

MINUTES

2021 SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AND COLLECTION

November 9, 2021
Room 548-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Senator Carolyn McGinn, Chairperson
Representative Susan Humphries, Vice-chairperson
Senator Molly Baumgardner
Senator Elaine Bowers
Senator Cindy Holscher
Senator Alicia Straub
Representative Tory Marie Arnberger
Representative Leo Delperdang
Representative Shannon Francis
Representative Jarrod Ousley
Representative Ponka-We Victors

Members Absent

All members present.

Staff Present

Chardae Caine, Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD)
Natalie Nelson, KLRD
Steven Wu, KLRD
Lindsay Archer, KLRD
Natalie Scott, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Jason Thompson, Office of Revisor of Statutes
David Wiese, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Nancy Fontaine, Committee Assistant

Conferees

Harold Schorn, 9th Judicial District Court
Amy Raymond, Office of Judicial Administration
Elizabeth Cohn, Kansas Department for Children and Families
Rachel Zietlow, Maximus
Kelly Lamson, YoungWilliams

Others Attending

No Other Attendees Present.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9 ALL DAY SESSION

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairperson McGinn called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m. and welcomed members, staff, and guests to the meeting.

Staff Presentation on Child Support Enforcement Primer

Chardae Caine, Fiscal Analyst, Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD), drew members' attention to two documents distributed in response to questions from committee members during the last meeting: a flow chart demonstrating the Kansas new-hire process ([Attachment 1](#)) and information regarding Kansas Tribal IV-D cases. ([Attachment 2](#))

Ms. Caine continued with discussion about child support enforcement, including the role of the federal government and state agencies in child support, details of the Kansas child support system and changes made during the quadrennial review of the Child Support Guidelines, and analysis of a June 2020 evaluation of the child support system in Kansas by Midwest Evaluation and Research, LLC. ([Attachment 3](#))

Staff Presentation on History of Child Support Enforcement Privatization

Ms. Caine provided an overview of the privatization of child support enforcement within Kansas, including general background information and a review of the Legislative Post Audit reports dating back to 1990. The audits, *Comprehensive Automated Eligibility and Child Support Enforcement System* (1990) and *Examining Child Support Enforcement Activities in Kansas* (1996), are available on the Legislative Post Audit website. ([Attachment 4](#))

Ms. Caine also provided a document demonstrating the state's system for processing child support enforcement and public assistance cases. ([Attachment 5](#))

Overview of Non-IV-D Child Support Payment Collections

Harold Schorn, District Court Trustee, 9th Judicial District Court, provided an overview of the Non-IV-D child support payment collection system and stated a complete understanding of the system in Kansas is important. The Trustee office has been providing these services since 1986. Until 2013, his office provided collection services under IV-D contracts, as well, and they had a good working relationship with Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). Mr. Schorn stated that DCF stopped offering the Trustee office the opportunity to provide collection services for IV-D child support payments, even though the office maintained a high collection rate because of the privatization of the process. Some Trustee offices receive county funding, but most survive on a small percentage of the fees they collect. He believes the Trustees program should remain in place. Mr. Schorn responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 6](#))

Non-IV-D System

Amy Raymond, Chief of Trial Courts Services, Office of Judicial Administration (OJA), stated that she serves as liaison between court trustees and the Kansas Payment Center (KPC), as well as serving as the OJA point of contact for court trustees. She also provides technical support to the Kansas Supreme Court's Child Support Guidelines Committee during its review period every four years. Ms. Raymond responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 7](#))

Monitoring Performance Measures

Elizabeth Cohn, Director of Child Support Services (IV-D), DCF, provided an overview of the Kansas IV-D program, which began in 1975. Until 1997, the program was state-operated and then some aspects were competitively bid to private contractors. In 2013, the program was fully privatized. ([Attachment 8](#))

Ms. Cohn then reviewed the five federal performance measures and the Kansas ranking compared to other states in the region for each of those measures, followed by a review of the Kansas statistics for each performance measure. Ms. Cohn also discussed the 2021 IV-D contract including details of the requirements put forth in the request for proposal (RFP) and then responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 9](#))

Ms. Cohn also provided two other documents:

- IV-D guide brochure; and ([Attachment 10](#))
- Child support services enrollment form. ([Attachment 11](#))

Ms. Caine distributed three additional documents:

- 50-state child support process comparison; ([Attachment 12](#))
- County breakdown of collections; and ([Attachment 13](#))
- Kansas Payment Center statistics in response to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 14](#))

Rachel Zietlow, Vice President of Workforce Services, Maximus, provided information on the Maximus performance plan. She stated Maximus uses a structured approach for performance, including having standard operating procedures that are reviewed during the contract period. Maximus meets state and federal requirements, but they also provide important support to Kansas families. It is here to serve all stakeholders, including DCF, parents, and employers, and to make engagement easy and accessible. Ms. Zietlow responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 15](#)) ([Attachment 16](#))

Kelly Lamson, Project Operations, YoungWilliams, discussed YoungWilliams performance measure outcomes relating to the federal performance measures. YoungWilliams continues to monitor the performance measures on a monthly basis and has a team of quality

assurance specialists to conduct audits on the casework. It also uses ywPortal to track programs to state information with DCF, which helps the child support workers. Ms. Lamson responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 17](#)) ([Attachment 18](#))

Lunch

Chairperson McGinn recessed the meeting at 11:50 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Changes to the Current System

Mr. Schorn discussed possible changes to the current system that were included in his testimony provided during the morning session of the meeting. He stated his main concern is with the KAECSES computer system, which is a major computer system containing data for all youth placed in state custody and removed from their home. The computer system is very difficult to work with, and it is still on a mainframe. He also believes we should maintain two systems, IV-D and Non IV-D. He stated it is not a perfect solution, but it would work. Mr. Schorn responded to questions from Committee members.

Ms. Cohn discussed changes that would benefit the child support collection program. Her recommendations were regarding the following areas: availability of IV-D services, technology upgrades, meaningful performance measures, refer Non-IV-D to IV-D, modernize funding, change distribution, optimize use of administrative processes, and de-privatize part of the system. She provided her top three specific recommendations, which were to identify meaningful performance metrics for the IV-D and Non-IV-D programs, ensure that every family is able to access a child support professional and investigate distribution, and long-term funding to determine if now is the right time to make meaningful changes for Kansas families. Ms. Cohn responded to questions from Committee members. ([Attachment 19](#))

Committee Comments and Recommendations

Chairperson McGinn opened the discussion of proposed recommendations or requests for information. The following recommendations and requests for information were made:

- Request for more information on the complexity in collecting from individuals out-of-state and whether any statutes need to be changed to get across that hurdle;
- Request that DCF conduct an in-depth review on what successful states are doing that Kansas is not;
- Recommendation to streamline the process as constituents move back and forth between IV-D and Non IV-D;
- Request for more information on the following topics:
 - How many cases are there for children and households;

- How many of those cases are not receiving support;
 - How many cases have not received payments in years;
 - What causes a case to fall off the list (is it when the child ages out, parent just stops calling, etc.); and
 - What is the return on investment for the contracts we have in place.
- Request that because DCF suggested expanding trustees to all counties, what would that process involve;
 - Recommendation on improvement in having meaningful performance measures and in the ability to access support services, with a suggestion to look into developing a partnership with regional states to improve cross-state coordination;
 - Request for information regarding the updated KAESCES program with regard to when it will be going online and how efficient it will be;
 - Request for information regarding the ranking of all states and how well they comply with federal performance measures;
 - Request for details on the contracts - how are they paid, is there a minimum benchmark, and what are penalties if they don't meet those benchmarks;
 - Request to look into the processes that could be set up to improve communication between DCF and the Court Trustees;
 - Request to look into the impact of TANF being pass-through versus non-pass-through as it applies to child support recovery and if that is feasible for DCF;
 - Recommendation to have constituents provide evaluations of how they are being treated so there can be more accountability;
 - Request that Legislative Post Audit look into these issues, but it was suggested to wait on this request, as the new contract has not been in place for a sufficient amount of time; and
 - Request for data that does not include federal stimulus funding as that may skew the data.

Chairperson McGinn asked committee staff to prepare the Committee's report by the second week in December. She stated Committee members will then have one week to review the report and provide comments. The updated report will then be sent out again to committee members.

The following documents were provided to the Committee based on their final comments and requests for information:

- Map of court trustees in Kansas; ([Attachment 20](#))

- Memo on pass through; ([Attachment 21](#))
- DCF response to requested information; ([Attachment 22](#))
- DCF supplemental document one; ([Attachment 23](#))
- DCF supplemental document two; and ([Attachment 24](#))
- Office of Child Support Enforcement performance measures spreadsheet. ([Attachment 25](#))

Adjourn

Chairperson McGinn adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Prepared by Nancy Fontaine

Edited by Chardae Caine and Lindsay Archer

Approved by the Committee on:

January 5, 2022

(Date)