reviewed must have an order established within twelve months from the date of service of a paternity action, if paternity is an issue, or from the date of service of a child support order if paternity is not an issue.

For Expedited Processes at the twelve-month tier we had two errors. Paternity was an issue for both cases. The initial paternity paperwork was served on each obligor but we have yet to serve a child support order. Both errors are due to the obligor avoiding service.

Our focus on timely establishment of orders remains a priority. Our goal is to continue improving compliance for Expedited Processes at both tiers.

Note: The Expedited Processes criterion measures the time allowed under the CFR to establish child support orders. The time frame 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: 97% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 427 cases, and found 14 errors. One hundred forty-seven cases received at least one wage withholding payment during the last quarter of the review period and an additional 141 cases received at least one payment during the entire review period. This sample had a +/- 0.7% margin of error. Below is the breakdown of errors for Enforcement.

FFY 2013 Data

Enforcement of Support Orders FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Failed to complete asset/employer locate	10	71%	71%
Case not submitted for federal offset/IRS	2	14%	86%
Withholding order not issued to employer within two days	1	7%	93%
Not taking any appropriate enforcement action when wage withholding not applicable	1	7%	100%
TOTAL	14	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. The efficiency rate was 94%. The five-year average was 93%. Last year, 65% of the cases sampled received a payment during the fiscal year. This audit period showed almost 68% with a payment.

The types of errors remained the same:

- Locate continues to be the biggest factor in case errors. We reduced the number of errors from sixteen to ten.

- Miscoding a case, preventing a submission to the IRS for tax refund offset was the second most common error.
- The third type of error was failing to issue a withholding order within two days.
- The last type of error was not completing an appropriate enforcement action when wage withholding was not applicable. This was a single error case.

We recommend caseworkers start the locate process sooner. Some cases had insufficient locate actions taken such as a call to the non-custodial parent or a postal verification issued when a full locate was necessary. Improvement demonstrated in Enforcement and collections is commendable.

The second most common enforcement action was not submitting case arrears to the IRS tax refund offset. The audit sample shows we increased the number of cases reporting to the Federal Offset program by thirteen cases but our errors increased from three to nine. These errors indicate a need for refresher training for the caseworkers. This is a repeat finding.

Five error cases did not have a withholding order issued within two days. This group of errors was not excessive and is consistent with historical findings, though it may present a topic for training among the enforcement caseworkers.

The last error case was due to not taking appropriate enforcement actions. The case became an arrears-only case when the dependent was returned to the intact family. A withholding order was not issued to the obligor's last known employer. After the review period, the Alaska PFD was received and a full locate performed with negative results. An automated locate was activated to find a potential employer. This is the sort of obscure error that can easily occur. It is unlikely that remedial training is warranted at this time.

Training should be considered to refresh worker skills for IRS/FOP coding. The goal for the agency is to increase the efficiency rate to 95% for FFY 2013.

Current Audit Findings. The efficiency rate increased to 97%. The five-year average increased to 94%. This audit period showed 67% of the cases reviewed for Enforcement received a collection in FFY 2013.

The types of errors remained the same:

- Locate continues to be the biggest factor in case errors. There were ten locate errors found during this audit. We also reported ten errors in FFY 2012.
- Miscoding a case, preventing a submission to the IRS for tax refund offset was the second most common error. We reduced the errors from nine in FFY 2012 to two in FFY 2013.
- Failing to issue a withholding order within two days. We reduced the number of errors from five in FFY 2012 to one in FFY 2013.
- Not completing an appropriate enforcement action when wage withholding was not applicable. This was a single error as in FFY 2012.

Since ten of the fourteen errors were for not performing appropriate locate actions, we will continue to focus on this area. The training manual is being updated and we have started refresher training. Our goal is to maintain the current level of efficiency.

Disbursement: 98% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 327 cases, and found six errors. This criterion was compliant. This sample had a +/- 1% margin of error. Below is the breakdown of errors for Disbursement.

FFY 2013 Data

Disbursement FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Hold because receipt amount is less than \$5.00	3	50%	50%
Proper distribution was uncertain pending adjustment	2	33%	83%
Hold remained after adjustment	1	17%	100%
TOTAL	6	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Current efficiency rate increased to 97%. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance is 97%. There are no new findings.

Money on hold increased to \$ \$741,000. The State Disbursement Unit (SDU) went through staffing changes and has since reduced money on hold to \$538,000 by the end of January 2013.

The most common error was due to a system feature that prevents a check of less than \$5.00 from being disbursed. This is a cost-efficiency matter. The table above is a breakdown of all the errors found in our sampling. Current staff is adequately maintaining control over distribution and disbursement of child support.

In the past, when checks were returned to the SDU because of a bad address, the caseworker was not notified that a locate was required. Now, the mail room notifies the caseworker of the returned check. The caseworker can then look for a valid address. The

SDU voids the payment and puts the money on hold. Once a new address is found, the money disburses automatically. This change of procedure should cause a reduction of money on hold due to a bad address.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) accounted for about 71% of incoming transactions and 58% of dollars collected. Over 63% of transactions outbound were via EFT, and amounted to almost 62% of dollars disbursed. About 3442 employers send money by EFT. Currently 4,383 people receive their collected support via debit card.

The goal for the agency is to maintain the efficiency rate at 97% or above.

Current Audit Findings. Current efficiency rate was 98%. This criterion remained compliant. The five-year average performance remains at 97%.

There are no new findings to report. The types of errors are the same as found in previous years, and are manageable. Three errors occurred because of a system feature that prevents a check for less than \$5.00 being sent out automatically. This is a cost-efficiency matter. The system was designed so management can change the dollar value to disburse money on hold when necessary. One way to increase performance slightly is to reduce the threshold.

EFT accounted for about 58% of dollars collected and 66% of dollars disbursed. About 3,900 employers have sent money by EFT. Currently 5,363 people receive their child support via debit card.

There was no measurable change in disbursements from FFY 2012 to FFY 2013 as documented on the annual 157 reports.

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

Medical Support Enforcement: 96% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

We measured 170 cases, and found six errors. This criterion was compliant. This sample had a +/- 2% margin of error. Below is the breakdown of errors for Medical Support Enforcement.

FFY 2013 Data

Medical Support Enforcement FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Terminated the NMSN in error	2	33%	33%
The child support order was incorrectly coded causing us to not enforce for medical	2	33%	67%
We did not issue a NMSN to the most current employer	2	33%	100%
TOTAL	6	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. We had a larger sample size for the second consecutive year. In FFY 2012, we measured 262 cases and found 50 errors. From FFY 2008 through FFY 2010, our sample sizes were smaller, creating a larger margin of error. In FFY 2011 and FFY2012 we reduced the margin of error to +/- 2%. We are more confident that our accuracy improved over prior years.

Prior errors fell in two categories:

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

In FFY 2012 we incurred an additional type of error:

- Failure to issue a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) to a new employer.

The first type of error, failure to determine if insurance was available, had four reasons for noncompliance. Nine findings were due to not taking any medical enforcement actions during the fiscal year when some type of action was required. Eight errors were due to miscoding the insurance. The system requires all fields to be populated including a 'coverage indicator' field. If any of the fields are blank or incorrectly coded, the case will not count as a case with medical ordered and provided. Seven errors were due to having medical enforcement excluded. Two errors were because the custodial parent was providing coverage but the coverage ended and we did not pursue new medical enforcement actions.

The second error type, failure to notify the Medicaid agency when insurance was provided caused 21 errors. All errors were due to not properly coding medical screens in our system.

The last medical error type was not issuing a NMSN to the current employer after the non-custodial parent changed employers. In one case the non-custodial parent went back to work for the same employer but the insurance policy and group number changed. Our system showed the old information.

Insurance information has to be properly coded in the system. In addition, when a case is reinstated for full enforcement, we need to make sure medical is enforced.

The agency should improve compliance by at least two percent in the next fiscal year.

Current Audit Findings. Medical Support Enforcement experienced a significant increase in efficiency this year after steadily declining the last three years.

Part of the increase in the efficiency rate is because this self assessment no longer measures as many subcategories for this criterion. In the past, we measured errors for not notifying the Medicaid agency of existing insurance coverage information for the dependent. In FFY 2011, failure to report medical information to Medicaid consisted of 24

out of 54 errors and in FFY 2012 it was 21 out of 50 errors. Reporting was a manual process of issuing a notification to the custodial parent listing the provided insurance. A second copy of the notification was sent to the Medicaid agency. Reporting is now automated. Every quarter we download a summation of all cases with medical information in our system and provide it to Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). Our agency continues to collaborate with DHSS. DHSS, Division of Public Assistance is implementing a new system called "ARIES" for the temporary aid to needy families. DHSS, Division of Health Care Services is also implementing a new system for medical coverage. As they implement their new automated systems, we will make sure our information continues to be transmitted.

All Alaska administrative child support orders include a medical coverage provision. Most of the Alaska court child support orders are created from a template which includes medical. We reported zero errors for not having a medical provision in an Alaska child support order in FFY 2013.

In prior years we measured a case out-of-compliance if the automated system was not properly coded. It was also out-of-compliance if we did not issue our semi-annual notice requesting insurance information from each party. We no longer hold the agency to such strict standards because the current 45 CFR 308.2(e) only measures if there is medical in the support order and the requirements for a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN). We reviewed self assessment standards for Medical Support Enforcement and confirmed we are still measuring for all the required subcategories.

- Two errors occurred due to improperly terminating the National Medical Support Notice (NMSN)

In the first case we conducted an administrative review of the NMSN. The decision was that the health care coverage withholding order was valid but then we terminated it in error. This was a caseworker error.

In the second case we terminated the NMSN because the custodial parent withdrew from our services. The dependents remained on an open Medicaid grant. We were required to continue to enforce for medical and we did not.

- There were two errors for not determining if medical was available.

In both instances, the order was miscoded in the system to exclude medical enforcement. This has been addressed.

- The last two errors were caused by not issuing a NMSN to a new employer when the obligor changed employment.

Our goal is to maintain the current compliance rate for Medical Support Enforcement. We will continue to concentrate on coding cases correctly for current medical coverage being provided. We will maintain a close working relationship with DHSS to ensure their new program systems are compatible with ours for the transmission of medical coverage information.

Review and Adjustment: 98% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

Of 278 cases measured, there were six errors. Failure to send a triennial *Notice of Right to Request a Review* (NRRR) accounted for all the errors. This criterion was compliant. This sample had a +/- 1% margin of error. The average efficiency rate for the past five years increased to 92%.

FFY 2013 Data:

Review and Adjustment of Orders FFY 2013 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.	6	100%	100%
TOTAL	6	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. Thirty-four of the 269 cases measured had orders modified or reviews conducted that resulted in denials of modification. There were sixteen administrative orders and eighteen court orders. Five of the administrative modifications were denied and three court modifications were denied. All denials were compliant. Of the cases that obtained a modification, three court orders and two administrative orders to add children to an order took over 180 days each. The combined result for administrative and judicial cases was 85% compliance for modifications (not including compliance for providing a *Notice of Right to Request a Review*). Overall, Review and Adjustment compliance was 90%.

A focused audit in 2004 found 95% of administrative orders were modified within 180 days and 65% of the court modifications were compliant. The combined result for administrative and judicial cases was 81% compliance. The audit consisted of 42 administrative orders and 40 court orders. Sixteen of the administrative modifications were denied and twenty-three court modification denials.

A focused audit in March 2010 found only 53% of administrative orders were modified within 180 days and 40% of the court modifications were compliant. The combined result for administrative and judicial cases was 45% compliance. The audit consisted of 105 administrative orders and 157 court orders.

Based on the current fiscal year compliance rates compared to both focused audits, we improved performance since 2010 and are more in line with the 2004 audit findings. The overall efficiency rate for this criterion varied only three percent in the last five years and measured 90% compliance in the last two years. Our goal is to maintain this efficiency rate.

Current Audit Findings. In this self assessment, we measured 36 of the 278 cases for completing a review of the order. Of the 36 cases, three court modifications were obtained by the case parties with insufficient documentation to determine if the modification was completed within 180 days.

Of the remaining 33 cases measured for having an order reviewed, 12 were administrative and 21 were judicial. The agency modified nine administrative orders and denied three. The judicial system modified 13 measurable cases and denied eight. Five cases took over 180 days for a decision. This amounts to an 85% compliance rate.

If a case has been reviewed and meets the conditions for adjustment under Alaska law and procedures under 45 CFR 308.3 and the order is adjusted, or a determination is made as a result of a review during the self assessment period that an adjustment is not needed in accordance with Alaska's guidelines for setting child support awards, we are considered to have taken appropriate action in that case. Even though we did not meet the 180-day timeline in five cases, they are still in compliance for this audit due to having a completed modification or denial.

- Six errors were due to not providing a NRRR not less often than once every three years.

In the last five years, most errors for Review and Adjustment were for not issuing the NRRRs as required. In FFY 2009, this accounted for 27 of 31 errors, in FFY 2010 it accounted for 19 of 23 errors, in FFY 2011 it accounted for 21 of 23 errors and in FFY 2012 it accounted for 26 of 27 errors. For FFY 2013, not issuing the NRRR notices only accounted for six errors with no other errors to report.

Our programmers created a report to list the cases that did not have a NRRR issued in the last three years. Caseworkers reinstated the NRRRs to meet federal compliance. We will continue to use this report. Our goal is to maintain this efficiency rate.

Intergovernmental Services: 93% (Minimum Acceptable: 75%)

The performance composite for Central Registry, Initiating and Responding cases was 93%. This sample had a +/- 3% margin of error. The five-year average remained at 91%. Of the 122 cases measured, nine had errors. Below is the breakdown of errors for both Initiating and Responding.

FFY 2013 Data: Intergovernmental Initiating

Intergovernmental Initiating FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
New information not provided to other state	2	40%	40%
Failed to initiate to other state within 20 days	1	20%	60%
Failed to take action as requested by the other state	1	20%	80%
Failed to notify the other state of case closure	1	20%	100%
TOTAL	5	100%	

FFY 2013 Data: Intergovernmental Responding

Intergovernmental Responding FFY 2013 Reason for Error	Number of Cases with Errors	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Not responding to a status request within 5 days	2	50%	50%
Failure to acknowledge receipt of case within 10 working days	1	25%	75%
Not providing requested order and payment information in a timely manner	1	25%	100%
TOTAL	4	100%	

Prior Audit Findings. The Overall Intergovernmental criterion remained compliant at 90% for the third consecutive year. The five-year efficiency rate was 91%.

Intergovernmental Initiating Action Analysis

This subcategory was 85% in compliance. The five-year average was 89%.

We measured 75 cases and found eleven errors. Six of the eleven errors were due to not initiating the case to another intergovernmental agency within twenty days of locating an obligor outside of Alaska. A case can be either enforced long-arm or initiated. If the decision is to initiate, the case needs to be initiated within twenty calendar days. Untimely initiating errors included the following:

- Three cases in which the caseworker took too long to take action.
- Two cases had confirmed addresses for the obligors through postal verifications but there was a communication breakdown: the person entering the verification did not notify the caseworker.
- One case was transferred from domestic enforcement to intergovernmental seventeen days after the non-custodial parent's address was verified, giving the caseworker only three days to comply. Instead of initiating, the intergovernmental caseworker set a reminder to take action in the future, outside CFR compliance time frame.

The other five initiating errors were due to not providing new information to the other tribunal for two cases, failure to take action as requested by the other jurisdiction in two cases, and failure to notify the other IV-D agency of a modification request within twenty days.

Intergovernmental Responding Action Analysis

This subcategory was 98% in compliance. The five-year average was 95%.

Out of 45 cases measured, one error was found. This criterion remained compliant. The error was due to not responding to an initial transmittal from a tribal agency requesting we establish pre-order arrears and enforce. Currently, we sent requests for income information to the parties and are waiting to take the next action.

Overall Recommendations and Goals:

Compliance for Initiating has decreased two to three percent each year since FFY 2009. Caseworkers need to refocus on CFR deadlines and improve communication between the Office Assistants and Caseworkers when a postal verification is returned with a positive response. All cases that require intergovernmental initiation should be acted upon within twenty calendar days as required by 45 CFR 303.7. We are 85% compliant in meeting the twenty-day requirement for initiating cases to other intergovernmental agencies.

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

Current Audit Findings.**Intergovernmental Initiating Action Analysis**

FFY 2013 Intergovernmental Initiating compliance increased to 93%. The five-year average increased to 90%. We measured 68 cases for this criterion. There were five errors:

- Two errors for not providing new information to the responding agency.

In one case the noncustodial parent on February 12, 2013 provided his new address changing it from New Mexico to Alaska. The case was updated by customer service, but an 'open' message was not entered for the caseworker to review. Because the caseworker was not alerted to the address change in the system, they were not able to notify the responding

state that the obligor moved to Alaska. This was a worker error by not following standard procedure for Intergovernmental cases.

The other error for not providing new information occurred when we located the putative father but did not notify the responding agency. The putative father did not show up for his paternity hearing. Both the responding agency and Alaska were conducting locate actions. Alaska located him in the other state's prison system with a tentative release date of 2021. Alaska failed to provide this information to the responding agency.

- One error was failing to initiate a case within 20 days.

Alaska obtained an address for the obligor in another jurisdiction. We took no action to review if we had all the required documentation to initiate the case or to decide to enforce long-arm. Instead, we sent another postal after the end of FFY 2013 to confirm the address again.

- One error was failing to take action as requested by the responding agency.

The responding agency notified Alaska that the obligor was deceased. The obligor was a tribal member and the responding agency was asking if obligor has or will be receiving money from the tribe. Alaska failed to respond or did not document a response.

- The last error was failing to notify the responding agency that Alaska had closed our case.

The obligor paid \$8.04, of which Alaska applied \$8.03 to the balance, refunded \$0.01 and proceeded to close the case. The responding agency notified Alaska that the final payment was insufficient because they apply a 5% fee to all payments.

Intergovernmental Responding Action Analysis

FFY 2013 Intergovernmental Responding compliance was 93%. The five-year average remained at 95%. We measured 54 cases for this criterion. There were four errors:

- Two errors for not responding to a status request within five days.

We took seven days to respond on the first case and thirteen days on the second case.

- One error for not acknowledging receipt of a case within ten working days.

An initial transmittal was received from Kentucky dated July 17, 2013 requesting a redirect of payments. We did not take action until August 27, 2013 (29 days later).

- One error for not providing requested information in a timely manner.

On August 6, 2013, Oregon asked for the source of payments; if the payments were paid by the noncustodial parent directly or from a withholding order. We took 36 days to respond.

Overall Recommendations and Goals:

Intergovernmental remains well within the compliance rate of 75%. All of the errors that occurred in this program area were because appropriate timeframes were not followed or failure to provide information. Staff should be reminded of the federal timeframes with regards to initiating interstate referrals and responding to or following up on information provided by the other jurisdiction.

Management Issues:

The results of the Self Assessment Review for October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013 show Alaska Child Support Enforcement Services is in compliance in all eight federal program areas.

Minor program enhancements enabled us to extract additional data from our system. We used this to manually update cases with medical coding errors, reactivate NRRR and ensure cases report to the federal offset recovery system. Planning for a new system has begun and we will continue to make minor enhancements to the current system as needed.

Category 3: Program Service Enhancements

Customer Service and Field Offices—

During FFY 2013, the Anchorage customer service reception area and phone bank handled 75,000 phone calls, 7,000 automated KidsLine calls and over 7,500 walk-ins. Field offices in Juneau, Fairbanks and Wasilla handled approximately 11,800 phone calls plus over 8,400 walk-ins. We are seeing a trend in the Anchorage office of fewer walk-ins and more automated Kidsline calls each year.

The Kidsline is an automated telephone system that can be called toll-free from within Alaska. Menu options include being able to talk to customer service directly, dialing your direct caseworker, leaving a message, obtaining automated payment information, obtaining general information and instructions for setting up Electronic Fund Transfer and using the Alaska Debit Card Program. Employers can also call this number to reach Employer Assistance.

CSSD continues to offer additional services in the Anchorage Customer Service Center. Services include collecting samples for genetic testing, verifying child support payments, responding to emails, in-house process service and notarization of state documents.

The Wasilla field office is receiving approximately 6 -7 calls per week from correctional facilities. Goose Creek Correctional facility is now operational and populated with inmates previously housed outside of Alaska. For many of these inmates, it was the first time they were able to call our agency. Feedback indicates they appreciate being able to communicate with staff directly and receive help on their cases.

Outreach—

Outreach continues to be successful. Other than the replacement of a staff member, there have been no significant changes in the program itself. However, management of the program was transferred from the IV-D Director and combined with the Child Support Hearings and Complaint Resolution teams. This places all CSSD outreach efforts under the direction of a single manager.

Interest in the Agency's "Think About It" teen outreach program continues to increase. Staff presented over 70 presentations in 2013 at various youth facilities, middle schools and high schools throughout Alaska. We will focus on expanding and refining the program throughout 2014 with hopes of adding the Matanuska-Susitna School District to our list of regularly scheduled presentations.

Outreach to local jails is a major component of our community outreach efforts. We assist inmates by providing general child support information and helping with modifications and default reviews.

Finally, we also continue to foster strong relationships with our Alaska Tribal organizations. Recent visits include the Association of Village Council Presidents, Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Tlingit-Haida, and Tanana Chiefs Conference.

Outreach efforts are advertised via local newspapers, radio shows and open radio forums. Public service announcements are published on the CSSD website. We circulate specialized booklets and brochures to the public.

Child Support Hearings—

Child support hearings include two levels of administrative appeal from an establishment or modification action. An administrative review hearing is the first

level of appeal and formal hearing is the final administrative appeal. A formal hearing decision may only be appealed to the Superior Court. Appeal procedures were modified in late 2012 in order to reduce the costs associated with the formal hearing process. It was also our intent to increase client involvement in the appeal process and settle disputes at the earliest possible opportunity. In the first year of implementation, we decreased formal hearings by about 30% at a cost savings of just over \$100,000.

Modification Resolution Program—

The Modification Resolution Program (MRP) is a collaborative effort between the Alaska court system, the Family Law Self-Help Center, volunteer mediators, attorneys and CSSD. It is a spin-off of the court's highly successful Early Resolution Program (ERP). The purpose of both programs is to assist pro se litigants through mediation processes designed to settle matters expeditiously and without the need for trial. CSSD was invited to participate in the expansion MRP, which began in December 2012. CSSD's role is to provide expertise and assist with the settlement of child support matters; additionally, CSSD's presence ensures the interests of the state are preserved. Cases are heard by a magistrate once or twice each month, with CSSD personnel on hand in the courtroom to address specific support issues. During the first nine months of the program, 55% of the cases were successfully settled. Of the remaining 45%, about half were scheduled for trial and the rest were continued, vacated, dismissed or referred for additional mediation.

Alaska Supreme Court Chief Justice Dana Fabe held an appreciation reception for all the MRP and ERP participants in June 2013. CSSD Child Support Hearings staff was recognized for outstanding contribution to the program. Currently, only the Anchorage court system is utilizing the MRP program, but plans are to include the Palmer court system in the near future. For 2014, CSSD received a Chief Justice invitation to participate in a summit on child custody.

Complaint Resolution—

Complaint Resolution handles all child support complaints that originate from official sources. Official sources include offices the Alaska Ombudsman office, the US and state-level legislative body, the Office of the Governor, Region 10 and others. Additionally, Complaint Resolution staff addresses customer concerns that cannot be resolved within the assigned section. Formal complaints to the agency have decreased by more than 70% over the previous five years. We reduced complaints to 55-65 per year.

Enforcement and Collections—

Enforcement experienced a significant increase in Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM) collections. In 2012, we collected a total of \$325,272.63 through FIDM, both in-state and multi-state. In 2013, by focusing on those times when obligors are more likely to have money in the bank (tax time, PFD time, etc.) we managed to increase collections to \$961,018.53, a significant increase in funds coming from this source.

Staff Training—

A new CSSD training program started about a year ago. Since implementation, we have had multiple groups of newly hired staff trained with very little downtime in between the groups. Promoted staff also attend training. A division-wide training on *Case File Imaging* concluded and we are about to train the Client Services Office Assistant IIs on proper locate procedures. Next, we will concentrate on the *Applications and Closures* training module. Various training modules were tightened-up to reduce training time. End-of-training assessments were expanded to improve future training.

Starting February 2014, a training calendar will be available to all the supervisors. Supervisors will be able to schedule and send an existing employee who might be struggling on a specific topic for targeted training. The plan is to present refresher training on various enforcement topics to the rest of the staff. We have already had success with this spot training.

2013 PAC-10 Cup Winner—

Alaska is one of four Northwestern states in Region 10 along with Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The Region 10 office created the *Region 10 PAID Preventing Arrears Challenge* in 2009. Alaska won the challenge in 2009, 2011 and this year – 2013! The winner is determined by calculating the total dollars in arrears collected/distributed compared to the total amount of arrears due on the state's books as a whole. Each year the PAC-10 Cup is awarded to the state with the greatest increase in this ratio from one year to the next.

Thank You and Great Job Everyone—

Prior to retiring, Director John Mallonee shared an editorial comment from an Alaska State Representative praising the Division on the changes we have made in the last twelve years and the accomplishments of staff.

"I've been dealing with this agency in amongst various capacities in the finance committee for a dozen years and I just did want to make an editorial comment. We have come a long way in fixing problems that existed in this agency 12 years ago and got to tell you this is one of the toughest agencies in the State to work for, I mean it is just, a heartbreak agency. I have the utmost respect for your folks that do this job and come to work every day and you know, just keep on doing it. It's a...I tip my hat to those folks over there. Thank you!"

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 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.

