

Child Support in Michigan: Facts & Figures



County and state child support offices in Michigan provide services for about 881,557 children and their families. Anyone can request services from the child support program by completing an application.

All families who receive public assistance are required to cooperate with the child support program to establish and enforce their child support orders. The mission of the child support program is to achieve the well-being of children and self-sufficiency of families by delivering consistent, innovative- and holistic services that promote healthy relationships between parents and children and ensure parents fulfill their financial obligations to their children.

(Federal fiscal year 2015 data is used in this fact sheet unless otherwise indicated.)

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Paternalty for children

- About 48,000 children are born outside of marriage in Michigan each year.
- 494,881 children born outside of marriage had a Michigan child support case.
- 98.5 percent of children in Michigan had paternity established.

Demographic information

- The Michigan child support program served 881,557 children in 842,709 child support cases.
 - Cases with children on current public assistance totaled 51,250.
 - Cases with children not on public assistance totaled 791,459.
- About 81.1 percent of Michigan child support cases had a child support order in place.

Collections for children

- The Michigan child support program collected and paid out \$1.36 billion in child support, with \$1.2 billion sent to families.
- Collections of child support paid in the month when due totaled \$986.1 million, which was 70.6 percent of the total current support that was due.
- The child support program collected an average of \$164 per child per month.

Child support debt

- Cumulative past-due child support, or arrears, owed as of Sept. 30, 2015, was about \$6.34 billion.
- About \$344.3 million was paid on child support debt. More than 61 percent of cases in arrears received an arrears payment during the year.
- The average debt owed in cases with child support debt was \$13,586.
- Parents in about 67 percent of child support cases owe some past due support.

Collections and enforcement methods

- **Income withholding.** A total of \$1.07 billion was collected by employers withholding child support from parents' paychecks.
- **New hire reporting.** Each month, employers reported an average of 205,507 newly hired staff. New hire reporting provides information for child support location and enforcement efforts.
- **Income tax refund intercepts.** Through income tax refund intercepts, \$75.8 million (5.4 percent of all collections) was collected. About 89 percent of intercepts were from federal returns; 10 percent were from state returns.
- **Financial Institution Data Match.** A total of \$6.71 million was collected by freezing or seizing financial assets.
- **License suspension.** About 3,500 parents had their driver's licenses suspended for failing to pay child support.
- **Other enforcement methods.** Parents who do not comply with child support orders may also be denied approval or renewal of their passport, reported to a credit bureau, subject to a civil contempt proceeding or charged with a felony.

To support Michigan children, a total of **\$1.36 billion** was collected.

Service delivery

- The Michigan Child Support Enforcement System (MiCSES), Michigan's automated computer system, supports the work of 2,171 county and state workers in providing child support services.
- The Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU), Michigan's centralized collection and payment processor, disbursed approximately \$124.8 million each month.
- Approximately 52.7 percent of the collections paid out by the MiSDU are directly deposited into checking or savings accounts; 34.7 percent of collections are deposited on a U.S. Bank ReliaCard Visa debit card.
- Child Support specialists answer an average of 12,250 calls each month, obtaining information for case initiation and providing parents with information about child support.
- Parents access information about their child support case activities and payments, or connect with their case worker through the phone an average of 625,000 times per month.
- On average, visits to the MiChildSupport secure website exceed 420,000 monthly. With more than 101,000 active users, parents can use this site to view their case information and apply for child support. The site URL is www.Michigan.gov/MiChildSupport.
- Child support information for parents, employers, hospitals and schools is located on the MDHHS website: www.michigan.gov/ChildSupport. This includes brochures, a high school curriculum, guides, etc.

Program funding

- Child support program costs totaled \$234.4 million. The federal government funded 67.4 percent (including costs funded with federal performance incentives), the state funded 16.5 percent and Michigan counties funded 16.40 percent.
- The federal government pays 66 percent of eligible state and county costs other than the costs funded with federal performance incentives. The federal performance incentives paid by the federal government are based on disbursed collections and five performance factors. Michigan estimates it will receive approximately \$25.8 million for fiscal year 2015. The federal performance incentives are shared between the counties and the state.
- For every \$1 spent on Michigan's child support program, \$5.76 was collected in support for Michigan's children.