

Child Support in Michigan: Facts & Figures

County and state child support offices in Michigan provide services for more than 828,000 children and their families. Anyone can request services from the Michigan Child Support Program by completing an application. All families who receive public assistance are required to cooperate with the program to establish paternity and child support orders if it is safe for them to do so. The program's mission is to achieve the well-being of children and self-sufficiency of families by delivering consistent, innovative and holistic services. These services promote healthy relationships between parents and children, ensure parents fulfill their financial obligations to their children and ensure families have access to all possible income sources.

(Federal fiscal year 2021 data is used in this fact sheet unless otherwise indicated.)



m i c h i g a n
child support

**We provide services
for more than 828,000
Michigan children and
their families.**

Paternity for children

- 493,061 children born to unmarried parents have a child support case.
- 81% of children born to unmarried parents had paternity established.

Demographic information

- We served 828,327 children on 779,885 child support cases.
- 77.8% of child support cases have an order requiring a parent to provide support.

Collections for children

- We collected and paid out over \$1.23 billion to families.
- 73.7% of support was paid in the month it was due. Collections of child support paid in the month when due totaled \$949.6 million.
- We collected an average of \$221 per child per month for those who were owed support.
- Families who receive cash assistance and child support received \$2.65 million directly instead of these funds reimbursing state and federal program costs (aka "pass through").

Child support debt

- Cumulative past-due child support, or arrears, owed as of Sept. 30, 2021, was about \$4.19 billion.
- About \$436.4 million was paid on child support debt. More than 75.3% of cases in arrears received an arrears payment during the year.
- The average debt owed in cases with child support debt was \$8,762.

**For every \$1 spent on
the Michigan Child
Support Program,
we collected \$6.19 in
support for Michigan's
children.**

By the numbers

Race and/or ethnicity data:

Race and/or ethnicity data is available for around 90% of parents and dependents in the Michigan Child Support Program. About half are recorded as white, a third Black, with the rest made up of a variety of other races/ethnicities; the largest populations were Hispanic (4%), Asian or Pacific Islander (<1%), and Native American (<1%).

Program funding:

The federal government pays 66% of eligible state and county program expenses. The federal government also makes incentive payments to Michigan for its performance in five areas of the program, including disbursed collections. Michigan estimates it will receive approximately \$25.8 million for fiscal year 2021. The federal performance incentives are shared between the counties and the state.

Sources:

OCSE Preliminary Data Report 2021
OCSE-157 FY21 Report
OCSE-34 FY21 Report
OCSE-396 FY21 Report
MI Child Support Enforcement System
SCAO-41
2021 Kids Count

Collections and enforcement methods

- **Income withholding.** A total of \$907.7 million was collected by employers withholding child support from parents' paychecks.
- **New hire reporting.** Each month in 2021, employers reported an average of 221,647 newly hired staff. New hire reporting provides information for child support location and enforcement efforts.
- **Income tax refund intercepts.** Through income tax refund intercepts, \$105 million (7.2% of all collections) was collected. About 90% of intercepts were from federal refunds; 10% were from state refunds.
- **Financial Institution Data Match.** A total of \$8.1 million was collected by freezing or seizing financial assets.
- **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.

Service delivery

- The Michigan Child Support Enforcement System, Michigan's computer system, supports the work of 1,950 county and state workers in providing child support services.
- The Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU), Michigan's centralized collection and payment processor, disbursed approximately \$133.2 million each month.
- Approximately 44.3% of the collections are directly deposited into checking or savings accounts; 39.1% of collections are deposited on a Way2Go prepaid Mastercard.
- OCS child support specialists answer an average of 7,590 calls each month, obtaining information for case initiation and providing parents with information about child support.
- On average, monthly visits to the MiChildSupport secure website exceeded 508,000 in FY2021. With nearly 209,000 active users, parents have used this site to view their case information and apply for child support. The site URL is Michigan.gov/MiChildSupport.
- Child support information for parents, employers and hospitals is located on the MDHHS website: Michigan.gov/ChildSupport. This includes information on opening cases, establishing paternity, withholding income, calculating support and other valuable brochures and guides.