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PPM 03-14 Child Support and Reporting to the Court (December 8, 2003)

REF: Chapter 6. Foster Care 6-410, 6-720, and 6-725; PPM 0-33

The purpose of this memorandum is to advise staff regarding collection of child support payments resulting from court orders or voluntary parental contributions. In the past OCS has collected court ordered child support and voluntary parental contributions. Support Enforcement Services (SES) is the federally mandated agency for collection of child support for Title IV-E and/or Title XIX eligible children in foster care custody. Also, SES may collect child support if there is an existing SES case when children enter foster care custody even if the child is not Title IV-E eligible. The auditor has cited OCS for child support funds that were collected and the correct percentage to be reimbursed to the federal government was not made for Acash assistance programs@ (AFDC/TANF, Medicaid, etc). OCS will refer all eligible children to SES for establishment and/or amendment of child support orders, collection of child support payments and the correct distribution of funds in accordance with federal regulations. Effective January 2004, OCS will not directly collect child support for Title IV-E and /or Title XIX eligible children.

Background on Child Support Legislation


For information on child support and Support Enforcement Services go to the following web sites: http://www.dss.state.la.us/offofs/html/support_enforcement_services.html for state services and <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/news/facts/csenew.html>. From these two web sites additional sites are identified with more specific information that may also be viewed.

Procedure for the Foster Care Worker for New Cases

The Foster Care Worker shall continue to provide information at court hearings concerning payment of child support for children in accordance with PPM 00-33. By accessing TIPS screen for Voluntary Parental Contributions or by accessing LASES, the SES payment system, the worker may verify child support payment in order to report to the court. For convenience of the workers, the instruction for accessing LASES is attached to this memorandum and may be viewed in online policy as an attachment to PPM 00-33. If there is a problem in understanding how to access the automated systems that document payment, the worker may contact the Regional Eligibility Specialist for assistance.

With new cases, the OCS worker should inquire if the person from whom the child was removed received child support. If the parent or caretaker of the child was receiving child support from a noncustodial parent, the worker should ask if the payment was by court order and if SES collected the payment. A printout of the LASES clearance should be obtained to verify if the parent is known to SES with a pre-existing court order for child support. This information shall be used to report to the court and for completing the FAST I.

At any time it becomes known from interviews with the child=s caretaker or a LASES clearance that a court order for child support exists, the information about the order for support shall be reported on the FAST I or FAST III. When available, a copy of the court order for child support shall be forwarded to

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the Regional Eligibility Specialist with the FAST I or FAST III. The Foster Care Worker shall forward the FAST III with a copy of the Disposition Order and/or any other court order that contains a child support judgment. The Regional Eligibility Specialist will refer to SES any order containing child support payment. It is preferable that SES initiate the child support court order process to insure that federal support guidelines are observed; both parents are identified/located and assessed properly; and payments are collected, distributed appropriately and tracked for payment including any past due amounts.

When no referral has been made to SES and a voluntary parental contribution is made, the parents (mother, legal and/or biological father) shall be informed to send the payment by money order payable to DSS, no other form of payment shall be accepted. The parents shall be informed that for proper credit of their payment that they need to include on the money order the name and Social Security Number of each parent who is making payment and the name, Social Security Number and the amount for each child for whom payment is being made. The parents should be informed to mail the money order to:

Department of Social Services
C/O OCS State Office Parental Contributions
P.O. Box 3318
Baton Rouge, LA 70801-3318.


The Foster Care Worker should check the TIPS 802 Parental Contributions screen prior to preparing the case plan and/or the court report to verify payment of voluntary Parental Contribution or child support.

Procedure for Regional Eligibility Specialist for New Cases

The Regional Eligibility Specialist makes the referral to SES. SES will obtain or amend an existing order for child support from the child=s parents (mother, legal and/or biological father) when a determination is made that a child is eligible for Title IV-E and or Title XIX. SES will collect child support payments to DSS and appropriately distribute the funds to OCS and any other sources required by law.

Whenever the child=s IV-E eligibility status changes, the Regional Eligibility Specialist shall notify SES of the change in status. This includes when a child becomes eligible or ineligible for Title IV-E. The change in status may be due to moving into or out of a non-paid placement or other non-IV-E eligible placement. When the change is due to a change in living arrangements for which OCS does not make a payment, the name and address of the living arrangement provider and relationship to the child shall also be reported to SES for appropriate distribution of the funds collected.

If the case has been referred to SES and in the interim a parent makes a payment for Parental Contribution, the payment (money order) shall be forwarded to SES along with a letter to the parent and the court acknowledging receipt and that the payment has been forwarded to SES, and directing future payments to be made directly to SES. A copy of the letter shall be sent to the Foster Care Worker to be filed in the child's case record.

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Procedure for Foster Care Workers with Existing Cases

The Foster Care Worker must determine if the parent is currently sending a court ordered child support payment directly to OCS or if the payment is being made to SES. For the parents currently sending payment to SES no further action will be required until a change in status that routinely requires a FAST III to be sent to the Regional Eligibility Specialist.

For those parents who are sending payments to OCS, the Foster Care Worker must send a letter to the parents with a copy to the court that has ordered the child support and to the court with CINC jurisdiction, if different. The letter is to advise the parents of the requirement to send the child support payment to SES by money order made payable to DSS. The address for SES is shown below.

Support Enforcement Services
P. O. Box 26022
Baton Rouge, LA. 70821.

A sample letter is attached for this notification. A copy of the notification letter is to be sent to the Regional Attorney or DA depending upon local procedures for representing OCS in court. A copy of the notification letter and the court order is to be attached to the FAST III and sent to the Regional Eligibility Specialist.

For those parents who are sending a Parental Contribution to OCS and it is not contained in a court order, no action is required.

Regional Eligibility Specialist Procedure for Existing Foster Care Cases

When a FAST III is received on a child with an existing court order for child support, the Regional Eligibility Specialist shall make a referral to SES. Upon request the Regional Eligibility Specialist shall assist the Foster Care Workers in determining whether payments currently received by OCS are Voluntary Parental Contributions or court ordered payments to OCS.


If you have any questions, please call State Office Parental Contributions at (225) 219-9828.

Date _____

Parent Name _____
Address _____
TIPS # _____

Dear _____,

You have been paying child support to OCS for (name of child) in the amount of \$ _____. Child support payments are now to be sent to

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DSS/Support Enforcement Services

P. O. Box 260222

Baton Rouge, LA. 70821.

Please send your child support payments by money order only. The money order should be made out to DSS/Support Enforcement Services. Please include on the money order your name and Social Security Number along with the name and Social Security Number of your child so that you are given proper credit for the payment,

By copy of this letter the court is being notified of the change in payment source and address for payment of your child support. Please continue to pay your child support in the amount established unless there is a court order that changes the amount. It is very important for you to pay child support to show that you are willing and able to provide for your child in order for the court to consider your child returning to your home and custody or another plan of care that you wish for your child. It is your responsibility to support your child financially whether court ordered or through a voluntary agreement with this agency.

If you have any questions about this change in payment directions, please contact your OCS worker as shown below.

OCS Worker Name

Telephone Number

Address

C: (Court Ordering Child Support and if different Court with CINC jurisdiction)


(Regional Attorney or DA, as appropriate)

(Attach copy to FAST III along with copy of the court order.)

ACCESSING AND READING LASES

LASES information can be obtained by any OCS worker who has a TIPS user number beginning with TIU. LASES is accessed through DHHR and CLIENT. When beginning a mainframe session, the user should initially enter DHHR. Next log onto DHHR using the TIU user ID and correct password. CLIENT should be chosen as the system to access. The next screen provides the user with name search options. Enter the absent parent name and press PF1. The search can be narrowed by using either the date of birth or the SSN. If the DOB or the SSN is used and it is incorrect, the search will either produce no match or a wrong match. LASES cases are denoted IV-D in the Program column with both the ID number and the Case number beginning with zeroes. Any IV-D case number without leading zeroes is not an active LASES case and contains old information.


Enter the correct item number and press PF3 to obtain the LASES case. The screen that comes up will be the APD1 screen.

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If the AP's name is not known, it is possible to determine if information exists on LASES about the child's parents. The child's name can be entered for a search for IV-D cases. If information is known, the child will have IV-D cases. There will be multiple cases if more than one parent is known to the IV-D agency. Multiple cases can be determined by the case number. The case number will be the same number as the ID number with the exception of the last two digits. These numbers will be 01 and 02 if there is more than one parent known. There may be three or more IV-D cases listed for the child. Searching using the child's name may be more time-consuming, but may be the only avenue to follow if the parent name is not known. The results of the search by child's name will also produce the APD1 screen.

Attached to this memorandum is a representative copy of a screen print from LASES. Basic information which appears on the screen includes name of child, name of parent, identifying information, address and telephone number. Of primary importance for locating the whereabouts of the parent is the address and verified code and date. These items have been set in bold print on the attached page. Much of the information is self-explanatory. The attached page shows the screen and provides some explanatory information.

In the area to the right of the address type, the MORE indicator can be seen. Pressing PF8 will give previous address if Y is indicated beside MORE. The system will continue to provide previous known addresses if the indicator remains Y after PF8 is pressed

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*

case information

identifying
information

address and
telephone
number

APD1	L A S E S		PROD	11/11/98
OCS	ABSENT PARENT DATA 1		INQUIRY	12:55:34
C#: 000111111 01	STAT: ATV AR: SMITH JAMIE	MC: Y M#: 000111111		
AT: CA 5 OFF: 07	CSLD: 600 AP: SMITH JAMES	MC: Y M#: 000111114		
NAME				
PRI L: SMITH	SUF: _____	F: JAMES	M: _____	
ALI L: _____	SUF: _____	F: _____	M: _____	
MAIDEN NAME: _____ SEX: M RACE: WHITE SSN: 408 81 9959 VER CD: VV				
ALIAS SSN: _____ DOB: 01 / 13 / 1956 AP PARISH: _____ EYES: BU HAIR: BL				
HT: 6 01 WT: 220 DR LIC NBR: 009999999 ST: LA EXPIRE DT: 01 / 13 / 2002				
POB CITY: SHREVEPORT ST: LA APPROX AGE: 037 AS OF DATE: 12 / 15 / 1993				
ID MARKS: SCAR L UPPER CHEST & STOMACH. TATTOO OF MUSHROOM ON CHEST				
ADDRESS TYPE: R ACTION: _____ (A/U/S) MORE: Y				
ADDR1: 5427 FOSTER ST EFF DT: 09 / 16 / 1998				
ADDR2: _____ END DT: _____ / _____ / _____ UPD OFF: 07 CSLD: 600				
ADDR3: _____ UPD DATE: 09 / 16 / 1998				
CITY: SHREVEPORT ST: LA ZIP: 71101 SRC: DR AGY CD: _____ RPT ST:				
HOME PHONE: (_____) _____ - _____ VERIFIED CD: NV VERIFIED DT: 09 / 16 / 1998				
WORK PHONE: (_____) _____ - _____ 1099:				
IVA ID: _____		MED ID: _____		CL ID: _____
				CASE ID: _____
GOTO: _____				

AR: Authorized Representative: when OCS case is the payee, the authorized representative will be the child.

AP: Absent Parent: this is the name of the child's parent.

Verified CD: Verified code for address. Possible codes are as follows:

NV - not verified

VN - verified not valid

VV - verified valid

* After selecting a case, enter APD1 in the GOTO field at the bottom right of screen.