



Colusa, Sutter and Yolo Regional Child Support Agency Leadership Advisory Committee

To: RCSA Leadership Advisory Committee
From: Natalie Dillon, Regional Director
Subject: General Update (Agenda Item #5)
Date: May 26, 2021

Budget

As you may recall from the February LAC Budget Update, in FY 2019-20, a new budget methodology for the child support program was established and funding was increased for the program by \$56.5 million. The intent was to add \$56 million new money each year for three years to fully fund California's Child Support program, starting with the most underfunded local child support agencies (LCSAs). However as a result of the economic impacts of Covid-19, California implemented a number of budget cuts including reducing the Child Support allocation by \$56 million in the current fiscal year.

In the Governor's Budget, there was an additional \$25 million for California Child Support to partially address the current year budget reductions. In the Spring, the Administration released a Spring Finance Letter requesting an additional \$31 million to support LCSAs – together equaling \$56 million. The money will be allocated to the LCSAs based on the budget methodology, not based on current year cuts. DCSS recently issued a revised initial planning allocation letter indicating that Yolo will receive an additional \$114,599 and Sutter will receive \$42,380. Colusa is not eligible to receive additional funds based on the budget methodology and is considered "over funded".

The Courts AB 1058 program has also experienced cuts which directly affect the efficiency of the Child Support Program. The AB 1058 program funds the Child Support Commissioner (judicial officer) and Family Law Facilitator Program to provide an expedited way for people to navigate the child support system. DCSS submitted a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) requesting \$12 million in ongoing funding for the AB 1058 program for critical program staffing and information technology needs. As a result of prior reductions in funding to the court, the Yolo Superior Court reduced its calendar time available to Child Support litigants. The Yolo Court CEO, contingent upon receipt of additional funding, has indicated he intends to increase the AB 1058 calendar.

E-Filing with Yolo Court & DocuSign

AB 976 signed into law September 18, 2018 authorizes all trial courts statewide, by local rule, to require electronic filing and service of all court documents. Signature under penalty of perjury may be replaced with signature via "computer or other technology" if e-filed. Counties are eligible to use this



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functionality if the courts website has the ability to accept e-filed documents from the LCSA on DCSS cases or if their court allows paper filing of documents with “original” electronic signatures, via local rule of court. The Yolo Superior Court updated their court case management system (CMS) to the Tyler Odyssey solution, allowing the court to implement this requirement and enhanced functionality. The Yolo County local child support agency previously expressed interest to DCSS to be added to the queue to modify CSE (the California Child Support case management system) to facilitate local e-filing between the child support agency and the court. DCSS informed us that they can make the necessary changes in the release scheduled for November 2021. In the interim, RCSA staff, court personnel, DCSS and Tyler consultants will work on technical coding, testing and implementation.

As noted above, the implementation of AB 976 also allowed for electronic submission of documents signed under penalty of perjury. Once we have implemented e-filing, we will be able to implement DocuSign for those forms, as well as myriad others. This will increase our ability to work with customers virtually, not requiring their presence in our offices. It will also significantly expedite the return of documents, which now can sometimes take weeks, into hours.

The Sutter Superior Court also uses the Tyler Odyssey solution. Earlier this month, we received approval from the Sutter Court to get in queue for the necessary programming. We have learned from DCSS that could take up to a year.

We are not aware of the Colusa Superior Court moving to a CMS that would allow for e-filing.

Conflict of Interest Policy

The Political Reform Act (Act) prohibits a public official from using his or her official position to influence a governmental decision in which he or she has a financial interest. Every state and local agency must adopt a conflict of interest code that identifies all officials and employees within the agency who make governmental decisions based on the positions they hold. As a new local agency, it was required that the Colusa, Sutter and Yolo Regional Child Support Agency create and file a Conflict of Interest Policy with the FPPC. Staff have been working with the Yolo County Counsel’s office to develop such a draft which is currently under review by the FPPC. Once approved by the FPPC, it will go before the Yolo County Board of Supervisors for their approval. The individuals in the designated positions must disclose their financial interests as specified in the agency’s conflict of interest code.

To help identify potential conflicts of interest, the law requires public officials and employees in designated positions in a conflict of interest code to report their financial interests on the [Form 700](#).

As the RCSA Leadership Advisory Committee is advisory in nature, the members of the LAC are not required to complete the Form 700 as it relates to their involvement with the Regional Child Support Agency, the requirement will be limited to the following designated RCSA staff:



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- Director
- Assistant Director
- Supervising Attorney
- Business Services Manager
- Business Services Supervisor

Organizational Structure

As noted during the February LAC meeting, the RCSA has created a regional organizational chart and has been working to implement the structure by filling vacancies including making a number of promotions. In anticipation of the integrated workload starting next federal fiscal year, we surveyed Child Support Assistants, Specialists, Seniors, as well as Supervisors to ascertain interest in functional assignment. Based on the individual preferences expressed in the survey, the regional leadership team worked to make assignments based on staff's preferences while taking into consideration business needs. Staff were notified of their assignments earlier this month.

Common IT Platform

CA DCSS provides the IT infrastructure for Colusa and Yuba City child support offices, whereas Yolo County IT supports the Woodland office. Being on different IT platforms creates problems for the regional agency as we do not share a common network or Microsoft Office tenant. The RCSA has been working with CA DCSS Technology Services Division and Yolo County IT to migrate the Woodland RCSA staff to the State's Office 365 tenant. Once this occurs, all staff of the RCSA will be able to access the same Teams platform, SharePoint site, and have common email addresses. We anticipate starting the migration of Woodland staff to the state tenant in June. Shortly thereafter, the Colusa and Yuba City staff will join the Regional platform and we will be able to communicate and share files more seamlessly.

Vehicle User Agreement

The RCSA is in the process of transferring the two (2) Sutter County Child Support Ford Fusions (2013 and 2016) cars to Yolo County. The RCSA has initiated the process to purchase a new car to be located at the Colusa office, replacing an old vehicle that needs to be surplus. Yolo County Counsel is working on an agreement between the three counties that will address the issues of one county's employees driving another counties vehicles.

Teambuilding Offsite

A committee comprised of staff from the three offices is working on planning a team building and employee engagement summer event in July. This will be a great opportunity for staff to meet their new team mates, supervisors as well as team build with regional coworkers. We intend to close the offices for a partial day on the day of the event.



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RCSA Website Update

The RCSA contracted with Granicus to build a regional agency website. The website is still under construction, and will be available this summer. Below is a screen shot reflecting the general design and navigation. Once the regional website is fully functional, it will replace the three individual LCSA websites. We will plan to showcase the entire site when available.



Training

The RCSA is working to streamline business practices and integrate our caseloads come October 1, 2021. Staff have been participating in workgroups to identify differences in work practices and processes are being determined to establish the regional way of doing business. In February staff were selected for our training team. The team has drafted a plan for training all staff on regional processes for their function, but is also responsible for things like new hire training and other ongoing training as needed. Between now and October staff will be participating in training on a variety of topics from leadership, regional practices, customer service, teambuilding and more.



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Debt Reduction Program

The RCSA updated its Debt Reduction Program effective May 2021 which was previously known as COAP (Compromise of Arrears Program). COAP was very complex and difficult for many to qualify for, particularly those with low income and large arrears balances. The new program will now be plainly referred to as the Debt Reduction Program. The program is statewide and the new eligibility rules are more generous, allowing parents who owe child support debt to the government to write off large amounts of debt including interest in exchange for a small payment, and potentially close their child support case. This will likely result in an increased rate of case closure, which is a recognized issue for the LCSA and the state as a whole. This is applicable to parents who owe money to the government because the other parent was on CalWORKs or the child was in Foster Care, this does not eliminate child support debt owed to the other parent.

The Child Support Debt Reduction Program aligns eligibility and repayment options with a Parent Paying Support's (PPS) ability to pay, in consideration of gross income, family size and cost-of-living for the county, state or territory of residence. Cost-of-living is calculated using collection financial standards (allowable living expenses) as published annually by the IRS. By aligning repayment with the PPS' ability to pay will allow the Child Support Debt Reduction Program to expand eligibility, increase overall collections and most importantly resolve uncollectable debt. Child support debt can be a barrier for some folks to successful reentry, getting out of homelessness, poverty, etc.