



# **Reducing Child Support Default Orders in Colorado**

**Final Report**

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## Executive Summary

The project, *Reducing Default Orders in Child Support Cases in Colorado*, tested several strategies by which child support agencies might promote the participation of noncustodial parents (NCPs) in proceedings to establish child support orders and reduce the use of default orders. Conducted in two Colorado counties — Denver and Jefferson — the project involved the use of a variety of automated and worker-initiated techniques to promote contact, stimulate parental involvement, and increase payment. The techniques used included personal telephone calls, financial incentives to those who appeared at order-making proceedings, face-to-face meetings; and automated reminder calls. Denver County also tried to get parents to contact the agency by having process servers attempt to distribute a brief survey of interests and needs and a brochure about child support along with the papers they normally deliver to noncustodial parents.

The goal of the evaluation was to test the pros and cons of using more and less time-consuming actions to attempt to achieve contact with noncustodial parents and reduce default orders. It involved the generation of three equivalent groups of child support cases in the target counties during January 2005 to June 2006 that were eligible for administrative order establishment and did not have a current order. Workers kept track of the efforts they made to contact 433 clients. Automated records were kept of 256 electronic notification calls. A control group was generated consisting of 526 cases treated in the normal manner in 2003, a year that preceded the informal use of proactive outreach efforts by some workers in Colorado.

In addition to the above-noted records, the data generated for the project included brief exit questionnaires from 233 noncustodial parents and 158 custodial parents at the close of the negotiation conference, telephone interviews with 105 noncustodial parents three months after their case was assigned to a worker to establish a child support order, brief assessments of child support information and services needed by 56 noncustodial parents who completed a checklist distributed by process servers, and a review of child support records for all cases in every group: 433 with worker-initiated contact efforts, 256 with electronic notification calls, 526 in the control group, and 85 and 75 subject to heightened and normal interventions by process servers, respectively.

### Efforts by Workers to Establish Contact with Noncustodial Parents

- Using phone, and in-person meetings, child support workers were able to make telephone and/or face-to-face contact with noncustodial parents in 86 and 77 percent of cases they handled in Denver and Jefferson, respectively. Workers used telephone conversations with parents to establish a relationship and schedule a face-to-face meeting to establish a child support order.

- Most noncustodial parents who met with a worker to establish a child support order in Denver and Jefferson County waived their right for service of process (89% and 60%), which reduced the need for papers to be legally served.
- Telephone and in-person contact increased the use of objective data sources (72%) and parent affidavits (76%) to identify income for noncustodial parents and decreased the incidence of income imputation, which dropped from 40 to 7 percent in Denver and 73 to 27 percent in Jefferson. Objective data and affidavits often result in more accurate orders.
- Making contact with noncustodial parents rarely resulted in workers referring them for help with employment (8%) and/or parent-child contact (9% to 13%). It is not known what percent of NCPs were interested in referrals, although many parents reported infrequent contact with their children (29%), and or being employed on a less than full-time basis (42%).
- Although compared to the control group it took more time to establish child support orders when worker-initiated contact was routinely attempted (86.6 versus 75.9 days), it took less time to establish orders in cases where contact was actually achieved as compared with the control group (69.2 versus 75.9 days).

### **Reactions of Parents to Worker-Initiated Actions to Establish Contact**

- Nearly all noncustodial parents who recalled receiving calls and materials from child support workers reported that it is “very” or “somewhat” helpful, although there was no consensus on the best way for the child support agency to communicate with parents, with 34 percent favoring in-person meetings, 29 percent favoring letters, and 23 percent favoring telephone calls.
- Despite the fact that over 90 percent of noncustodial parents reported feeling well treated by child support workers both immediately after the conference and three months later, a quarter reported being angry with child support and half gave the agency ratings of “fair” or “poor.” This inconsistency may reflect more basic disaffections with the child support system rather than specific customer service complaints.
- Noncustodial parents accurately identified many features of the child support program after meeting with a worker, although 20 to 33 percent were confused about the rules concerning public assistance, cooperation, tax refunds, and visitation.

## **Impact of Worker-Initiated Contact on Order Establishment and Payment**

- Cases with worker-initiated outreach as compared with the control group had significantly higher rates of orders set by stipulation (71% versus 51%) and lower rates of orders established by default (12% versus 45%).
- The payment rate was significantly higher for noncustodial parents experimental group as compared with the control group during the first and second year following the promulgation of their orders (45% versus 37%).

## **Electronic Notification Calls**

- Attempts to convey meaningful messages to noncustodial parents using electronic notifications were rarely successful, with 40 percent of targeted calls not attempted due to a missing phone number and 74 percent of attempted calls never reaching a live person due to unanswered calls, answer machines, and immediate hang-ups.
- The differences between rates of stipulation (60% versus 53%) and rates of default (40% versus 47%) for noncustodial parents subject to electronic reminder calls and those in the control group, respectively, were not statistically significant, suggesting that they could be due to chance alone. Parents exposed to electronic reminder calls did no better job of paying child support than did their counterparts in the control group.

## **Process Servers**

- Process servers engaged noncustodial parents and obtained additional information, with more than half of targeted parents completing a brief assessment that identified their interest in receiving help with child support, visitation, and employment.
- Nearly all noncustodial parents (86%) who completed a brief assessment of needs wanted information on how child support works, but nearly as many also wanted help with getting to see their children (79%) and with employment (56%).
- Noncustodial parents who were exposed to process servers who perform conventional and heightened outreach duties had comparable rates of stipulation and default.

## **Conclusions**

The project, *Reducing Default Orders in Child Support Cases in Colorado*, shows that it was feasible for workers to reach most noncustodial parents at early stages of case processing and that routine attempts to contact and communicate were extremely beneficial. Worker-initiated

outreach was associated with a significant reduction in default orders and an increase in those established by stipulation. Other benefits were a significant improvement in the payment rate during both the first and second years after orders were established, reduced enforcement activity, high levels of user satisfaction, and increased use of objective data sources and parental affidavits to establish income. To contrast, electronic reminder calls were rarely successful. Many calls were not made because phone numbers were not available in the child support system. Other calls were never answered, or there was an immediate hang up or message left on an answer machine. Unlike worker-initiated outreach efforts, parents exposed to electronic reminder calls did not stipulate at higher rates than did parents in the control group and had similar default and payment patterns. Finally, there was no evidence that up-front, outreach efforts by process servers led to lower rates of default.

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## Chapter 1: Background, Setting, Approach, Research Design and Data

The *Reducing Default Orders in Child Support Cases in Colorado Project* was designed to implement and test several strategies by which child support agencies might promote the participation of noncustodial parents (NCPs) in proceedings to establish child support orders and reduce the use of default orders. Conducted in two Colorado counties — Denver and Jefferson — the project involved the use of enhanced efforts to:

- Locate noncustodial parents;
- Contact, notify, and remind noncustodial parents about pending legal proceedings;
- Build relationships with noncustodial parents, expand their understandings of their child support obligations, and promote their participation in order establishment procedures;
- Identify parent income and set orders that reflect an ability to pay; and
- Remind noncustodial parents about their payment obligations and elicit payment.

Child support agencies in both counties attempted to promote contact and stimulate parental involvement and payment using a variety of worker-initiated and automated techniques. They included:

- Personal telephone calls;
- Financial incentives to those who appeared at order-making proceedings;
- Face-to-face meetings; and
- Automated reminder calls.

Denver County also experimented with the use of process servers to promote contact and communication with child support workers by distributing a brief needs assessment and a brochure about child support along with the papers they normally deliver to noncustodial parents.

The goal of the evaluation was to test the pros and cons of using more and less time-consuming actions to achieve contact with noncustodial parents. It was designed to generate empirical information on (1) how a child support agency can do a better job of contacting and involving noncustodial parents in child support proceedings; and (2) how effective early outreach techniques are in preventing default orders, increasing the number of orders that accurately reflect the noncustodial parent's ability to pay, and encouraging payments.

## Background

When a NCP fails to make a legal appearance in the child support case brought against him or her, the court or administrative agency enters a default order. If actual information about income is missing, it will be imputed. In the absence of accurate income information, default orders may exceed what the noncustodial parent can reasonably afford to pay. The noncustodial may be unaware of the existence of, or the amount of, an obligation established by default, and fail to “buy-in” to the order amount. Not surprisingly, default child support orders have been cited by some researchers and administrators as a contributing factor to the large amounts of child support arrearages accumulated by many low-income obligors (Sorensen, 1999; Turetsky, 2000) and the lower collection rates on current support and large arrearage balances carried by many jurisdictions (Sorensen, 2007).

Although most jurisdictions use default orders to some degree, rates vary tremendously. A survey by Policy Studies Inc. conducted in 2002 that looked at default rates in selected jurisdictions across the country found that rates ranged from a low of 10 percent in Harris County, Texas, and 13 percent in New York City, to a high of 62 percent in Maricopa County, Arizona, and 79 percent in Los Angeles County, California (Legler, 2003). Federal and state laws and regulations support the use of default orders for child support cases when the noncustodial parent has been properly notified, has the ability to respond, and is trying to escape responsibility by ignoring or evading court and agency actions. The significant differences in default order rates among jurisdictions across the country, however, suggest that default orders are often entered when they could be avoided.

In recent years, jurisdictions have begun to use a number of innovative methods to reduce the incidence of default orders. Frequently referred to as the use of “early intervention techniques,” they involve practices that encourage workers to focus on child support cases at initial stages of case processing and to engage in proactive contact with noncustodial and custodial parents for the purpose of establishing a positive working relationship. Caseworkers often have little or no contact with noncustodial parents until months into the case when he or she owes back-due support and faces bank attachments, license revocations, liens, and other enforcement actions.

Prior to order establishment, early intervention involves contacting the obligor to identify income and address barriers to payment through appropriate service referrals. Early intervention may also involve contact with custodial parents and employers to locate noncustodial parents and ensure that wage withholding orders have been sent to the right payroll office. The most important aspects of early intervention are setting reasonable, enforceable orders from the outset; promoting voluntary compliance with child support obligations; monitoring cases; and enforcing them swiftly (Legler, 2003).



At all stages of case processing, the goal of early intervention is for the child support agency to approach noncustodial parents in a non-threatening manner before any legal action is started. Ideally, the worker verbally explains in an understandable manner the need for child support and the process by which orders are established and enforced. Next, the worker determines whether unemployment or underemployment are barriers to payment and offers employment and training services so that the noncustodial parent can work and better support himself. The worker might also determine whether parent-child contact is established and make appropriate referrals to community-based agencies and court programs offering mediation, and other services to promote access and visitation. If the noncustodial parent's circumstances have changed since the promulgation of the order, the worker would determine whether a review and adjustment is warranted. During the ensuing few months, the worker would monitor payment behavior and assist a parent in meeting his obligations. Child support might also contact employers to make sure that they have received legal papers instructing them to garnish wages for child support purposes. If payment is not forthcoming, the worker would swiftly initiate enforcement actions.

While extensively used in New Zealand and Australia, child support agencies in the United States are just beginning to experiment with early intervention techniques. To emphasize prompt, proactive steps to generate timely and consistent payments, as set forth in the National CSE Strategic Plan for 2005-2009, the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement recently funded projects in Iowa (Iowa Bureau of Collections, 2006), Tennessee (Policy Studies Inc., 2006), and Nebraska (Social Sciences Research Center, 2006) to promote the use of early intervention techniques in child support cases. OCSE also supported a Special Improvement Grant that examined the use of early intervention techniques in jurisdictions in Colorado, Massachusetts, Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin (CPR, 2007).

Although most of these projects involved interventions that were implemented following the generation of new orders, the projects in Tennessee and Oregon utilized front-end contacts with noncustodial parents prior to the generation of child support orders, with the objective of involving obligors in order-making proceedings and generating orders that better reflected the ability to pay. The Colorado project was the only one that focused exclusively on the use of proactive outreach measures at the earliest stages of case processing. Interventions were targeted to occur as soon as the noncustodial parent had been located and the case was referred to workers to establish an order.

The next section describes the two Colorado counties that participated in the present study, the steps that workers in each agency took to try to contact noncustodial parents and engage them in the child support process, and the methods by which the effectiveness of their efforts were evaluated.

## Project Setting

The project was conducted in Denver and Jefferson counties. Although both have total population sizes of about one-half million, they have substantial demographic differences. While Jefferson County is a suburban county, adjacent to Denver, Denver County is contiguous with the City of Denver, and relative to Jefferson County is much more heavily comprised of Hispanics (53.1% versus 12.8%), those with less than a high school diploma (18.5% versus 6.9%), and the foreign born (18.9% versus 6%). Denver also has a higher rate of out-of-wedlock births, poverty, and impoverished female households with minor-aged children. For example, 18.8 percent of families with children under 18 in Denver fell below the poverty line, as compared with 8.2 percent in Jefferson County. Table 1 presents selected demographic information for Jefferson and Denver Counties.

**Table 1: Selected Demographic Information for Denver and Jefferson Counties**

	Jefferson County, Colorado	Denver County, Colorado
Population Size & Growth		
Total population 2005 estimate	519,071	545,198
Population percent change from 2000 to 2005	-1.5%	-1.7%
Age		
Population under age 18	127,095	135,205
Median age	38.8 years	34.3 years
Households		
Female headed households with own children under 18 as a percent of all households	6.1%	6.1%
Males: Never married (percent of population 15 yrs+)	28.9%	39.4%
Females: Never married (percent of population 15+ yrs)	22.8%	31.8%
Race <sup>1</sup>		
White (non-Hispanic)	83.8%	50.4%
African-American	.84%	10.3%
American Indian & Alaska Native	.47%	1.2%
Asian & Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian	2.6%	3%
Hispanic, any race <sup>2</sup>	12.8%	35.1%
Education (25 years or older)		
Less than high school diploma	6.9%	18.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	38.8%	39%
Special Populations		
Disabilities: Non-institutionalized ages 16-64 (population 5+ yrs)	11%	13.2%
Foreign born	6%	18.9%
Language other than English in home (population 5+ yrs)	9.6%	31.1%
Fertility <sup>3</sup>		
Number of women 15-50 yrs who gave birth in the past 12 months	6,473	8,814
Unmarried women <sup>4</sup> 15 to 50 yrs who gave birth in the past 12 months	1,391 (21.5%)	2793 (31.7%)
Per 1,000 women 15 to 19 years	21	11

**Table 1: Selected Demographic Information for Denver and Jefferson Counties**

	Jefferson County, Colorado	Denver County, Colorado
Income		
Median household income in 2005	\$60,944	\$42,370
Median family income in 2005	\$73,355	\$52,139
Poverty status		
Percent of all families with children under 18	8.2%	18.8%
Percent of all families with female householder and children under 18	24.6%	30.5%
Unemployment Rate		
Unemployment 2005	6%	6.6%

The child support program in both Denver and Jefferson counties is administered by the county Departments of Human Services. Both counties make heavy use of administrative procedures to establish, modify and enforce child support orders. In Denver County, order establishment is handled by four teams of specialized workers and two comprehensive teams that perform both establishment and enforcement functions. Each team consists of nine technicians and two support workers who handle approximately 450 to 500 cases per month that are assigned on a random, numerical basis. In Jefferson County, paralegals handle paternity and establishment matters. Cases are distributed to workers on a random basis using an alphabetical method of assignment.

Table 2 shows selective information on child support patterns in both counties in 2003, prior to the start of the project. Although Jefferson County had approximately half the number of open cases, it collected about 75 percent of the child support revenue that Denver County collected. While rates public assistance in the child support caseloads were similar, as were the percent of cases with orders, the counties differed in other important respects. One was the percentage of cases established by default, which was 26.7 percent in Jefferson and 36 percent in Denver. The counties also differed on their collection rate, which was 49.2 percent in Denver and 56.2 percent in Jefferson.

**Table 2. Selected Child Support Characteristics of Denver and Jefferson Counties**

	Jefferson	Denver
Open CSE Cases (2003)	13,532	25,012
Percent of Orders Established by Default	26.7%	36%
Collections	\$27,806,987	\$36,871,994
Percent Public Assistance Cases	11.0%	13.3%
Percent Open Cases with Orders	85.4%	83.4%
Percent Current Support Collected	56.2%	49.2%

## Project Approach

The project involved the generation of three equivalent groups of child support cases in each county and comparisons between and among the three groups and across the counties on the incidence of default orders and rates of child support payment. Noncustodial parents in two groups of cases in each county were exposed to different treatments that included both worker initiated and automated attempts to make telephone contact. A third group of cases served as a comparison group. Cases in all three groups were drawn from the pool of cases set for order establishment in Denver and Jefferson counties in 2003.

All three groups of cases consisted of those that were eligible for administrative order establishment and did not have a current order. Administrative procedures can be used in many, but not all, types of cases. For example, it cannot be used in cases that involve minor-aged parents, multiple possible fathers, and allegations of domestic violence where the custodial parent has obtained a good cause exemption to the cooperation requirements. In addition, judges in Denver County frequently require cases that involve Spanish-speaking parents to obtain orders using judicial rather than administrative procedures in order to utilize certified translators at the courthouse. In 2003, 91 percent of orders in Jefferson County, and 64 percent in Denver County, were established by administrative procedures.

The two treatment groups developed for the project involved the use of a variety of worker-initiated and automated interventions aimed at maximizing contact with noncustodial parents. The automated, proactive interventions included a series of automated telephone messages to custodial and noncustodial parents to remind them of upcoming hearings and payments and alert to them to missed payments. The Division of Child Support Enforcement of the Colorado Department of Human Services contracted with Courtland Consulting to provide the programming needed to reach targeted custodial and noncustodial parents by telephone at key moments in their cases. Five calls were developed. They included a reminder call about the negotiation conference for noncustodial parents, a reminder call about the negotiation conference for custodial parents, a call to noncustodial parents who fail to appear at their negotiation conference, a call to remind noncustodial parents that their first payment was due, and a call to alert noncustodial parents who miss their first payment about their delinquency. Parents had the option to leave a message that was forwarded to a case worker's voicemail and email in order to explain a missed appearance, reschedule an appointment, or speak to a caseworker.

The worker-initiated interventions included a variety of mail and telephone notices and outreach efforts to custodial and noncustodial parents to acquire and transmit information and build rapport. Other worker-initiated interventions included the use of more sophisticated Internet-based location resources, the use of photographs provided by the custodial parent and/or the

Department of Motor Vehicles to improve service of process, and the collection of location information by process servers.

The participating child support agencies also offered generous financial incentives to noncustodial parents with debts owed to the state if they appeared at a conference to establish their support obligations (the “negotiation conference”). The incentive was extended to cases in the treatment group exposed to worker-initiated interventions. Most notably, noncustodial parents in this treatment group who attended negotiation conferences and had a child support debt or owed fees to the child support, agency, had their fees and debts waived. While the child support agency could not compromise child support arrears owed to the other parent, they were able to facilitate a discussion between the two parents concerning past-due support at the negotiation conference that might lead to compromise arrangements. Workers also used the conference to identify barriers to payment and to make appropriate referrals for assistance with parenting time and employment problems.

A final feature of the project in Denver County involved attempts to use process servers to exchange information with noncustodial parents in the course of delivering legal papers. Process servers distributed brief questionnaires to parents asking about their interest in receiving different types of information and services from child support workers. They also distributed a brochure about child support along with the name of a worker and a telephone number permitting easy, direct contact. Workers kept track of the number of parents who contacted them as a result of these outreach efforts. Their rate of appearance at negotiation conferences was compared with appearance rates for noncustodial parents who were served in the usual manner.

## Research Design

During January 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006, cases in Denver and Jefferson counties that were eligible for administrative order establishment, and did not have a current order, were randomly assigned to two treatment categories. The treatment groups consisted of cases that received: (1) automated telephone reminder calls, and (2) reminder calls and worker-initiated outreach efforts. In addition to the two treatment groups, a third group of comparable cases was generated for comparison purposes. It consisted of cases processed during 2003 that would have been eligible for the above-noted project treatments had they come to the attention of the agency in 2005 and the first half of 2006. The following describes the interventions undertaken with cases in the two groups in greater detail.

- **A treatment group receiving only automated interventions (“ENS Only Group”).** Courtland Consulting was retained to provide five automated telephone messages to parents, alerting them of important events in their child support case. The ENS calls that were placed included the following:

✓ **Reminder calls about the negotiation conference for noncustodial parents.**

On the day before the negotiation conference, attempts were made to call noncustodial parents and remind them of the date, time, and place of the scheduled conference. They had an opportunity to leave a message that was forwarded to a caseworker’s voicemail and email.

✓ **Reminder calls about the negotiation conference for custodial parents.**

On the day before the negotiation conference, attempts were made to call custodial parents (CPs) to remind them of the date, time, and place of the scheduled conference. They also had an opportunity to leave a message for their worker.

✓ **Calls to noncustodial parents who fail to appear at their negotiation conference.**

On the day following the negotiation conference, attempts were made to call noncustodial parents who failed to appear. They were instructed to contact their child support worker and told that a child support obligation would be entered if they failed to respond.

✓ **First payment due calls for noncustodial parents.**

One week prior to the day that the first child support payment was due, attempts were made to call noncustodial parents reminding them of the due date, the amount due and the place to send their payment. Those who paid via income assignment were encouraged to remind their employer of the need to remit payment to the State Disbursement Unit.

✓ **First missed payment call for noncustodial parents.**

Two weeks after the first child support payment was missed, attempts were made to call noncustodial parents reminding them that they were delinquent. They were urged to pay or contact a caseworker immediately to avoid enforcement actions.

- **A second treatment group receiving both automated and worker-initiated interventions (“Experimental Group”).** The second treatment group received all of the automated telephone calls described above. In addition, this group received the following worker-generated communications and actions:

✓ **A “Contact-Us” letter mailed to the noncustodial parent.**

Workers sent NCPs a letter saying that the CP had applied for services, the NCP had been named as a father/possible father, paternity testing was available, he had the option to phone for an appointment, and the agency would proceed to set up an order if he did not respond. The letter encouraged noncustodial parents to call the agency to attend a conference to establish an order.

✓ **A “relationship-building” telephone call with the noncustodial parent.**

The worker attempted to contact the NCP to introduce herself, explain the nature of the child support establishment process, describe the financial incentive offered for appearing, identify barriers to child support payment, and make appropriate referrals.

✓ **Contact the custodial parent to request a cell phone number and email address for the noncustodial parent and a recent photograph.**

If the NCP did not respond to the Contact-Us letter and/or a telephone call, the worker mailed a letter to the custodial parent requesting an up-to-date cell phone number, email address, and a recent photograph.

✓ **Use websites to enhance efforts to locate the noncustodial parent.**

If the NCP could not be reached, the worker made additional efforts to locate him. This included consulting a checklist of location sources and exploring at least three of the 13 listed web addresses, as well as paid location websites.

✓ **Request a photograph from the Department of Motor Vehicles.**

If the custodial parent did not provide a photograph of the NCP, the worker requested that the Department of Motor Vehicles email one to the agency for use by the process server.

✓ **Mail the APA packet with a Spanish-language attachment that explains the contents.**

Unless letters to the NCP were returned as “undeliverable,” the worker sent the Notice of Financial Responsibility by regular mail as well as the normal service of process procedure. A brief Spanish-language attachment was added that explained the materials and their importance, and urged the parent to phone a number to receive further explanation and information by a Spanish-language worker.

✓ **Provide the process server with the worker’s business card and a photograph of the noncustodial parent.**

Workers reviewed with the process server the information available for noncustodial parents, attached their business card to service papers, and provided a photograph of the noncustodial parent.

✓ **Notify the custodial parent about the negotiation conference and urge her to attend.**

Workers mailed a letter to the custodial parent notifying her about the negotiation conference and urging both parents to attend.

✓ **Conduct the negotiation conference, waive child support debt and fees, and offer referrals to remedy barriers to payment.**

Workers conducted the negotiation conference in the usual manner but NCPs who attended were offered several incentives. One was a waiver of child support debts and fees owed to the State of Colorado. In addition, the CP and NCP were encouraged to negotiate about the amount of retroactive support that would be paid if it was owed. Finally, workers attempted to determine if the parents were having problems with parenting time and/or employment, and to make appropriate referrals.

✓ **Notify noncustodial parents who fail to appear at the negotiation conference that their order will become effective in 10 days.**

Noncustodial parents who failed to attend their negotiation conferences were sent a letter listing the ordered amount, describing how it was calculated, and informing them that they had 10 days in which to respond before it was promulgated by the court.

✓ **Contact custodial parents who fail to appear at the negotiation conference and try to determine why the NCP did not attend.**

If neither parent attended the conference, the worker called the custodial parent to try to assess the reasons for the NCP’s nonattendance (*e.g.*, incarceration, hospitalization) and to collect any new or different location information.

- ✓ **Enter a stipulated, temporary, or default order according to normal agency procedures.**

Workers followed normal agency procedures to enter a stipulated, default, or temporary order. Custodial and noncustodial parents were notified of the final order amount and the next step in their case. Workers responded to any calls they received from parents in response to reminder calls that were placed electronically.

- **The third group was the Control group.** This group was generated from an extract of the Automated Child Support Enforcement System (ACSES) provided by the state Department of Human Services. It consisted of cases with new child support orders established in 2003 in Denver and Jefferson counties using administrative procedures. From the total pool of 1,400 cases with orders established in 2003 in Denver and Jefferson, a random sample of 526 cases was selected.

The project design is summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3. Design of Project for Worker-Initiated and ENS Only Activities**

Treatment Group 1 Automated Proactive Interventions Only  "ENS Only"	Treatment Group 2 Automated and Worker Initiated  "Experimental"	Control Group Normal Agency Procedure  "Control"
Cases assigned to 3 workers in Denver and 2 workers in Jefferson from May 2005 through May 2006 (n=256 cases or 512 parents)	Cases assigned to 2 workers in Denver and 1 worker in Jefferson from January 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006 (n=433)	Random sample of 526 new orders established in Denver and Jefferson counties in 2003. Generated as extract from ACSES.

### Data Sources and Data Collection

Data from numerous sources were collected and analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the worker-initiated and automatic, electronic interventions. The data available were:

- A record of electronic call attempts and outcomes for cases in both treatment groups. The data on electronic calls were maintained by Courtland Consulting and transmitted to the Center for Policy Research for analysis. The extract contained information on call attempts and outcomes including hang-ups, phone disconnections, and the incidence of calls that were answered.
- Manual data collection forms completed by workers for 433 case in the experimental group that documented worker attempts to contact and communicate with custodial and noncustodial parents. Workers kept track of the activities they took in targeted cases and the responses of clients. This included phone conversations and in-person meetings with custodial and noncustodial parents, as well as the use of paid websites to locate noncustodial parents.



- Brief exit surveys completed by 233 noncustodial parents and 158 custodial parents in the treatment group who were subject to worker-initiated outreach efforts. The surveys were administered at the close of the negotiation conferences. They focused on parent perceptions regarding their treatment by the child support agency and the child support worker and their reactions to the additional worker and automated contacts they might have experienced as part of their participation in the project. Parents who attended the negotiation conference were offered a McDonald's gift certificate worth \$10 as an incentive to complete the brief paper-and-pencil questionnaire.
- Telephone interviews with 105 NCPs in the experimental group exposed to both worker-initiated and electronic outreach efforts. Phone interviews were attempted approximately three months following the date the case was assigned to an establishment worker. The telephone interviews were conducted by professional interviewers at the Public Opinion Laboratory of Northern Illinois University. Respondents were asked about the fairness of their child support orders, their payment patterns, and reasons why they may have been paying less than the full amount of child support that was due. To see whether outreach efforts had helped to educate parents about the child support system, NCPs were asked a series of questions about child support, the enforcement process, and the role of the agency. Finally, noncustodial parents were asked about whether they recalled receiving an electronic reminder call and whether it had been helpful. Respondents were sent a gift certificate for \$20 at the conclusion of the 15-minute telephone interview.
- A manual review of child support records for 433 cases exposed to worker-initiated and electronic outreach efforts, 256 cases exposed to electronic outreach efforts only and 526 cases in the control group that were processed in 2003 using normal agency procedures without extra outreach efforts. The information was extracted from ACSES by an experienced child support worker during June to August 2007. On average, the data collection effort occurred 18 months following the promulgation of orders for cases in the experimental group and 32 months following the promulgation of orders in the control group. Among the items generated for all project cases were the amount of ordered child support, the method by which the child support order was developed, and child support payments. To standardize the information obtained for cases in the experimental and control groups, the evaluation focused on payments in the 12 months following the establishment of the child support order, as well as arrears balances and enforcement actions.

Table 4 shows the number of cases with various types of information

**Table 4. Numbers of Cases with Different Types of Information for Evaluation of Worker-Initiated and ENS-Only Activities**

	Worker-Initiated & ENS	ENS Only	Control Group
Selected information on child support case characteristics	433	0	526
Information on actions taken by workers to establish contact and results of these efforts	433	0	0
Information on automated telephone calls regarding upcoming child support events and payments	324	256	0
Reactions of custodial and noncustodial parents to negotiation conferences and various worker- initiated and automated telephone calls	233 NCPs 158 CPs	0	0
Longer-term reactions of noncustodial parents to various worker initiated and automated telephone calls and NCP understandings of the child support process	105	0	0
Child support payment patterns and enforcement actions approximately 12 months after the case was referred for order establishment	433	256	526

To assess whether process servers could be used to distribute and collect information from noncustodial parents in the course of performing their service of process duties, the evaluation compared cases exposed to enhanced outreach with cases exposed to conventional interventions. All the cases were Denver County cases targeted for order establishment using administrative procedures that needed service of process treatments to deliver legal papers. During May 2006 to June 2007, a total of 85 cases handled by four child support workers fell into this category and were targeted for enhanced outreach efforts by process servers. During the same time period, two workers contributed 75 cases that comprised the comparison group. They received service of process interventions using conventional formats.

Information on cases in both groups was extracted from trip sheets prepared by workers for process servers. Workers who handled cases in the experimental group that were exposed to heightened outreach efforts kept track of follow-up contacts by noncustodial parents who sought additional information about child support and/or referrals for employment or help with parenting time.

Noncustodial parents who were interested in obtaining additional information or referrals completed a brief assessment of child support needs, which was returned to the worker via the process server. Finally, an experienced child support worker reviewed the automated child support system for all cases in both groups and noted the proportion of cases established by stipulation and by default.

Table 5 shows the number of cases for which information of different types was collected from to evaluate the effectiveness of using process servers to enhance contact with noncustodial parents.

**Table 5. Cases with Different Types of Information for Evaluation of Enhanced Activities by Process Servers**

	Enhanced Process Server Treatment	Regular Process Server Treatment
Selected information on child support case characteristics	85	75
Assessment forms completed by NCPs indicating interest in child support information and services	56	0
Information on automated telephone calls regarding upcoming child support events and payments		
Service of process patterns	72	76
Rates of stipulation and default	85	75

### Analysis

Quantitative information for cases in the treatment and comparison groups was entered on a computer and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data collection forms filled out by child support workers recording the actions they took to establish contact with noncustodial parents were entered and merged with the child support data extracted from ACSES that showed payments and enforcement actions. Information on the electronic telephone calls (ENS) made to NCPs to remind them about child support appointments and payments was sent to the evaluator by Courtland Consulting in an Excel format. The data on electronic notification calls was then converted to an SPSS file and merged with child support payment and enforcement data extracted from the ACSES.

Information on case characteristics for 2003 cases that comprised the control group for the assessment of worker initiated and electronic interventions was merged with payment and enforcement information drawn from the ACSES using a manual extraction process. We also received an SPSS data file from the Public Opinion Laboratory of Northern Illinois University, the firm that conducted the follow-up telephone interviews with noncustodial parents approximately three months after their case was referred to a worker at the child support enforcement agency for the establishment of a child support order.

The analysis of worker-initiated and electronic interventions begins with a comparison of cases in the experimental and control groups to ensure that they are equivalent. Next, we focus on the worker-initiated actions to establish contact with noncustodial parents in cases in the experimental group. In a later chapter, we examine the reactions of noncustodial parents to outreach efforts taken by the child support agency and consider whether they enhance client understandings of child support and client impressions of the child support agency. In Chapter 5, we focus on child support payment patterns for cases in the experimental and control groups. In Chapter 6, we focus on electronic calls to noncustodial parents to alert them to their impending

meetings at the child support agency and payment obligations. The analysis assesses the utility of such calls and the impact of calls on payments. Finally, we address the effectiveness of using process servers to identify client needs and to enhance the quality of contact information obtained for noncustodial parents.

## Chapter 2: Comparing the Experimental and Control Groups

In the following chapters, the term “experimental group” refers only to the 433 cases that were exposed to worker-initiated outreach efforts. Cases that only received automated phone calls are considered separately in Chapter 6.

Approximately half of the experimental cases were generated in each county: 201 in Denver, and 232 in Jefferson. Sample generation occurred from January 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006. Control group cases were randomly generated from the listing of new cases scheduled for order establishment in Denver and Jefferson counties using administrative techniques during 2003. A random sample of 526 cases was identified. It consisted of 347 cases in Denver and 179 cases in Jefferson. These cases were processed using normal agency procedures without special worker-initiated and/or electronic outreach efforts.

**Table 6. Project Cases, by Site and Totals**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Total experimental group cases	201	232	433
Total control group cases	347	179	526

To assess whether cases in the experimental and control groups were comparable, the analysis began with a comparison of the limited information that was available about noncustodial parents in the two groups. Table 7 shows that they were comparable with respect to the age of the noncustodial parent and his marital status. On average, NCPs in both groups were 30 years old and at least three-quarters of every group had never been married to the other parent. To the extent that there were differences, Denver participants in both the experimental and control groups exhibit lower rates of marriage than their counterparts in Jefferson.

**Table 7. Selected Demographic Characteristics of Non-Custodial Parents in Experimental and Control Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
NCP age						
Mean	31.1	30.8	29.8	30.9	30.4	30.8
Median	30.0	29.5	28.8	29.4	29.1	29.5
Range	19-52	19-56	18-52	18-53	18-52	18-56
Number	(159)	(321)	(213)	(170)	(372)	(491)
Parents' marital status						
Never married	88%	90%	75%	70%	80%	83%
Married	12%	10%	25%	30%	20%	17%
Number	(177)	(343)	(220)	(180)	(397)	(523)

While there was no difference between the interstate and public assistance status of cases assigned to the experimental and control groups in Denver and Jefferson counties, the experimental group in Denver County was comprised of a significantly higher proportion of medical support cases than the control group. This probably reflects the greater emphasis that the

child support agency in Colorado has placed on medical support in the last few years. As previously noted, control group cases had orders generated in 2003, while cases in the experimental group had orders generated in 2005 and the first half of 2006. Cases in all groups tended to consist of intrastate matters that involved clients who had never been on public assistance or had been former recipients of TANF. Approximately 10 percent of cases in every group consisted of current recipients of TANF.

**Table 8. Selected Characteristics of Cases in the Experimental and Control Groups, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Interstate status						
Intrastate	95%	91%	93%	92%	93%	91%
Interstate, initiating	0.5%	0%	1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%
Interstate, responding	5%	9%	7%	6%	6%	8%
Number	(168)	(326)	(212)	(172)	(380)	(498)
TANF status						
Current TANF	12%	9%	8%	8%	10%	9%
Former TANF	41%	59%	46%	55%	44%	58%
Never TANF	47%	32%	46%	36%	46%	34%
Number	(176)	(339)	(217)	(179)	(393)	(518)
Order status		★				★
New order, child support/paternity and child support	78%	88%	93%	96%	86%	91%
Medicaid only	11%	0.3%	0.5%	0%	5%	0.2%
Foster care	0.6%	0%	1%	0.6%	1%	0.2%
Existing order/modification	11%	12%	6%	4%	8%	9%
Number	(167)	(332)	(213)	(171)	(380)	(503)

★Differences between experimental and control groups are significant at .09 or less.

Table 9 compares verification of employment and residential information for noncustodial parents in the experimental and control groups in Denver and Jefferson counties. It shows that NCPs in both groups were equally apt to have identified employers and verified home addresses when their case was referred to the child support agency. Comparable percentages of NCPs in the experimental and control groups had single and multiple cases at the time their orders were established. Almost three-quarters of the NCPs in both the experimental and control groups had only a single case at the time of order establishment.

**Table 9. Selected Employment and Child Support Characteristics of NCPs in Experimental and Control Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Ever show signs of employment						
Yes	75%	77%	73%	79%	74%	78%
No	25%	23%	27%	21%	26%	22%
Number	(173)	(340)	(217)	(178)	(390)	(518)

**Table 9. Selected Employment and Child Support Characteristics of NCPs in Experimental and Control Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Ever show signs of verified home address						
Yes	75%	76%	73%	69%	74%	73%
No	25%	24%	27%	31%	26%	27%
Number	(173)	(340)	(217)	(178)	(390)	(518)
Number of child support cases						
Single case	80%	72%	76%	74%	78%	73%
Multiple cases	20%	28%	24%	26%	22%	27%
Number	(153)	(346)	(200)	(179)	(353)	(525)





### **Chapter 3: Worker-Initiated Actions in Cases in the Experimental Group**

Workers were encouraged to use many techniques to contact and engage noncustodial parents in cases in the experimental group. The objective was to try to develop a relationship with the noncustodial parent, bring him into the child support office, and ultimately establish a child support order that was understandable and acceptable to him. A set of procedures was developed at the start of the project for workers to follow in both counties, although they had discretion about the measures they actually took. They recorded their actions and the outcomes they produced on manual data collection forms that were subsequently analyzed as part of the project evaluation.

The first step workers could take involved mailing the noncustodial parent a “contact us” letter. It explained to the NCP that he had been named as a parent in a child support case and that the establishment of a child support order was in process. This letter asked that he contact a child support worker to learn about how the process worked and participate in a negotiation conference to establish a child support order based on accurate income information and ability to pay. If accurate address and telephone information for the NCP was lacking, the child support worker could send a letter to the custodial parent requesting that he provide updated contact information for the NCP. Workers could also access paid websites to obtain location information that was potentially unavailable on standard Internet sources utilized by child support workers.

A second step that workers were encouraged to take involved conducting a telephone call to make direct contact with a noncustodial parent and establish some measure of rapport. As in the initial letter, the worker attempted to explain that the parent was named as a father or possible father, and that the agency would begin to establish a child support order setting forth his financial obligation. The worker explained that paternity testing was available and that the agency wanted him to participate in an in-person meeting to establish an obligation that was based on accurate financial information. Another goal of the call was to describe the incentives offered to those who attended their negotiation conference, which included having child support debts and fees owed to the State of Colorado waived as well as receiving referrals for parenting time and/or employment problems. The calls also allowed the worker a chance to explain that if the NCP did not respond, the agency would proceed to set up an order and that it would enforce the order using a variety of aggressive strategies that did not require parental consent or participation.

Other actions undertaken by workers involved providing the noncustodial parent with official notification of his impending financial responsibility. The official document that provides this information is the Notice of Financial Responsibility (NFR). It can be conveyed to noncustodial parents either through service of process or by mailing it to him via first class mail with a cover

letter explaining the documents and requesting that he attend the negotiation conference and establish the child support order. The technician could also send a notice to the custodial parent on the case to encourage her to attend the negotiation conference and participate in the establishment of the order.

As previously noted, workers tried to encourage participation in the negotiation conference by waiving child support owed to the State of Colorado for public assistance previously paid to families. Conference attendees were also eligible to have fees and costs owed to the child support agency waived. Although the worker could not compromise obligations for past due support owed to the other parent, he or she could encourage a discussion of prior obligations and incorporate agreements reached by the parties in child support documents and orders produced at the negotiation conference.

If the noncustodial parent failed to appear at the negotiation conference or contact the worker to reschedule, the worker attempted to communicate that a child support order would be entered within 10 days unless contact was made. The worker could call the custodial parent to try to obtain new contact information for the other parent. Additional phone calls with the noncustodial parents could be placed and letters could be sent. In the absence of contact with a noncustodial parent, a default order was promulgated based upon the best available income information and/or an imputation of income based on the minimum wage.

Workers were permitted to customize the steps that they took to establish contact with parents and differences between Denver and Jefferson counties emerged. For example, workers in Denver County preferred to dispense with the initial “contact us” letter and go directly to phoning the noncustodial parent and attempting to schedule a negotiation conference with him. Just over three-fourths of noncustodial parents in experimental group cases were sent the “contact us” letter in Denver County, as compared with a significantly greater proportion of clients (89%) in Jefferson County.

Workers in the two counties also differed in the use of mail for the delivery of official papers notifying obligors of their financial responsibilities. A significantly higher proportion of Jefferson County cases were mailed the APA packet, compared with Denver County (85% versus 54%). Overall, the majority of noncustodial parents in the experimental group received a letter and the APA packet of information in the mail, although Denver County workers relied more heavily on the use of service of process to achieve notification.

Finally, workers in the two counties differed in their use of paid websites to attempt to locate noncustodial parents, although neither group made extensive use of such resources. Overall, paid websites were used in only 6 percent of all cases in the experimental group. Workers in Denver

County utilized this service significantly more often than did their counterparts in Jefferson County (11% versus 2%). See Table 10.

**Table 10. Interventions Used by Workers to Contact NCPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
During the time the case was open at early intervention, worker reports			
★ Sent NCP a "contact us"	77%	89%	84%
★ Mailed APA packet to NCP	54%	85%	71%
Mailed NCP a "failure to appear" notice 10 days following no show at negotiation conference	10%	13%	12%
Checked websites for NCP locate information	11%	2%	6%
Number	(200)	(236)	(436)

★ Chi square significant between sites at .05 or less.

Workers appeared to focus less on contacting custodial parents than they originally anticipated and they sent a letter requesting updated contact information on the noncustodial parent in only 10 percent of cases. The most common intervention with custodial parents was to send them a letter encouraging their participation in the negotiation conference. Jefferson County workers did this in 73 percent of all project cases, while this was done in only 18 percent of Denver County cases. See Table 11.

**Table 11. Interventions Used by Workers to Contact CPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Worker reports			
★ Sent CP a letter requesting updated contact information for the NCP	18%	3%	10%
★ Letter sent to encourage participation in the negotiation conference	18%	73%	48%
Call to CP	7%	5%	6%
Number	(200)	(236)	(436)

★ Chi square significant between sites at .05 or less.

### Worker Contact with Parents in Cases in the Experimental Group

Workers ultimately made in-person or telephone contact with a majority of noncustodial parents in cases in the experimental group. Fifty-eight percent of noncustodial parents were reached by telephone, and nearly three-fourths appeared at the child support agency and met with their worker. There were significant differences in contact patterns by site. A significantly higher proportion of noncustodial parents in Denver County compared to Jefferson County spoke with their worker by phone (67% versus 50%). Noncustodial parents in Denver were also significantly more likely to meet with their worker (79% versus 69%). As previously noted, workers in

Jefferson County relied more heavily on mail to contact noncustodial parents and convey child support information to them. See Table 12.

**Table 12. Worker Reports of Contact with NCPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Worker reports			
★ Had contact with NCP via telephone or in-person	86%	77%	81%
★ Spoke with the NCP by telephone	67%	50%	58%
★ Met with NCP in-person	79%	69%	73%
Number	(200)	(236)	(436)

★ Chi square between sites is significant at .05.

Worker contacts with custodial parents mirrored those achieved with noncustodial parents, although levels of contact were understandably lower. Workers in Denver reported significantly higher levels of telephone contact than their counterparts in Jefferson County, although in-person contact was achieved ultimately in approximately half of the cases in the experimental group in both counties. See Table 13.

**Table 13. Worker Reports of Contact with CPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Worker reports			
★ Had contact with CP via telephone or in-person	67%	58%	62%
★ Spoke with the CP by telephone	43%	27%	34%
Met with CP in-person	53%	48%	50%
Number	(200)	(236)	(436)

★ Chi square is significant between sites at .05 or less.

### Outcomes Reported by Workers in Cases in the Experimental Group

Child support workers who reached noncustodial parents by telephone reported achieving a variety of objectives. Most commonly, they indicated that they had conducted a “relationship-building call.” The purpose of this call was to establish rapport with the noncustodial parent, explain the child support process, and make him an active participant in the case. Workers reported accomplishing this goal in nearly all cases where telephone contact was made: 84 percent in Denver County and 92 percent in Jefferson County. The next most common outcome of the telephone call was to schedule the negotiation conference. This was done in 80 percent of cases where the noncustodial parent was reached by telephone. Other less-common outcomes reported by workers included scheduling the case for court (1%), rescheduling an already established negotiation conference (4%), and/or scheduling a genetic test (11%). See Table 14.

**Table 14. Outcome of Telephone Contact with NCPs in Experimental Group Cases by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
For those who contacted/spoke with NCP on telephone			
Conducted relationship-building call	84%	92%	87%
Scheduled NFR	87%	73%	80%
Scheduled for court	2%	1%	1%
Requested continuance/rescheduled NFR	2%	5%	4%
Schedule for genetic testing	5%	19%	11%
Number	(134)	(118)	(251)

For those cases where the noncustodial parent appeared and met with the child support worker, the most common outcomes were that the NCP signed the waiver of service and stipulated to the child support order. Nearly three-fourths of all meetings resulted in a signed waiver and a stipulated order, although this was more common in Denver County (89%) than in Jefferson County (60%). A waiver of service obviates the need to use formal legal procedures to deliver child support papers such as service of process.

One-fifth of the meetings (mostly in Denver County) led to a referral for genetic testing. In another 15 percent of cases, the noncustodial parent contested the terms of the child support order and he was scheduled to appear in court. In 11 percent of the cases, the noncustodial parent was excluded as a result of genetic testing. Other less common outcomes of in-person meetings between the noncustodial parent and the child support worker included the case being closed for child support services (3%); the conference terminating because the noncustodial parent refused to cooperate once he arrived (2%); the conference terminating because of a lack of service or proper service of papers (8%); and the scheduling of a new negotiation conference. See Table 15.

**Table 15. Outcome of In-Person Contact with NCPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
For those who met with NCP in person			
★NCP signed waiver	89%	60%	74%
Stipulated to order	75%	76%	76%
★Referred NCP for genetic testing	29%	12%	20%
Sent to court, NCP contested	15%	15%	15%
Continued/rescheduled another meeting	0%	0%	0%
NCP excluded by genetic testing	15%	7%	11%
Case closed	2%	3%	3%
NCP refused to cooperate	3%	1%	2%
No service	10%	7%	8%
Schedule NFR	0%	1%	1%
Other	2%	1%	2%
Number	(157)	(163)	(320)

★Chi square is significant at .05.

One perceived benefit of having workers conduct relationship-building calls and in-person meetings is the ability to identify potential barriers to the payment of child support and early referral to appropriate services. For those cases where workers had contact with noncustodial parents, referrals were provided 18 percent of the time. They were evenly divided between parenting time and employment referrals. In Denver County, 10 percent of noncustodial parents were referred for other types of resources — typically help with modifying child support orders, mediation, or help with school. See Table 16.

**Table 16. Referrals Provided to NCPs in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Provided referrals to the NCP	22%	15%	18%
Number	(158)	(163)	(320)
Type of referrals provided to NCPs			
Parenting time	13%	9%	11%
Employment	8%	9%	8%
Other	10%	0%	4%

Obtaining accurate income information from reliable sources is another intended goal of having workers contact noncustodial parents at early stages of the child support process. The intent is to establish orders that reflect actual earnings and avoid imputing income or relying on reports by the custodial parent. Table 16 shows that this objective was usually, but not always accomplished. In both counties, earnings information was obtained from objective sources such as employer reports, new hire records, and tax returns in approximately two-thirds of the cases. This was frequently supplemented with financial affidavits by the noncustodial parent. Although custodial parent accounts were rarely used in either county, 10 percent of the orders in Denver County and 32 percent in Jefferson County were based on an imputation of income. See Table 17.

**Table 17. Income Information Used to Establish Orders For Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
★Source of income information			
NCP Affidavit	57%	78%	69%
CP report	1%	0%	.3%
Objective data such as quarterly wage data, new hire, tax returns, pay stubs	71%	67%	68%
No information, income was imputed	10%	32%	23%
No income, NCP on SSI, SSDI	1%	1%	1%
Other	18%	8%	12%
Number	(132)	(183)	(315)

★Chi square is significant between sites at .05 or less.

Table 18 re-examines the type of income information used to generate orders in both counties, but distinguishes between those cases where the worker did and did not have telephone and/or in-person contact with noncustodial parents. It shows that worker contact makes a difference in the

source of information used to establish income and the incidence of imputation. While income was imputed in only 7 percent of Denver County cases with contact, this was the case for 40 percent of cases with no contact. Similarly, while income was imputed in 27 percent of cases with contact in Jefferson, this was the case for 73 percent of cases with no contact. Overall, only 18 percent of cases with contact required income imputation, as compared with 63 percent of cases with no contact.

**Table 18. Income Information Used to Establish Orders For Experimental Group Cases With and Without Child Support Worker Contact, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Worker contact	No worker contact	Worker contact	No worker contact	Worker contact	No worker contact
Source of income information						
NCP Affidavit	★62%	0%	★86%	18%	★76%	13%
(CP report)	0.6%	0%	0%	0%	0.4%	0%
Objective data source such as quarterly wage data, new hire, tax returns, pay stubs	★73%	40%	★72%	27%	★72%	31%
No information, income was imputed	★7%	40%	★27%	73%	★18%	63%
No income, NCP on SSI, SSDI	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Other	17%	30%	9%	5%	12%	13%
Number	(121)	(10)	(161)	(22)	(282)	(32)

★Chi square is significant between worker contact and no worker contact at .05 or less.

To encourage noncustodial parents to appear and participate in negotiation conferences, workers in both counties offered to waive outstanding child support balances owed to the State of Colorado for public assistance previously paid on behalf of dependent children. While workers lacked the authority to waive child support owed to custodial parents, they encouraged parents who appeared at negotiation conferences to discuss past-due balances and consider the possibility of making adjustments.

Table 19 shows that these policies and procedures translated into substantial reductions in child support obligations for noncustodial parents in both counties. Overall, noncustodial parents with outstanding child support obligations owed to the State of Colorado who participated in negotiation conferences experienced an average waiver of \$4,448 in child support debt and \$88 in fees. In Denver County, where the child support agency attempts to collect past due support on behalf of custodial parents, which is known as retroactive support, participation in the negotiation conference led to agreements by the parents to reduce such obligations by an average of \$3,835.

**Table 19. Child Support Debt and Fee Amounts Due and Waived in Experimental Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Debt Amount Due	Amount Waived	Debt Amount Due	Amount Waived	Debt Amount Due	Amount Waived
Child Support Debt Owed to State						
Mean	\$3,810	\$4,094	\$5,641	\$4,753	\$4,809	\$4,448
Median	\$1,570	\$1,547	\$2,589	\$2,387	\$2,156	\$2,026
Range	\$270-62,364	\$270-62,364	\$144-51,149	\$144-41,497	\$144-62,364	\$144-62,364
Number	(85)	(68)	(102)	(79)	(187)	(147)
Fees Owed to State						
Mean	\$102	\$116	\$67	\$68	\$81	\$88
Median	\$129	\$129	\$30	\$30	\$60	\$114
Range	\$25-174	\$25-174	\$20-181	\$20-181	\$20-181	\$20-181
Number	(59)	(45)	(88)	(88)	(147)	(110)
Child Support Owed to CP						
Mean	\$10,294	\$3,835	N/A	N/A	\$10,294	\$3,835
Median	\$4,463	\$2,148			\$4,463	\$2,148
Range	\$1-99,299	\$1-25,263			\$1-99,299	\$1-25,263
Number	(56)	(36)			(56)	(36)

One concern that workers have about trying to engage noncustodial parents by using telephone calls and in-person meetings is that it will prolong the process of establishing child support orders and that they will exceed mandated time frames. Table 20 compares the number of days that elapsed between the referral of experimental cases to workers in the establishment unit and the generation of child support orders in both the experimental and control groups. On average, orders were established in 86.8 days for cases in the experimental group, compared with 75.9 days for cases in the control group. The difference was statistically significant. Most of the difference was due to patterns in Jefferson County, where it took 62.9 and 87.4 days to establish orders for cases in the control and experimental groups, respectively. In Denver, the use of worker-initiated outreach efforts in cases in the experimental group did not translate into changes in time frames and the average case took approximately 85 days to establish an order. Despite the fact that order establishment was a significantly lengthier process for cases in the experimental group, approximately half of all orders in both groups were established within two months.

**Table 20. Days from Project Entry to Order Establishment by Site ★**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Number of Days to Establish Order						
Mean	85.9	82.7	87.4	62.9	86.8	75.9
Median	56.0	65.0	57.0	55.0	57.0	60.0
Range	2-706	8-534	3-592	13-693	2-706	8-693
Number	(127)	(313)	(193)	(164)	(320)	(477)
Order established within 60 days	52%	44%	55%	59%	54%	49%

★Chi square is significant at .09.



Table 21 examines whether early intervention techniques slow down order establishment because of the time required to communicate with noncustodial parents who are actually contacted or to pursue parents with whom contact is never achieved. The answer is clearly the latter. When the experimental group was limited to cases where workers made contact with noncustodial parent, the time required for order establishment actually declined. Order establishment took an average of 69.2 days in the experimental group with NCP contact, compared to 75.9 days in the control group. The difference was most pronounced in Denver County, where the average days to establish an order dropped to 67.3 days, as compared with 82.7 days in the control group. Order establishment was still somewhat slower among experimental group cases in Jefferson County, although both groups had orders established in 60 days or less in statistically identical proportions of cases (63% versus 59%). See Table 20.

**Table 21. Days from Project Entry to Order Establishment in Experimental Group Cases With Noncustodial Parent Contact, by Site\***

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Number of Days to Establish Order	★		★		★	
Mean	67.3	82.7	70.6	62.9	69.2	75.9
Median	48.5	65.0	52.5	55.0	52.0	60.0
Range	2-501	8-534	3-545	13-693	2-545	8-693
Number	(114)	(313)	(156)	(164)	(270)	(477)
Percent of with order established within 60 days	★				★	
	58%	44%	63%	59%	61%	49%

★Chi square significant between experimental and control groups at .09 or less.



## Chapter 4: Parent Reactions to Worker-Initiated Outreach Efforts

### Parent Reactions to Worker Outreach: Exit Surveys Immediately Following the Negotiation Conference: Exit Surveys

Custodial and noncustodial parents who attended a negotiation conference were asked to fill out a brief, two-page exit survey immediately following the completion of the session. The surveys elicited some basic demographic information about the parents, their understandings of the child support system, their personal situation, and their reactions to the conference. To boost the response rate, all parents who completed a survey were given a \$10 McDonald’s gift certificate.

Table 21 presents the characteristics of the noncustodial parents who appeared for their negotiation conference and agreed to fill out the exit questionnaire. In both counties, most noncustodial parent respondents were male (88%), approximately one-third reported having a high school diploma, and 58 percent reported having a GED or high school diploma. Jefferson County respondents were significantly more apt to be non-Hispanic whites, while Denver had a substantially higher proportion of Hispanics and African-Americans. Respondents in the two counties also differed in the number of months of full-time employment they had experienced in the past year and their hourly wage. The median hourly wage for respondents in Denver and Jefferson counties was \$10 and \$12, respectively; half of all respondents earned less than this level.

Noncustodial parents in the two counties reported having an identical number of children, prior child support orders, and access to health insurance, with only one-third reporting coverage. Asked to characterize their financial situation, 40 percent in both counties reported “having trouble making ends meet,” and 9 percent said it was “impossible.” See Table 22.

**Table 22. Characteristics of Noncustodial Parents Who Attended the Negotiation Conference and Responded to Exit Survey, by County**

	Denver (n=118)	Jefferson (n=115)	Total (n=233)
Sex			
Male	88%	88%	88%
Female	12%	12%	12%
★Race			
White, nNot Hispanic	14%	54%	34%
Hispanic	55%	34%	45%
African-American	28%	3%	16%
Other	3%	9%	6%

**Table 22. Characteristics of Noncustodial Parents Who Attended the Negotiation Conference and Responded to Exit Survey, by County**

	Denver (n=118)	Jefferson (n=115)	Total (n=233)
Education			
None	25%	24%	25%
GED	20%	20%	20%
High school diploma	38%	37%	38%
Technical school or AA degree	11%	13%	12%
College degree or higher	6%	7%	7%
Number of child support orders			
Mean	1.1	1.1	1.1
Median	1.0	1.0	1.0
Range	0-7	0-4	0-7
Number of children under 18 have, who do not live with you			
Mean	1.5	1.4	1.4
Median	1.0	1.0	1.0
Range	0-7	0-4	0-7
★ Number of months employed full-time in the past year			
Mean	6.4	7.9	7.2
Median	6.0	9.0	8.0
Range	0-12	0-12	0-12
★ Hourly wage			
Mean	\$10.78	\$12.53	\$11.66
Median	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$10.00
Range	\$2-28	\$2-33	\$2-33
Currently have			
Health insurance	35%	34%	35%
A disability or injury that keeps you from working	11%	11%	11%
Transportation you can count on for work	75%	70%	73%
Description of current financial situation			
Pretty comfortable	7%	5%	6%
Making ends meet	46%	45%	46%
Having trouble making ends meet	39%	41%	40%
Impossible to make ends meet	8%	9%	9%

★Chi square is significant at .08 or less.

The vast majority (96%) of the custodial parents who attended the negotiation conference and agreed to fill out a brief exit survey were female. They mirrored noncustodial parents in their educational attainment: nearly one-third (31%) had a high school diploma and just under one-quarter did not hold any degree (24%). The only significant difference between custodial parents in the two counties was race. As with NCPs, the majority of custodial parents in Jefferson County were non-Hispanic white (66%), while the majority of custodial parents in Denver County were Hispanic (52%) and African-American (24%) See Table 23.

**Table 23. Characteristics of Custodial Parents Who Attended the Negotiation Conference and Responded to Exit Survey, by County**

		Denver (n=75)	Jefferson (n=83)	Total (n=158)
Sex	Male	5%	2%	4%
	Female	95%	98%	96%
★Race	White, not Hispanic	17%	66%	43%
	African-American	24%	4%	13%
	Hispanic	52%	28%	39%
	Other/Mix	7%	2%	4%
Education	None	27%	21%	24%
	GED	16%	22%	19%
	High school diploma	32%	29%	31%
	Technical school or AA degree	16%	19%	18%
	College degree or higher	8%	10%	9%

★Chi square is significant at .09 or less.

Most noncustodial parents remembered receiving printed information from the child support agency by mail and talking with a child support worker on the telephone. Noncustodial parents in Denver County were significantly more likely than their counterparts in Jefferson County to recall receiving their worker’s business card from the process server and to remember getting a call reminding them to come to an in-person meeting. Nearly everyone who remembered receiving calls and materials reported that it was “very” or “somewhat” helpful.

**Table 24. Noncustodial Parent Reactions to Information and Worker Outreach Efforts, by Site**

Please check whether you remember receiving the following, and how helpful it was	Percent Responding “Yes”		Percent Responding “Very” or “Somewhat Helpful”	
	Denver (n=113)	Jefferson (n=116)	Denver	Jefferson
A letter asking you to call the child support office to talk to a worker	76%	79%	97%	98%
Child support papers in the mail?	75%	84%	★88%	100%
Child support papers from a process server?	43%	47%	★76%	91%
A business card for your child support worker from the process server?	★52%	32%	★76%	89%
A call reminding you to come to your child support meeting?	★69%	52%	85%	93%
A call with the child support worker where you talked about what the child support agency does and what you need to do?	79%	70%	91%	93%
A letter from the child support worker asking you to come to the meeting with the other parent?	61%	65%	★84%	94%

★Chi square is significant at .08 or less.

At both sites, noncustodial parents reported a high level of understanding of the child support system and their personal situation following the negotiation conference. When asked a series of knowledge questions about child support following the negotiation conference, over 90 percent of all noncustodial parents reported having a better understanding of the child support system, their

order, how to go about making payments, and what to do if their financial or living situation changes. See Table 25.

**Table 25. Noncustodial Parent Reports of their Understanding of Child Support Following the Negotiation Conference**

	Denver County (n=117)	Jefferson County (n=120)	Total (n=237)
Following NFR, percent of parents reporting they			
Understand the child support system better?	91%	92%	92%
★ Understand what you owe in child support?	96%	99%	98%
Understand what to do if your job or salary changes?	95%	97%	96%
★ Understand what will happen if you do not pay child support?	94%	98%	96%
Understand what to do if you get behind in your child support payments?	91%	95%	93%
Understand that you have the right to go to court?	100%	98%	99%

★ Chi square is significant at .09 or less.

Custodial parents also reported having a better understanding of the child support process, and their child support order following the negotiation conference. See Table 26.

**Table 26. Custodial Parent Reports of their Understanding of Child Support Following the Negotiation Conference**

	Denver County (n=75)	Jefferson County (n=83)	Total (n=158)
Following NFR, percent of parents reporting they:			
Understand what is owed in child support	97%	100%	99%
Understand what will happen if the other parent does not pay	95%	99%	97%
Understand what to do if you do not get a child support payment	93%	95%	94%
Understand what to do if the other parent moves	92%	94%	93%
★ Understand what to do if your address changes	95%	100%	98%
Understand what to do if your parenting time changes	96%	98%	97%

★ Chi square is significant at .09 or less.

Based on the exit questionnaires, both custodial and noncustodial parents appeared to be extremely satisfied with the negotiation conference and the order that they established. Virtually all respondents felt as though they had been treated with respect and that the process was fair. Nearly all (91%) noncustodial parents agreed that they would be able to pay the ordered level of child support. At the same time, 24 percent of noncustodial parents admitted to feeling “angry with the child support agency.” And two-thirds (61%) of responding custodial parents said that they had received money directly from the other parent in the past. See Table 27.

**Table 27. Custodial and Noncustodial Parent Reactions to the Child Support Agency and Their Order Following the Negotiation Conference**

	Noncustodial Parent	Custodial Parent
Percent Responding "Agree" to the following statements:	(n=233)	(n=158)
The child support worker treated me with respect.	99%	100%
The worker answered all my child support questions.	100%	100%
The child support agency was fair to me.	95%	99%
The child support agency was fair to the other parent.	97%	97%
The child support order I have is fair.	87%	94%
I will be able to pay/receive child support.	91%	91%
I am feeling angry with the child support agency.	24%	N/A
In the past I have received money directly from the other parent.	N/A	61%

### Reactions of Noncustodial Parents to Worker-Initiated Outreach: Three-Month Follow-Up

In addition to surveying custodial and noncustodial parents immediately following the negotiation conference, telephone interviewers attempted to contact noncustodial parents in the experimental group three months after they entered the project. The follow-up telephone interviews were conducted by professional telephone interviewers with the Public Opinion Laboratory of Northern Illinois University. A total of 105 interviews were conducted: 38 with noncustodial parents in Denver County and 67 with noncustodial parents in Jefferson County. On average, the interviews took 25 minutes to complete. Those who completed the interview received a \$20 gift certificate from a major local grocery store.

Noncustodial parents were asked a variety of questions including their reactions to the process of establishing a child support order, their understanding of their order and how to make payments, and how they felt they had been treated by the child support worker. The interview also sought to determine if parents remembered receiving calls and letters from the child support agency and to learn whether this outreach had been helpful. The questionnaire concluded with questions on the noncustodial parent’s employment status, relationship with the other parent, and visitation with the children.

Not surprisingly, recollections of letters and phone calls from a worker at the child support agency were somewhat dimmer three months following the promulgation of orders than they had been immediately following the negotiation conference. Among this group of respondents, the proportion that recalled receiving a telephone call from a worker was 53 percent in Denver County and 39 percent in Jefferson County. Similar proportions of respondents in each county recalled receiving an automated telephone call reminding them of their upcoming child support meeting (51% and 41%) and to make their first child support payment (36% and 27%).

Relatively few in Denver (18%) and Jefferson (35%) recalled receiving child support papers via a process server. Understandably, a higher proportion of respondents recalled participating in in-person meetings with a child support worker (in Denver, 82% and in Jefferson, 93%). See Table 28.

**Table 28. Noncustodial Parent Recollections of Various Outreach Efforts by the Child Support Agency, by Site**

	Denver County (n=38)	Jefferson County (n=67)	Total (n=105)
When you got your child support order, did you			
Receive a letter from the child support agency telling you that you may owe child support?	61%	72%	68%
If yes, very or somewhat helpful	91%	85%	87%
Receive a phone call from a worker telling you about child support?	53%	39%	44%
If yes, very or somewhat helpful	90%	92%	91%
★ Get legal papers served to you about child support?	18%	35%	29%
If yes, very or somewhat helpful	100%	91%	93%
★ Meet with a child support worker to figure out what you owe in child support?	82%	93%	89%
★ If yes, very or somewhat helpful	94%	71%	79%
Receive a recorded telephone call reminding you to go to your child support meeting?	51%	41%	45%
If yes, very or somewhat helpful	94%	92%	93%
Remember receiving telephone call reminder to make first child support payment?	36%	27%	31%
If yes, very or somewhat helpful	85%	88%	87%

★ Chi square significant at .05.

There is no consensus among NCPs on the best way for the child support agency to communicate with noncustodial parents. Approximately a quarter to a third recommends in-person meetings (34%), letters sent through the mail (29%), and telephone calls (23%). All of these methods are clearly preferable to simply delivering legal papers using a process server, which was suggested by only 7 percent of respondents. See Table 29.

**Table 29. Parent Report of Best Way for Child Support Agency to Reach NCP, by County**

	Denver County (n=38)	Jefferson County (n=67)	Total (n=105)
Best way to reach NCP			
Letter by mail	26%	30%	29%
Telephone call to house	26%	21%	23%
Face-to-face meeting at child support	34%	39%	37%
Legal papers brought to house by process server	8%	6%	7%
Other	5%	5%	5%



One goal of early intervention programs is to educate noncustodial parents about the child support system and the consequences of nonpayment. To determine whether this had been achieved with noncustodial parents in the Colorado project, interviewers asked respondents to assess the veracity of a variety of factual statements about the child support program. Table 29 shows nearly all parents correctly noted that they were responsible for paying support (93%). Nearly all also understood that:

- If they failed to pay, they could lose their driver’s license (93%);
- They could ask for their order to be changed if they switched or lost their job (88%);
- Child support needs to be paid even if they can’t see their children (88%); and
- They need to immediately notify the agency about job or income changes (93%).

In addition, most (87%) knew how to reach a worker at the child support agency if they needed a question answered. At the same time, some were confused about other important aspects of the program.

- Only 75 percent correctly noted that money must be paid back to the state for children receiving welfare (86% in Denver and 66% in Jefferson);
- Only 67 percent were aware of the fact that applicants for public assistance are required to cooperate with child support; and
- A third (31%) incorrectly rejected the view the child support could take a tax refund to pay for support.

See Table 30.

**Table 30. NCP Understandings of How Child Support Works**

	Denver County (n=38)	Jefferson County (n=67)	Total (n=105)
Percent of NCPs responding “True” to following statements:			
★ If your children get welfare, you have to pay the money back to the state.	86%	66%	73%
It is your job to make sure that child support is being paid.	92%	94%	93%
If your children get welfare, the child support agency will try to collect money from you even if the mother does not ask for it.	70%	66%	67%
To collect child support, the agency can take money out of your paycheck.	92%	94%	93%
To collect child support, the agency cannot take your tax refund.	36%	29%	31%
If you do not pay, the agency can take your driver’s license.	92%	94%	93%
If you lose your job or the amount you earn changes, you do not need to tell your worker right away.	5%	8%	7%
You can ask for your order to be changed if you lose/change jobs.	89%	87%	88%
You have to pay child support even if you do not get to see your children.	81%	92%	88%
You know what number to call at the child support agency if you have questions or your work situation changes.	87%	87%	87%

★Chi square is significant at .08 or less.

One possible barrier to the payment of child support is lack of access with children and/or visitation denial. Although the causal mechanism has not been established, many studies find a connection between parent-child contact and child support payment. It was hoped that child support workers who contacted noncustodial parents would identify problems with parenting time and refer parents to appropriate services to remedy the situation.

In the follow-up survey, noncustodial parents were asked to gauge how often they saw their children before and after they got their child support orders and whether contact had become more frequent, less frequent, or was unchanged since project entry. Their response to this question appears in Table 30. It suggests that contact patterns were unchanged for half (49%) of responding parents and had declined for about a third (32%). Across the two project sites, only 19 percent of noncustodial parents reported seeing their children more often. Looked at somewhat differently, while 14 percent of parents reported that they had seen their children “not at all” before getting a child support order, this was the case for 25 percent of parents during the three months following the promulgation of their order. The percentage reporting seeing their children a few times a week dropped from 63 to 48 percent. See Table 31.

**Table 31. NCP Report of Visitation with Children Before and After Establishing a Child Support Order, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Frequency of contact with children since getting child support order			
See kids more often	25%	16%	19%
Less often	33%	31%	32%
About the same	42%	53%	49%
Number	(36)	(62)	(98)
★How often see kids now			
Not at all	11%	34%	25%
One to two times per year	3%	5%	4%
A few times per month	27%	21%	23%
A few times per week	60%	40%	48%
Number	(37)	(62)	(99)
★How often see kids before you got your child support order			
Not at all	0%	23%	14%
One to two times per year	3%	3%	3%
A few times per month	27%	16%	20%
A few times per week	70%	58%	63%
Number	(37)	(62)	(99)

★Chi square significant at .05.

Table 32 explores the factors associated with parent-child contact patterns. While average distances between noncustodial parents and children were high due to a few extreme distances,

medians were much lower, with half of all responding parents reporting being 10 to 12 miles apart. Nevertheless, distance and lack of transportation were cited as barriers to parent-child contact by approximately one-third of responding noncustodial parents at each site. The most commonly cited problem, noted by 42 percent of respondents, was the “other parent not wanting you to see them.” The noncustodial parent’s work schedule was a problem cited by 41 and 23 percent of Denver and Jefferson County respondents, respectively. Twelve percent said that it was difficult to see the children because of child support problems. See Table 31.

**Table 32. NCP Report of Distance From Children and Barriers to Visitation, by Site**

	Denver County (n=38)	Jefferson County (n=67)	Total (n=105)
Number of miles live from children			
Mean	59.1	165.3	124.7
Median	12.5	10.0	10.0
Range	1-1,400	1-2,000	1-2,000
Reasons NCP reports why its difficult to see children:			
Lack of transportation	32%	27%	29%
Distance/travel time involved	32%	30%	31%
Other parent or guardian not wanting you to see them	41%	43%	42%
★ Your work schedule	41%	23%	29%
Not wanting to see your children until you feel more “together”	6%	8%	7%
Children in Child Protection System, restrictions on visits	3%	6%	5%
Other parent has left the state with child and cannot be located	11%	5%	7%
★ Mother says you are not the father	8%	2%	4%
Child support problems	8%	14%	12%
Child unwilling/unreceptive	3%	3%	3%
Other	17%	29%	25%

★Chi square significant at .05.

An identical 58 percent of interviewed noncustodial parents at both sites reported being employed full time, and another 13 percent reported part-time employment. Approximately 20 percent said they were unemployed or did temporary and/or pick-up jobs. Those who worked did an average and median of 40 hours per week, with the range going from 9 to 80 hours. Slightly more than half (60%) reported receiving employer-paid benefits, with 51 percent receiving medical coverage for their children. When they were asked how well their salaries cover their financial needs, 61 percent of the respondents said “not at all,” or “not very well.”

**Table 33. Employment, Salary, and Benefit Status of NCPs, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
NCP currently employed			
Full-time	58%	58%	58%
Part-time	11%	15%	13%
Temporary/Pick up jobs	13%	5%	8%
Self-employed	3%	5%	4%
Not working	16%	18%	17%
Number	(38)	(67)	(105)
Number of months employed, for those currently employed			
Mean	22.4	22.1	22.2
Median	9.0	8.0	8.0
Range	1-96	1-210	1-210
Number	(23)	(50)	(72)
Number of hours work per week			
Mean	40.2	39.2	40.0
Median	40.0	40.0	40.0
Range	15-80	9-80	9-80
Number	(26)	(52)	(78)
Benefits provided by employer			
Any benefits provided	59%	60%	60%
Paid vacation	59%	52%	55%
Paid sick leave	42%	34%	37%
Medical coverage	60%	57%	58%
Medical coverage for your children	52%	50%	51%
Number	(32)	(55)	(87)
How well your salary covers financial needs			
Very well	4%	0%	1%
Fairly well	44%	34%	38%
Not very well	30%	42%	38%
Not at all	22%	24%	23%
Number	(27)	(50)	(77)

Unemployed respondents in Denver and Jefferson counties reported different experiences and reasons for their unemployment. Those in Jefferson County reported longer periods of nonwork and lower rates of job search activity. In contrast, noncustodial parents in Denver County tended to attribute their unemployment to a lack of training, experience, and skills. On average, these respondents had been out of work for an average of 11.2 weeks and 91 percent reported actively searching for work in the months following the promulgation of their child support orders.

**Table 34. Unemployment Status of NCPs, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Length of time unemployed (weeks)			
★Mean	11.2	41.2	27.4
Median	4.0	12.0	12.0
Range	2-52	3-260	2-260
Number	(11)	(13)	(24)

**Table 34. Unemployment Status of NCPs, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Since getting child support order, percent who have been looking for work	91%	79%	84%
Number	(11)	(14)	(25)
For those unemployed and looking for work, reasons why have not found work			
Lack of GED or high school diploma	10%	36%	24%
★Lack of training, experience, or skills	40%	0%	19%
No work available in your line	30%	55%	43%
Illness, disability, or handicap	10%	18%	14%
Too difficult for an ex-offender to find a job	30%	27%	29%
Discrimination	10%	9%	10%
Do not have transportation to get to places	20%	36%	29%
No good job leads or referrals	50%	27%	38%
Number	(10)	(11)	(21)

★Differences between sites are significant at .09 or less.

Despite the financial pressures that many noncustodial parents face, 83 percent of these respondents reported paying all the child support they owed. The top reasons respondents gave for making less than full payments were not having the money, having another family to support, and the child support order being too high. See Table 35.

**Table 35. NCP Report of Child Support Payments Made Following Order Establishment, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Percent reporting paid			
Nothing	0%	0%	0%
Less than 25%	5%	2%	3%
Less than 50%	8%	5%	6%
More than 50%	8%	9%	9%
All	79%	85%	83%
Number	(38)	(67)	(105)
For those not paying all their child support, reasons why not			
Do not have the money	89%	80%	83%
★Child support order is too high	78%	40%	54%
Have another family to support	89%	60%	71%
Have some disagreements about visitation	22%	40%	33%
Have some disagreements about how the support is spent	33%	33%	33%
The child support money goes directly to the welfare department, not to the children	13%	23%	19%
Other parent does not need the money	25%	15%	19%
Other parent has a new partner who can help support the children	38%	15%	24%
Do not think the child is his	33%	7%	17%
Did not want the child	11%	7%	9%
Number	(9)	(15)	(24)

★Chi square is significant between sites at .09 or less.

In addition to paying formal child support, nearly all (84%) of the interviewed noncustodial parents reported providing informal support. Most commonly, this consisted of buying clothes and toys for the children (71%). Nearly half (45%) reported giving money directly to the other parent or the child. A similar proportion reported buying diapers (45%) and 29 percent reported paying daycare costs.

**Table 36. NCP Report of Informal Support Provided, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
In the past few months, NCP reports have given the following to his children and/or the other parents			
★Percent reporting provided some type of informal support	95%	78%	84%
Type of informal support provided			
Gave money directly to the child or other parent	46%	44%	45%
★Made car payments, purchased a car, or loaned a car	19%	8%	12%
Paid medial bills for them	30%	19%	22%
Made mortgage or rent payments	17%	9%	12%
★Bought clothes, furniture, bikes, or other major items	87%	63%	71%
★Bought diapers	57%	38%	45%
Paid day care costs	35%	25%	29%
★Spent money on the children when you are with them	97%	72%	81%
Other	49%	48%	49%
Number	(37)	(64)	(101)

★Chi square is significant between sites at .09 or less.

Do noncustodial parents feel well treated by child support workers? Do they recall receiving basic information about child support and referrals to services that might help them over time? Table 37 shows that nearly all interviewed respondents:

- Felt they had been treated with respect by child support workers (88%);
- Said the worker had explained the importance of child support (90%);
- Understood the order amount (92%);
- Knew how to contest the order (94%);
- Understood how to make payments (93%); and
- Said they knew what would happen if payments were not made (87%).

The early outreach goal of obtaining accurate income information also appears to have been met. Nearly all (87%) of the respondents recalled the worker asking how much money each parent earned and 74 percent recalled bringing the worker pay stubs to document wages.

It is not as clear whether the project was successful in offering all the needed service referrals. Only 50 percent of the interviewed NCPs recalled the worker telling them where to go for help

with parenting time, and 36 percent recalled being told where to go for help with employment. However, referrals will not necessarily be appropriate or necessary in all cases.

**Table 37. NCP Reactions to the Child Support Agency, Worker, and Order Establishment Process, by Site**

	Denver County	Jefferson County	Total
Percent responding "Yes" to the following statements			
The worker was polite and treated me with respect.	84%	90%	88%
The worker explained the importance of child support.	87%	91%	90%
The worker asked how much money the other parent and I earned.	90%	86%	87%
I brought pay stubs to show the worker how much money I make.	74%	75%	74%
The worker explained what I owe in child support.	90%	94%	92%
The worker explained what I could do if I disagree with paternity or with the child support order.	92%	95%	94%
The worker told me where to send my child support payments or how it would be taken from my paycheck.	92%	94%	93%
The worker explained what could happen if I did not pay.	90%	85%	87%
The worker told me where I could go if I needed help with employment.	39%	38%	38%
★ The worker told me where I could go if I needed help with seeing my children.	61%	44%	50%
Number	(38)	(67)	(105)

★ Chi square is significant between sites at .09.

Although noncustodial parents in the project felt well treated by workers and received critical information on the child support system, their overall views of the agency did not change. Approximately 20 percent of respondents rated the agency as "excellent," both before and after they established their order, and 31 percent rated the agency as "good." The percent giving the agency a negative rating of "fair" or "poor" went from 43 percent to 49 percent.

**Table 38. Overall Rating of the Child Support Agency by NCPs Before and After Order Establishment, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Excellent	29%	26%	12%	17%	18%	20%
Good	26%	24%	48%	35%	40%	31%
Fair	26%	18%	25%	17%	25%	17%
Poor	20%	32%	16%	32%	18%	32%
Number	(35)	(38)	(61)	(66)	(96)	(104)





## Chapter 5: Outcomes for Cases Exposed to Worker-Initiated Actions

### Payment Performance

A key objective of the project was to reduce the incidence of default orders and improve child support payments by having workers in Denver and Jefferson counties attempt to contact noncustodial parents at the early stages of case processing. Through telephone calls and face-to-face meetings, workers hoped to explain child support to noncustodial parents, develop a relationship, and engage them in the process of establishing their orders. To determine whether these goals were accomplished, we compared patterns of order establishment and child support payment for cases in the experimental and control groups. The information was manually extracted by an experienced former child support worker who looked up each case on ACSES.

Table 38 presents the method used to establish child support orders in cases in the experimental and control groups. Table 38 shows:

- In both counties, the incidence of stipulations was significantly higher among cases in the experimental group and the incidence of orders established by default was significantly lower.
- Across the two counties, default orders were generated in only 12 percent of cases in the experimental group, as compared with 45 percent of the cases in the control group.

The proportion of cases with no child support order was higher in the experimental group. As previously noted, control group cases consisted of new filings slated for order establishment using administrative procedures in 2003 while cases in the experimental group were generated from 2005 to June 2006. Clearly, a higher proportion of cases in the younger, experimental group were unresolved when the ACSES records were checked for evaluation purposes in June to August 2007.

**Table 39. Method of Order Establishment Used in Project Cases, by Group and Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Order established by	*	*	*	*	*	*
Stipulation	69%	49%	72%	55%	70%	51%
Default	9%	47%	14%	41%	12%	45%
Court	10%	2%	5%	0%	7%	1%
No order	12%	3%	9%	5%	11%	3%
Number	(185)	(330)	(233)	(179)	(418)	(509)

\*Chi square is significant between experimental and control groups at .05.

Table 39 examines the terms of the child support orders generated for cases in the experimental and control groups. Since orders are based on earnings, it considers whether there are differences in the financial standing of noncustodial parents in the two groups. It also shows whether the project led to changes in the terms of the orders produced for members of the two treatment groups.

Table 40 shows:

- Average order levels were significantly higher in the experimental group in Denver County (\$318 versus \$247).
- Noncustodial parents in the experimental group in Denver were significantly more likely than NCPs in the control group to have minimum orders of \$50 (6% versus 2%). This suggests that workers were more apt to obtain financial information for cases in the experimental group and applied the minimum order more often with noncustodial parents who had extremely low incomes.
- Cases in the experimental group were significantly less apt to have an arrears balance, with 64 percent showing no arrears in Denver County, as compared with 16 percent in the control group. As previously noted, project participants in the experimental group could eliminate the child support debt they owed to Denver County for public assistance paid on behalf of their children if they contacted the child support agency and attended the meeting to establish a child support order.
- Monthly support orders, arrears balances, and proportions with minimum orders were statistically comparable for members of the experimental and control groups in Jefferson County. As in Denver County, the proportion with no arrears was significantly higher among members of the experimental group, reflecting the practice of eliminating debt balances to induce noncustodial parents to attend and participate in order-making proceedings.

**Table 40. Description of Child Support Order Levels and Arrears in Experimental and Control Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Amount of current monthly support	★				★	
Mean	\$318	\$247	\$292	\$259	\$303	\$251
Median	\$304	\$190	\$252	\$236	\$284	\$218
Range	\$12-1,285	\$11-1,120	\$14-989	\$50-859	\$12-1,285	\$11-1,120
Percent of with \$50 (minimum) order	★6%	2%	7%	6%	★7%	3%
Number	(143)	(303)	(209)	(165)	(352)	(468)
Total arrears balance						
Mean	\$5,196	\$3,848	\$1,973	\$2,766	\$3,815	\$3,537
Median	\$3,192	\$1,398	\$812	\$1,276	\$1,950	\$1,346
Range	\$1-25,263	\$25-54,568	\$1-12,771	\$144-24,000	\$1-25,263	\$25-54,568
Number	(52)	(278)	(39)	(112)	(91)	(390)

**Table 40. Description of Child Support Order Levels and Arrears in Experimental and Control Group Cases, by Site**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Percent with no arrears	★64%	16%	★80%	33%	★73%	22%
Amount to be paid monthly toward arrears						
Mean	\$41	\$50	\$41	\$34	\$39	\$46
Median	\$35	\$30	\$25	\$25	\$29	\$29
Range	\$1-200	\$5-1,819	\$1-255	\$5-200	\$1-255	\$5-1,819
Number	(46)	(186)	(35)	(73)	(86)	(259)

★Differences between experimental and control groups, chi square significant at .05.

To assess payment patterns among cases in the experimental and control groups, we compared the total amount due on a monthly basis with the total amount paid during the 12 months following the establishment of the child support order. The comparison shows:

- Payments were significantly higher for cases in the experimental group in both Denver and Jefferson counties.
- On average, noncustodial parents in the experimental group paid 45.5 percent of what they owed during the first year after they obtained a child support order, while their counterparts in the control group paid only 35.1 percent of their obligation.
- In Denver County, the percent paying nothing at all was nearly twice as high among noncustodial parents in the control group versus the experimental group (39% versus 20%).

**Table 41. Comparison of Child Support Payments in the First Year Following Order Establishment in Experimental and Control Group Cases**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Average Percent of MSO due that was paid in 12 months following order establishment	★		★		★	
Mean	42.1%	31.8	48.2%	41.8%	45.5%	35.1%
Median	38.0%	18.0	51.0%	41.5%	44.0%	26.0%
Range	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%
Number	(141)	(286)	(174)	(146)	(315)	(433)
	★		★		★	
Percent paying nothing	20%	39%	18%	25%	19%	34%
Percent paying 1-25%	19%	15%	18%	15%	19%	16%
Percent paying 26-50%	21%	15%	12%	20%	16%	17%
Percent paying 51-75%	14%	12%	18%	16%	17%	13%
Percent paying 76-99%	22%	17%	25%	23%	24%	19%
Percent paying 100%	4%	2%	8%	1%	6%	2%

★Differences between experimental and control group are significant at .1 or less.

Table 42 considers whether the payment patterns observed during the first year following order establishment hold up over time. It compares the average amount of monthly support due and paid by noncustodial parents in the experimental and control groups during months 13 to 24 following the promulgation of their child support orders. The comparison shows:

- Payment rates continued to be significantly higher for cases in the experimental group in both Denver and Jefferson counties.
- On average, noncustodial parents in the experimental group paid 45.2 percent of what they owed during the second year after they obtained a child support order, while their counterparts in the control group paid only 36.7 percent of their obligation.
- In Denver County, the percent paying nothing at all continued to be nearly twice as high among noncustodial parents in the control group compared with the experimental group (27% versus 15%).

**Table 42. Comparison of Child Support Payments in the Second Year Following Order Establishment in Experimental and Control Group Cases**

	Denver County		Jefferson County		Total	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Average percent of MSO due that was paid in 24 months following order establishment	★				★	
Mean	43.6%	33.4%	46.4%	43.3%	45.2%	36.7%
Median	42.0%	22.0%	41.5%	41.5%	42.0%	28.0%
Range	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%	0-100%
Number	(141)	(286)	(174)	(146)	(315)	(433)
	★				★	
Percent paying nothing	15%	27%	15%	20%	15%	25%
Percent paying 1-25%	23%	25%	22%	22%	22%	24%
Percent paying 26-50%	20%	15%	17%	14%	18%	15%
Percent paying 51-75%	16%	14%	14%	15%	15%	14%
Percent paying 76-99%	25%	17%	27%	27%	26%	20%
Percent paying 100%	1%	1%	6%	2%	4%	2%

★Differences between experimental and control group are significant at .1 or less.

Of course, even without worker outreach, some percentage of noncustodial parents will attend the negotiation conference. Table 43 suggests that the outreach efforts that workers utilized with cases in the experimental group resulted in a greater number of unemployed noncustodial parents participating in order-establishment procedures than would have been the case without the outreach. In the control group, education is more highly associated with attendance at the negotiation conference than is true for the experimental group.

**Table 43. Employment Status of Stipulation and Default Cases, by Group**

	Stipulated Cases		Default Cases	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
<b>All Cases</b>				
Ever showed evidence of employment	★77%	84%	★57%	74%
Number	(294)	(257)	(49)	(228)

\*Chi square is significant at .08 or less.

Table 44 examines the relationship between the method by which orders were established and payment patterns in the ensuing 24 months. It shows that order-establishment methods were critical to explaining payment.

- Cases with stipulated orders in both the experimental and control groups had identical payment patterns.
- Noncustodial parents who stipulate do a far better job of paying child support than do NCPs with orders established by default.

It appears that early outreach efforts by workers succeed in inducing more noncustodial parents to participate and stipulate, and that these individuals do a better job of paying over time. In contrast, the lack of concerted outreach efforts to noncustodial parents in the control group is associated with a higher rate of default and a lower rate of payment. The better payment among control-default cases compared to experimental-default cases is probably due to the greater level of employment among default-control cases (see Table 42).

**Table 44. Comparison of Child Support Payments, by Method of Establishment, Group, and County**

	Stipulated Cases		Default Cases	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
<b>All Cases</b>				
Percent of MSO due that was paid in the 24 months following order establishment	51.0%	51.8%	★11.6%	19.6%
Number	(238)	(221)	(47)	(204)
<b>Denver County Cases</b>				
Percent of MSO paid that was due in the 12 months following order establishment	46.9%	48.0%	13.1%	15.4%
Number	(108)	(138)	(15)	(141)
Percent of MSO due that was paid in the 24 months following order establishment	47.6%	49.8%	14.8%	16.5%
Number	(108)	(138)	(15)	(141)
<b>Jefferson County Cases</b>				
Percent of MSO paid that was due in the 12 months following order establishment	56.0%	55.1%	★9.9%	23.4%
Number	(130)	(83)	(32)	(63)
Percent of MSO due that was paid in the 24 months following order establishment	53.9%	55.3%	★10.1%	★26.5%
Number	(130)	(83)	(32)	(63)

★ T-test of means shows significant (.05) differences between experimental and control group.



## Chapter 6: Cases Exposed Only to the Electronic Notification System

### Call Attempts and Outcomes

Beginning in May 2005 and continuing through May 2006, cases in the experimental group received the worker-initiated services described in Chapter 2 and were also sent to a project contractor, Courtland Consulting, for a series of telephone reminder calls. The first type of call was placed to the noncustodial parent prior to the negotiation conference with the child support technician. This call included a reminder of the date, time, and location of the meeting. The second type of reminder call was placed to the custodial parent prior to the negotiation conference. The final reminder call was placed to noncustodial parents prior to the time the first payment was due.

A second group of cases was assigned to receive these same three reminder calls, but none of the other worker-initiated outreach activities and services were provided to the experimental group. Assignment to this group is described in Chapter 2 of this report. In the tables below, these cases are described as “Only ENS (Electronic Notification System) Calls.” Comparing these two groups, and comparing each to the control group, allows for an assessment of the value of placing automated reminder calls relative to the greater level of intervention afforded to the experimental group that received both reminder calls and worker-initiated actions.

Table 45 shows that 324 cases (a total of 648 custodial and noncustodial parents) were assigned to the full experimental group and 256 cases (yielding a total of 512 custodial and noncustodial parents) were assigned to receive only the reminder phone calls.<sup>1</sup> During the project, 1,060 attempts were made to telephone a parent in the experimental group and 808 attempts were made to telephone parents in the ENS Only group. In both groups, just over three calls were attempted on average, although the range was from 1 to 25 in the experimental group and 1 to 32 in the ENS Only group.

**Table 45. ENS Call Attempts, by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Only ENS Calls
Number of cases (NCP and CP constitute one case)	324	256
Total number of calls attempted	1,060	808
Average number of calls attempted	3.3	3.1
Percent with only one call attempted	32%	34%
Range in number of calls attempted	1-25	1-32

<sup>1</sup> Approximately 100 cases were eliminated from the analysis because there was no indication regarding which parent was called or the purpose of the call.

Table 46 shows that approximately 60 percent of the cases in both groups had at least one call attempt to remind the noncustodial parent about the negotiation conference. The outcomes of these calls were very comparable in the two groups. In about a quarter of the cases in both groups, the ENS message was played to someone in the noncustodial parent’s home. In almost another third of the cases, the message was started but the person answering the phone hung up immediately. In 6 to 15 percent of the cases in each group, the ultimate outcome of the call attempts was that the ENS left a message for the noncustodial parent. Assuming that the message was played and the reminder reached the noncustodial parent, approximately 41 percent of the noncustodial parents in the experimental group and 32 percent in the ENS Only group received the reminder about the negotiation conference.

**Table 46. ENS Calls to Remind NCP of Negotiation Conference by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Only ENS Calls
Percentage of cases with an attempt to call NCP	61%	60%
Outcome of NCP conference reminder calls		
Message was played	26%	26%
System left a message	15%	6%
Party answered and hung up without listening	29%	35%
Other outcomes (no answer, busy, answering device full, etc.)	30%	33%
	(198)	(153)

Table 47 shows that in approximately 80 percent of the cases in both the experimental and ENS Only groups, there were attempts to place reminder calls about the negotiation conference to the custodial parent. In both groups, the message was played to someone in the custodial parent’s home about 30 percent of the time. Combining calls with messages played and calls with message left means that approximately 38 percent of the custodial parents in both groups were reminded of the negotiation conference through the electronic system.

**Table 47. ENS Calls to Remind CP of Negotiation Conference, by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Only ENS Calls
Percentage of cases with an attempt to call CP	77%	83%
Outcome of CP conference reminder calls		
Message was played	26%	34%
System left a message	12%	4%
Party answered and hung up without listening	31%	24%
Other outcomes (no answer, busy, answering device full, etc.)	32%	38%
	(249)	(212)

Table 48 shows that fewer than half of the noncustodial parents in the experimental group, and only about a quarter in the ENS Only group, were the subject of an attempted call to remind them about a child support payment that was due. When calls were attempted, 12 to 24 percent were



successful in reaching the noncustodial parent or someone else in the home. Messages were left in another 11 to 19 percent of the cases.

**Table 48. ENS Calls to Remind NCP of Payment Due, by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Only ENS Calls
Percentage of cases with an attempt to call NCP with payment reminder	44%	26%
Outcome of NCP payment reminder calls		
Message was played	24%	12%
System left a message	19%	11%
Party answered and hung up without listening	28%	45%
Other outcomes (no answer, busy, answering device full, etc.)	29%	32%
	(142)	(66)

Table 49 provides a summary of calls played and messages left. It shows that attempts to convey messages to noncustodial and custodial parents using automated telephone techniques are rarely successful. Indeed, in nearly 80 percent of the cases in the full experimental and ENS Only groups, no messages were played to a person at either the home of the noncustodial or custodial parent. In about 60 percent of the cases in each group, the calls were not played to a live person in either the home of the noncustodial or custodial parent.

If playing the message to a live person and leaving a message are combined, the percentage of cases with no ENS calls declines somewhat. About half of the cases did not have a call played or a message left at either the noncustodial or custodial parents' homes. About 70 percent of the custodial parents in each group did not have a message played to someone at their home or have a message left. Among noncustodial parents, the figures are 65 percent in the experimental group and 76 percent in the ENS Only group.

**Table 49. Summary of ENS Call Outcomes, by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Only ENS Calls
Percentage of cases with no calls played to NCP	78%	82%
★Percentage of cases with no calls played to CP	80%	72%
Percentage of cases with no calls played to either party	64%	59%
	(324)	(256)
★Percentage of cases with no calls played to NCP or message left	65%	76%
Percentage of cases with no calls played to CP or message left	71%	68%
Percentage of cases with no calls played to either party or message left	46%	52%
	(324)	(256)

★Chi square significant at .01.

### Child Support Outcomes

To assess the effectiveness of using electronic reminder calls to engage parents in the child support process, we compared default order rates for:

- Cases subject to a full array of worker-initiated actions along with telephone reminder calls;
- ENS Only calls; and
- A control group that was exposed to traditional worker outreach efforts, but not the battery of more intensive interventions assembled for this project.

Table 50 shows how the experimental, ENS Only, and control groups compared on the percentage of cases with child support orders established by default. The results show:

- The experimental group exposed to worker-initiated actions along with electronic telephone calls had a higher percentage of stipulations than either the control group or the ENS Only group.
- The control and ENS Only groups were quite similar in their default and stipulation patterns. This suggests that automated, telephone reminder calls by themselves do little to promote appearance at order-making proceedings and reduce rates of default.

**Table 50. Default Order Establishment, by Group \***

	Full Experimental Treatment	Control Group	Only ENS Calls
Percentage of cases established through stipulation	86%	53%	60%
Percentage of cases established through default	14%	47%	40%
	(343)	(485)	(116)

\*Chi square significant at .01.

Table 51 restricts the analysis to those cases in the experimental and ENS Only groups when the reminder call about the negotiation conference was attempted or achieved. Even under these conditions, the experimental group continues to be significantly different from both the control and ENS Only cases. In other words, even in cases in which the noncustodial parent presumably heard the conference reminder call played, there was no indication of higher stipulation levels unless the noncustodial parent also received the full range of worker-initiated, experimental interventions.

**Table 51. Orders Established by Default, by Group and NCP Conference Reminder Call\***

	Full Experimental Treatment	Control Group	Only ENS Calls
Percent with orders established through <u>default</u>			
★ Cases with conference reminder call to NCP <u>attempted</u> (except control group)	8%	47%	27%
★ Cases with conference reminder call to NCP <u>played</u> (except control group)	8%	47%	22%
	(34)	(485)	(18)

★ Chi square significant at .01.

Finally, Table 52 compares the three groups on child support payments in the 12 months following order establishment, both for the group as a whole and for those subsets of the experimental and ENS Only cases where a payment reminder call was played.

The results show that overall, noncustodial parents in experimental cases did a better job of paying than their counterparts in control cases. The differences between the ENS Only group and the control group, however, were not significant. Nor were the differences between the ENS Only and experimental groups. This pattern continued to hold when the analysis was restricted to that subset of experimental and ENS Only cases in which a reminder call about payment was attempted.

**Table 52. Child Support Payment in the Year Following Order Establishment, by Group**

	Full Experimental Treatment	Control Group	Only ENS Calls
★ Percentage of child support due in the 12 months after the order was established that was paid	46%	35%	42%
	(315)	(432)	(127)
★ Percentage of child support due in the 12 months after the order that was paid among cases with a payment reminder call to NCP <u>attempted</u> (except control group)	55%	35%	46%
	(107)	(432)	(42)

★ Differences between full experimental and control group are significant at .05.



## Chapter 7: Enhanced Information Collection by Process Servers

### Background and Objective

Process servers are typically the first and often the only representatives of the child support agency to have face-to-face contact with noncustodial parents. As part of this demonstration grant, it was determined to see whether process servers could help the child support enforcement agency build more positive relationships with noncustodial parents and elicit useful contact information. To accomplish this, process servers in Denver County were asked to administer a brief, one-page questionnaire (Parent Needs Assessment) and deliver a brochure about child support to a group of noncustodial parents when they achieved service of process. The brochure and needs assessment survey were available in both English and Spanish. Another group of noncustodial parents in Denver County was served in the normal manner, without the brief assessment of their needs or the distribution of a child support brochure.

Four child support workers in Denver County sent 85 of their cases requiring service of process for the enhanced treatment, while two workers in the agency with an equivalent case pool sent 75 of their cases requiring service of process for normal process. The group that received the Parenting Needs Assessment and brochure was termed the experimental group while the group that received regular service of process treatments was the control group.

A comparison of two groups suggests that they were generally equivalent. Noncustodial parents in both groups were overwhelmingly male (88%), Hispanic (48% and 47%), never married (87% and 89%), 31 years old, with an average of 1.5 children. They were also equally likely to have prior experience with the child support agency and open child support cases on the Automated Child Support System (ACSES).

On the other hand, the control group was significantly more likely to consist of cases that involved the current receipt of public assistance (15% versus 5%) and to involve order modifications rather than new orders (10% versus 1%). (See Table 53.)

**Table 53. Characteristics of Noncustodial Parents in Process Server Intervention, by Group**

		Experimental	Control
Sex	Male	88%	88%
	Female	12%	12%
	Number	(64)	(76)
Age	Mean	31.3	31.7
	Median	31.1	28.5
	Range	18-54	20-60
	Number	(67)	(72)
Race	White	20%	14%
	African-American	30%	38%
	Hispanic	48%	47%
	Other	2%	1%
	Number	(50)	(73)
Marital Status	Never married	87%	89%
	Married	13%	11%
		(85)	(75)
★TANF Status	Current TANF	5%	15%
	Former TANF	42%	37%
	Never TANF	53%	48%
		(85)	(75)
★Order Status	New order	99%	90%
	Existing order/modification	1%	10%
Number of children on current case	Mean	1.5	1.5
	Median	1.0	1.0
	Range	1-6	1-4
	Number	(85)	(75)
Total Number of cases on ACSES	Mean	1.4	1.3
	Median	1.0	1.0
	Range	0-7	0-5
	Number	(85)	(75)

★Chi square is significant between groups at .1 or less.

Probably due of the greater percentage of modifications among control group cases, there were some significant differences in the types of documents that were served to noncustodial parents in the two groups. Those in the control group were significantly more likely than their counterparts in the experimental group to receive basic legal documents needed to establish an order including a Notice of Financial Responsibility (NFR) (72% versus 57%). On the other hand, the proportion of noncustodial parents receiving an NFR along with a paternity action was 40 percent in the experimental group and 18 percent in the control group. Only 3 percent of experimental group cases and 11 percent of control group cases received a summons and petition.

The number of service attempts in both experimental and control groups was statistically equivalent with 1.9 and 1.8 attempts, respectively. The type of service varied significantly between the two groups. Nearly all noncustodial parents in the experimental group (90%) were personally served as compared with 68 percent of noncustodial parents in the control group. The original study design called for the exclusive use of personal service for cases in the experimental group exposed to more intense treatments. Over time, this requirement was dropped and both groups consisted of cases that involved both personal and secondary service.

Noncustodial parents in cases in the control group were significantly more likely to refuse service by the process server (4%) compared with experimental group cases. This could be due to a variety of factors, including the more communicative role of the process server in the experimental group, the larger number of cases with secondary service in the control group, and the higher percentage of modification cases.

**Table 54. Documents Served, Service Attempts, and Service Outcomes, by Group**

	Experimental	Control
★Documents served		
Notice of Financial Responsibility/Subpoena to Produce/Child Support I&E Affidavit/Uniform Support Petition	57%	72%
Notice of Financial Responsibility/Paternity Action/Subpoena to Produce/Father's Paternity Advisement and Admission	40%	18%
Summons and Petition	3%	11%
Number	(72)	(76)
Number of service attempts		
Mean	1.9	1.8
Median	1.0	1.0
Range	1-6	1-6
Number	(27)	(27)
★Type of service		
Personal	90%	68%
Family member	10%	32%
Number	(70)	(72)
★Refused Service		
	0%	4%
Total Fees Charged for Service		
Mean	\$30	\$31
Median	\$35	\$30
Range	\$10-45	\$10-50
Number	(46)	(28)

★ Chi square is significant between groups at .09 or less.

### Assessment of Parent Needs and Enhanced Information Collection

Process servers were able to complete the Needs Assessment with 65 percent of noncustodial parents in the experimental group. Noncustodial parents in the experimental group were also given a brochure about child support along with the name and phone number of their child support worker. More than half (56%) of noncustodial parents who completed the Needs Assessment contacted the child support agency, either by telephone or by walking in for an in-person meeting. Of those NCPs who contacted the child support agency, 17 percent telephoned the agency and 26 percent walked in for a meeting with the child support worker. See Table 55.

**Table 55. Needs Assessments Completed by NCPs and Contact with Child Support Worker**

	Experimental (n-86)
Process Server was able to conduct assessment of parent needs survey with NCP	65%
Number	(56)
Of those with needs assessment conducted	
NCP contacted child support agency	56%
Telephoned the child support agency	17%
Walked-in for a meeting at child support agency	26%
Number	(56)

A review of needs assessments completed by 56 noncustodial parents in the experimental group reveals that most wanted to get more information on how child support works (86%) and what happens at the negotiation conference (80%). Nearly as many (79%) wanted help with getting to see their children. Another major area of concern dealt with the information the noncustodial parent needed to provide to the child support agency and what to do if he did not have that information (63%). Over half of the noncustodial parents wanted employment referrals (56%), wondered if they would have to appear in court (54%), and had questions about TANF and child support payments (50%). See Table 56.

**Table 56. Issues of Interest to NCPs Based on Needs Assessments Completed with Process Servers**

	Experimental (n-56)
Percent responding interested in or want help with the following	
Parenting time and getting to see his child	79%
Employment referrals	56%
Paternity testing and costs	46%
How child support works and what is going to happen	86%
The negotiation conference and who will be there	80%
TANF and child support payments	50%
Appearance in court	54%
Back child support issues	48%



**Table 56. Issues of Interest to NCPs Based on Needs Assessments Completed with Process Servers**

	Experimental (n-56)
Information he will have to provide to the child support agency and what to do if he does not have that information	63%
Other	38%

### Child Support Outcomes

Did interaction with the process server and the distribution of Needs Assessments and child support brochures to noncustodial parents translate into higher appearance rates at order-making procedures? To answer this question, we compared rates of stipulation and default for cases in the experimental and control groups. The results appear in Table 57. It shows:

- The rate of orders established by stipulation, default, and court did not vary significantly by group.
- Twenty-seven percent of experimental group cases and 21 percent of control group cases were established by stipulation.
- One-quarter of experimental group cases and 27 percent of control group cases were established by default.
- A high proportion of cases in both groups were unresolved when the child support records were reviewed and no order had been established.

Thus, there is no evidence that having process servers distribute brochures and elicit information from noncustodial parents about their child support needs and interests improves their involvement and reduces the incidence of defaults.

**Table 57. Order Establishment Outcomes in the Process Server Intervention, by Group**

	Experimental	Control
Child support order established by		
Stipulation	27%	21%
Default	25%	27%
No order	20%	31%
	(85)	(75)



## Chapter 8: Summary and Conclusions

The demonstration grant *Reducing Default Orders in Child Support Cases in Colorado* tested several strategies by which child support agencies might promote the participation of noncustodial parents in proceedings to establish child support orders and reduce the use of default orders. Conducted in two Colorado counties — Denver and Jefferson — the project involved the use of a variety of automated and worker-initiated techniques to promote contact, stimulate parental involvement, and improve payment. They included:

- Personal telephone calls;
- Financial incentives to those who appeared at order-making proceedings;
- Face-to-face meetings; and
- Automated reminder calls.

Denver County also tried to encourage parents to contact the agency by having process servers distribute a brief survey of interests and needs and a brochure about child support along with the papers they normally deliver to noncustodial parents.

The goal of the evaluation was to test the pros and cons of using more and less time-consuming actions to achieve contact with noncustodial parents. It involved the generation of three equivalent groups of child support cases that were eligible for administrative order establishment and did not have a current order in each county. A total of 256 noncustodial parents were exposed only to automated telephone calls to remind them of upcoming hearings and payments that were due and alert them to missed payments. A total of 433 noncustodial parents were exposed to worker initiated attempts to make contact including mailed notices, telephone calls, face-to-face meetings, and generous financial incentives to parents with child support debts and fees owed to the State of Colorado. A third group of cases in both counties (n=526) was treated in the normal manner and served as a control group. It was drawn from the pool of cases set for order establishment in Denver and Jefferson counties in 2003. The intervention with process servers in Denver involved 85 cases using heightened attempts to establish contact and 75 cases processed in the normal manner.

The demonstration grant data include:

- Records of electronic call attempts;
- Records of actions taken by workers;

- Records of action taken by process servers;
- Brief exit questionnaires from 233 noncustodial parents and 158 custodial parents at the close of the negotiation conference;
- Telephone interviews with 105 noncustodial parents three months after their case was assigned to a worker to establish a child support order;
- Brief assessments of child support information and services needed by 56 noncustodial parents who completed a checklist distributed by process servers; and
- A review of child support records for all cases in every group: 433 with worker-initiated contact efforts, 256 with electronic notification calls, 526 in the control group, and 85 and 75 subject to heightened and normal interventions by process servers, respectively.

## Summary of Key Findings

### Efforts by Workers to Establish Contact with Noncustodial Parents

- **Using mail, phone, and in-person meetings, child support workers were able to make telephone and/or face-to face contact with most noncustodial parents.**

Workers had discretion in the techniques they used to contact noncustodial parents, with some relying on mailings and others using more phone calls. When attempting telephone and/or in-person contact is a job requirement for workers, they succeed nearly all the time. Workers reported contact in 86 and 77 percent of cases they handled in Denver and Jefferson, respectively. Communication with custodial parents (undertaken to try to locate noncustodial parents) was somewhat less common, with workers reporting telephone and/or in-person contact in 67 percent of cases in Denver and 58 percent in Jefferson County.

- **Workers used telephone conversations with parents to establish a relationship and schedule a face-to-face meeting to establish a child support order.**

Workers used their telephone conversations with noncustodial parents to introduce themselves and explain the child support process. They also scheduled an in-person meeting to establish a child support order (“negotiation conference”). With smaller proportions of noncustodial parents, workers at each site arranged for genetic tests to be conducted (5% and 19%).

- **Most noncustodial parents who met with a worker to establish a child support order waived their right for service of process and signed a stipulation.**

Telephone contacts and in-person meetings reduce the need for child support papers to be legally served. Most noncustodial parents who met with workers in Denver and Jefferson (89% and 60%) waived their right to be legally served with child support papers and stipulated to an order (75% and 76%).

- **The use of objective data sources and parent affidavits to identify income for noncustodial parents increases and the incidence of income imputation decreases when telephone and in-person contact is achieved.**

Workers reported using quarterly wage reports, tax returns, and pay stubs to establish orders in approximately 72 percent of the cases where contact with noncustodial parents was achieved. They used affidavits filed by noncustodial parents in 76 percent of the cases with direct contact. When contact was made, only 7 percent of cases in Denver and 27 percent in Jefferson lacked income information and required imputation. In cases with no contact, workers imputed income at dramatically higher rates in both Denver (40%) and Jefferson (73%). Contact also appears to enhance the generation of appropriate orders. For example, the percent of cases with minimum orders of \$50 was significantly higher in the experimental group compared with the control group in Denver County (6% versus 2%).

- **Making contact with noncustodial parents rarely leads workers to refer them for help with employment and/or parent-child contact.**

Although a perceived benefit of having workers telephone and meet with noncustodial parents is the ability to identify barriers to the payment of child support and make service referrals, such referrals were not common. Workers reported making referrals for parenting-time for only 13 percent of noncustodial parents in Denver and 9 percent in Jefferson. They made referrals for employment services in approximately 8 percent of cases. The low level of referrals does not appear to reflect the actual rate of problems. In telephone interviews with noncustodial parents, only 58 percent reported being employed full time and 61 percent said that their salary did not cover their financial needs. Nearly one-third (29%) reported not seeing their children at all or only once or twice per year. Of course, the presence of such problems does not necessarily mean that an NCP wants, or will act on, a service referral.

- **Although it takes more time to establish child support orders when worker-initiated contact is routinely attempted, order establishment is faster in cases where contact is actually achieved.**

On average, it took longer for workers to establish orders for cases in the experimental group (86.6 days) where worker-initiated contact was routinely attempted as compared with the control group (75.9 days). When the analysis was restricted to cases where contact was *actually*

achieved, the pattern was reversed and it took an average of only 69.2 days for cases in the experimental group, as compared with 75.9 days for cases in the control group.

### **Reactions of Parents to Worker-Initiated Actions to Establish Contact**

- **Nearly all noncustodial parents who recall receiving calls and materials from child support workers report that it is “very” or “somewhat” helpful, although there is no consensus on the best way for the child support agency to communicate with noncustodial parents.**

Both immediately after meeting with a worker to establish a child support order and three months later, noncustodial parents who recalled receiving letters and telephone calls from workers were overwhelmingly likely to characterize the contact as helpful. At the same time, there was little agreement on the best way for workers to communicate with noncustodial parents, with 34 percent favoring in-person meetings, 29 percent favoring letters, and 23 percent favoring telephone calls.

- **Both immediately after the conference and three months later, most noncustodial parents report feeling well treated by child support workers, although a quarter report being angry with the agency and half give the agency ratings of “fair” or “poor.”**

Both immediately after meeting with a worker to establish a child support order and three months later, over 90 percent of surveyed noncustodial parents gave workers high marks for being respectful and answering their questions about child support. At the same time, 24 percent reported feeling “angry” with the child support agency and substantial proportions in both Denver and Jefferson rated the agency unfavorably (52% and 49%). Even though the agency eliminated child support debt and fees for those who appeared for in-person meetings to establish orders, overall views of the agency were not perceived to have changed, with 43 percent rating it unfavorably before order establishment and 49 percent rating it unfavorably afterwards.

- **Noncustodial parents appear to understand most aspects of the child support program and the enforcement process, but some are misinformed about the rules concerning public assistance, cooperation, tax refunds, and visitation.**

Both immediately after meeting with a worker to get an orientation to child support and establish an order and three months later, nearly all noncustodial parents accurately identified many features of the child support program, including their obligations, enforcement actions that the agency would take, and their right to go to court. At the same time, some parents were confused about important aspects of the program, with 25 percent failing to realize that they would have to pay money back to the state for any welfare paid to their children, and 33 percent failing to

realize that applicants for public assistance are required to cooperate with child support. Many noncustodial parents in Denver (36%) and Jefferson (29%) did not realize that child support can intercept a tax refund to pay child support. Finally, 19 percent of noncustodial parents in Denver and 8 percent of parents in Jefferson wrongly indicated that the obligation to pay child support was tied to their ability to see their children.

### **Impact of Worker-Initiated Contact on Order Establishment and Payment**

- **Cases with worker-initiated outreach have significantly higher rates of orders set by stipulation and lower rates of orders established by default, as compared with cases in the control group.**

In both Denver and Jefferson counties, stipulation rates were significantly higher among cases in the experimental group as compared with the control group (71% versus 51%), and rates of default were significantly lower (12% versus 45%).

- **Noncustodial parents in the experimental group pay significantly more child support than their counterparts in the control group during the first and second year following the promulgation of their orders.**

On average, noncustodial parents in the experimental group with worker-initiated outreach paid 45.5 percent of what they owed during the first year of their order, as compared with their counterparts in the control group who paid only 35 percent of their obligation. The differential persisted during the second year following order establishment (45.2% versus 36.7%). The percentage paying nothing was nearly twice as high for parents in the control versus the experimental group in Denver County in the first (20% versus 39%) and second years (15% versus 27%) after getting orders.

- **Noncustodial parents with stipulated cases in both the experimental and control groups pay significantly more of what they owe (50%) than do their counterparts in both groups who establish orders by default (11% and 18%).**

Worker-initiated outreach appears to induce more noncustodial parents to participate and stipulate and these individuals do a better job of paying over a 24-month period. Twelve months after establishing orders, parents who stipulated paid 51 percent of what they owed. Noncustodial parents in the experimental and control groups who failed to appear and received a default order paid 10.9 percent and 17.9 percent, respectively. By 24 months, parents in the stipulated groups continued to pay 51 percent of what they owed while parents in the experimental and control groups who defaulted paid 11.6 and 19.6 percent, respectively. In Jefferson County, parents in the control group who defaulted did a significantly better job of paying support than their

counterparts in the experimental group (23.4% versus 9.9%). This suggests that in the absence of concerted efforts to establish contact with noncustodial parents in the control group, a substantial proportion of noncustodial parents who were employed and had the ability to pay support failed to appear and received default orders.

### **Electronic Notification Calls**

- **A majority of the attempts to convey messages to noncustodial parents using electronic notifications are unsuccessful with most calls not being made or played due to the lack of a phone number, unanswered calls, answering machines, and immediate hang ups.**

Electronic reminder calls could only be attempted in 60 percent of the targeted cases due to the lack of a phone number in the child support system. Among cases with placed calls, messages to appear for a conference to establish a support order were played by noncustodial parents in 26 percent of the cases where electronic calls were attempted and messages are left on answer machines in another 6 to 15 percent. In a third of the cases, the phone was never answered, and in another third, there was an immediate hang-up. As a result, in 80 percent of the cases, no messages were played to a person in either the home of the noncustodial or custodial parent, and in about 60 percent of the cases in each group, the calls were not played to a live person in either home.

- **Noncustodial parents subject to electronic reminder calls (along with those who appear to have played the message) have similar rates of stipulation and default.**

Statistically equivalent proportions of noncustodial parents exposed to electronic reminder calls and conventional treatments in the control group established orders by stipulation (60% versus 53%) and default (40% versus 47%). The overall payment rate during the year following order establishment for parents in the group with electronic reminder calls was 42 percent as compared with 35 percent in the control group, a difference that was not statistically significant. The payment rate for parents in the group where electronic reminder calls were actually attempted was 46 percent. The payment rate in the control group was 35 percent. The difference between the two was not statistically significant, suggesting that it might be due to chance alone.

### **Process Servers**

- **Process servers can engage noncustodial parents and obtain additional information about their child support interests and needs.** Process servers who were asked to try to communicate with noncustodial parents and exchange information while delivering legal papers, succeeded in getting more than half the noncustodial parents they met to complete a



brief assessment identifying their interest in receiving additional information and help with child support, visitation, and employment.

- **Nearly all noncustodial parents who complete a brief assessment of needs understandably want information about how child support works, but many also want help with getting to see their children and with employment.** Most parents who completed the needs assessment indicated that they wanted information on how child support works (86%), the conference to establish an order (80%), and what documents they needed to bring with them (63%). Nearly as many, however, indicated that they wanted help with getting to see their children (79%) and with referrals for employment (56%).
- **Noncustodial parents who are exposed to process servers who perform conventional and heightened outreach duties have comparable rates of stipulation and default.** Rates of stipulation and default were comparable in cases exposed to conventional interventions with process servers and those where the process server attempted to be more communicative and exchange information with parents that was subsequently relayed to child support workers for follow-up actions. In both groups, orders were established by default in approximately a quarter of the cases. It is relevant that orders were not established at all in 20 to 31 percent of the cases in the experimental and control groups, respectively.

## Conclusions

The project *Reducing Default Orders in Child Support Cases in Colorado* shows that it was feasible for workers to reach most noncustodial parents at early stages of case processing and that routine attempts to contact and communicate were extremely beneficial.

Workers were able to speak with and/or meet nearly all (77 to 86%) parents they tried to reach to establish a relationship and explain the child support process. Although routine attempts to make contact increased the average number of days required to establish a child support order from 75.9 to 86.6, the process took an average of 69.2 days for the majority of cases where contact was actually achieved. This suggests that lags only occurred in the small fraction of cases where no contact was made. In addition to being processed more quickly, cases with worker contact were less apt to require service of process and less likely to rely on imputations of income to generate child support orders. Conversely, workers were more likely to identify income using objective data sources and parent affidavits in cases where they had telephone and/or in-person contact with noncustodial parents.

One key benefit of having workers attempt to contact and communicate with noncustodial parents was a significant reduction in default orders (45% versus 12%) and an increase in those established by stipulation (51% versus 71%). Another benefit was a significant improvement in

the payment rate during both the first and second years after orders were established (45% versus 35%) and a reduction in the level of enforcement activity (50% versus 71%).

The chief reason why worker outreach was associated with higher payments was the ability of workers to induce some noncustodial parents who normally ignore mailed notices to appear and participate in order-establishment procedures. As a result, fewer parents received default orders, and those who did tended to have the lowest rates of employment and the fewest resources.

Nearly all surveyed noncustodial parents found calls and materials from child support workers to be at least somewhat helpful, although there was no consensus on the best way for workers to communicate, with roughly equal proportions favoring in-person meetings, letters, and telephone calls. Following their meetings and telephone calls, most parents were knowledgeable about the child support program, although a substantial number were still confused about the rules governing cooperation and reimbursements for welfare benefits. Finally, while parents gave workers high marks for being respectful and answering their questions about child support, a substantial proportion reported feeling angry with the agency and rated it unfavorably. The discrepancy probably reflected basic frustrations with child support obligations and circumstances rather than specific customer-service concerns.

Electronic reminder calls were much less effective than outreach efforts initiated by workers. Many calls were not made because phone numbers were not available in the child support system. Other calls were never answered, there was an immediate hang-up, or the message was left on an answer machine. As a result, no message was played to a person in the home of the noncustodial or custodial parent in 80 percent of the targeted cases. Only 26 percent of the cases with placed calls resulted in a message being played by a noncustodial parent. Not surprisingly, perhaps, parents exposed to electronic reminder calls did not stipulate at higher rates than parents in the control group and had similar default and payment patterns.

Finally, the project found that while process servers can be effective in distributing and collecting information from parents about child support and their interest in various forms of help and communicating this to child support workers (particularly with parenting time and employment), the effort did not appear to lead to a higher rate of appearance and a lower rate of default.

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# Colorado Default Grant Evaluation Intervention Data Collection Form

NCP Name: ACSES case number: Date of locate/assigned to tech: Primary language: 1- English   2- Spanish   3- Other _____ 4- Unknown Phone number for NCP provided: 1- Yes   2- No	SSN: County: <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson <input type="checkbox"/> Denver Case Category/Status at case assignment: Is this a caretaker relative case? 1-Yes   2-No
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Intervention Log				
	Intervention	Number of Attempts	Final Outcome	What Happened
<b>First Step: Locate</b>	Contact us Letter sent to NCP	Number of Attempts ____	<input type="checkbox"/> Undelivered <input type="checkbox"/> Not contacted by NCP <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted by NCP <input type="checkbox"/> Not sent, contacted via phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation conference set <input type="checkbox"/> Explained child support <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
	Letter sent to CP requesting cell phone, email & recent photo	Number of requests ____	<input type="checkbox"/> Undelivered <input type="checkbox"/> Received	<input type="checkbox"/> No response from CP <input type="checkbox"/> CP called <input type="checkbox"/> CP mailed <input type="checkbox"/> CP came into office <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot locate CP, case closed
<b>Second Step: Service/ Notification</b>	Mail APA packet to NCP (with Spanish attachment) via first class mail and cover letter	Number sent ____	<input type="checkbox"/> Undelivered <input type="checkbox"/> Delivered	
	Letter to CP to encourage participation of both CP and NCP	<i>Not applicable</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Undelivered to CP <input type="checkbox"/> Delivered to CP	
<b>Third Step- No Show for NFR</b>	Letter with 10 day notice sent to NCP	Number of Attempts ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Undelivered <input type="checkbox"/> Delivered, contacted <input type="checkbox"/> Delivered, no contact	<input type="checkbox"/> Request genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Enter stipulation <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-contested <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-language <input type="checkbox"/> Continued NFR
	Tech calls CP to determine why NCP didn't show	Number of Attempts ____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Contacted CP <input type="checkbox"/> Not contacted CP	<input type="checkbox"/> Provided new locate info. <input type="checkbox"/> Gave reason for NCP not showing <input type="checkbox"/> Did not provide new info.

Case Outcomes
Order Entered as <input type="checkbox"/> Default <input type="checkbox"/> Stipulation <input type="checkbox"/> Trial/Hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary <input type="checkbox"/> No order
Date Order Entered:
Income Information Source <input type="checkbox"/> Affidavit <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly Wage <input type="checkbox"/> SSI (no income) <input type="checkbox"/> CSE 111 & 111P <input type="checkbox"/> Tax returns <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> New Hire <input type="checkbox"/> Imputed <input type="checkbox"/> Pay Stubs <input type="checkbox"/> Employment verification letter (EVL)

## Locate Checklist

<b>Website Type/Name- Phone, Address and More Searches</b>	<b>Web Address</b>	<b>Check Site?</b>	<b>Good Info?</b>
The Ultimates	<a href="http://www.theultimates.com">www.theultimates.com</a>		
Smart Pages	<a href="http://www.smartpages.com">www.smartpages.com</a>		
AT&T	<a href="http://www.att.com/directory">www.att.com/directory</a>		
Switchboard	<a href="http://www.switchboard.com">www.switchboard.com</a>		
Lycos	<a href="http://www.lycos.com">www.lycos.com</a>		
Freeality	<a href="http://www.freeality.com">www.freeality.com</a>		
Qwest Dex Online	<a href="http://www.dexonline.com">www.dexonline.com</a>		
Any Who	<a href="http://www.anywho.com">www.anywho.com</a>		
World Pages	<a href="http://www.worldpages.com">www.worldpages.com</a>		
Phone Book USA	<a href="http://www.phonebookusa.com">www.phonebookusa.com</a>		
Info Space	<a href="http://www.infospace.com/info.zip">www.infospace.com/info.zip</a>		
Super Pages	<a href="http://www.bigbook.com">www.bigbook.com</a>		
Verify address/zip	<a href="http://www.usps.com/zip4">www.usps.com/zip4</a>		
<b>Is NCP a Property Owner?</b>			
General Public Records	<a href="http://www.pac-info.com">www.pac-info.com</a>		
NETRonline	<a href="http://www.netronline.com">www.netronline.com</a>		
Public Record Sources	<a href="http://www.publicrecordsources.com">www.publicrecordsources.com</a>		
Natnl. Assn. of Counties	<a href="http://www.naco.org">www.naco.org</a>		
<b>Could NCP Be Deceased?</b>			
Ancestry.com	<a href="http://www.ancestry.com">www.ancestry.com</a>		
Soc. Security Death Index	<a href="http://www.ssdigenealogy.rootsweb.com">www.ssdigenealogy.rootsweb.com</a>		
Soc. Security Admin.	<a href="http://www.sssa.gov">www.sssa.gov</a>		
<b>Could NCP Be in Jail?</b>			
Federal Bureau of Prisons	<a href="http://www.bop.gov">www.bop.gov</a>		
Other State Prisons	<a href="http://www.adc.state.az.us/OTHERCOR.HTM">www.adc.state.az.us/OTHERCOR.HTM</a>		
Inmate Locator	<a href="http://oprestorerresearch.tripod.com/locator/htm">http://oprestorerresearch.tripod.com/locator/htm</a>		
<b>NCP Employed</b>	<b>Web Address</b>	<b>Check site?</b>	<b>Good info?</b>
The Work Number	<a href="http://www.theworknumber.com">www.theworknumber.com</a>		
<b>A Few More Websites</b>			
CO Marriages and Divorces	<a href="http://www.quickinfo.net/madi/comadi.html">www.quickinfo.net/madi/comadi.html</a>		
CO Sex Offenders	<a href="http://sor.state.co.us">http://sor.state.co.us</a>		
Other			
<b>Paid Websites</b>			
Accurint	<a href="http://www.accurint.com">www.accurint.com</a>		
Credit Report (social search only)	<a href="http://www.experian.com">www.experian.com</a>		
Court Quest	<a href="http://www.courtquest.com">www.courtquest.com</a>		
Other			

## Phone Contact with NCP

<b>Call 1-Placed/ Received</b> (Enter date)	<b>Call Outcome</b> Check all that apply	<b>Call Content</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">___/___/___</p> Who initiated call: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support Technician <input type="checkbox"/> NCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, conducted relationship building call for _____ minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled NFR <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court (lang) <input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain CSE process <input type="checkbox"/> Explain incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Explain enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Screen for employment or AV problems <input type="checkbox"/> Offer referrals <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)
<p style="text-align: center;">___/___/___</p> Who initiated call: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support Technician <input type="checkbox"/> NCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, conducted relationship building call for _____ minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled NFR <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court (lang) <input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain CSE process <input type="checkbox"/> Explain incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Explain enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Screen for employment or AV problems <input type="checkbox"/> Offer referrals <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)
<p style="text-align: center;">___/___/___</p> Who initiated call: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support Technician <input type="checkbox"/> NCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, conducted relationship building call for _____ minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled NFR <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court (lang) <input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain CSE process <input type="checkbox"/> Explain incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Explain enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Screen for employment or AV problems <input type="checkbox"/> Offer referrals <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)
<p style="text-align: center;">___/___/___</p> Who initiated call: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Support Technician <input type="checkbox"/> NCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, conducted relationship building call for _____ minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled NFR <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, scheduled for court (lang) <input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Explain CSE process <input type="checkbox"/> Explain incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Explain enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Screen for employment or AV problems <input type="checkbox"/> Offer referrals <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)

### In-Person Contact with NCP

Meeting Date-1	NCP Attend	Meeting outcome, check all that apply	CP Attend	Languages Spoken by Parents	Incentives	Referrals
____/____/____ 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Signed waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Stipulated to order <input type="checkbox"/> Referred for genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-contested <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-language <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for continuance <input type="checkbox"/> Excluded by genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Case Closed <input type="checkbox"/> NCP refused to cooperate <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> English only <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish only <input type="checkbox"/> Mix of English and Spanish	Total debt due at meeting: \$ Total debt waived at meeting: \$ Fees due at meeting: \$ Fees waived at meeting \$ Total retro due at meeting \$ Total retro agreed to at meeting \$	<input type="checkbox"/> To parenting time resources <input type="checkbox"/> Employment help <input type="checkbox"/> Other
____/____/____ 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Signed waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Stipulated to order <input type="checkbox"/> Referred for genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-contested <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-language <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for continuance <input type="checkbox"/> Excluded by genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Case Closed <input type="checkbox"/> NCP refused to cooperate <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> English only <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish only <input type="checkbox"/> Mix of English and Spanish	Total debt due at meeting: \$ Total debt waived at meeting: \$ Fees due at meeting: \$ Fees waived at meeting \$ Total retro due at meeting \$ Total retro agreed to at meeting \$	<input type="checkbox"/> To parenting time resources <input type="checkbox"/> Employment help <input type="checkbox"/> Other
____/____/____ 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Signed waiver <input type="checkbox"/> Stipulated to order <input type="checkbox"/> Referred for genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-contested <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to court-language <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for continuance <input type="checkbox"/> Excluded by genetic testing <input type="checkbox"/> Case Closed <input type="checkbox"/> NCP refused to cooperate <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> English only <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish only <input type="checkbox"/> Mix of English and Spanish	Total debt due at meeting: \$ Total debt waived at meeting: \$ Fees due at meeting: \$ Fees waived at meeting \$ Total retro due at meeting \$ Total retro agreed to at meeting \$	<input type="checkbox"/> To parenting time resources <input type="checkbox"/> Employment help <input type="checkbox"/> Other

## Phone Contact with CP

Call Attempt-1	Call Outcome Check all that apply	Did you get:
____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, gave CP information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP provided new information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP could not provide new information <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone number <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Address <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No new information on NCP provided by CP
____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, gave CP information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP provided new information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP could not provide new information <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone number <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Address <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No new information on NCP provided by CP
____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, gave CP information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP provided new information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP could not provide new information <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone number <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Address <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No new information on NCP provided by CP
____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> Busy or no answer <input type="checkbox"/> Left message <input type="checkbox"/> Bad number <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, gave CP information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP provided new information <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted, CP could not provide new information <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone number <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph <input type="checkbox"/> Address <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No new information on NCP provided by CP
Other Contact on this case		
Number of Contacts:	Contact received from:	What did you get:
	<input type="checkbox"/> NCP relative <input type="checkbox"/> CP relative <input type="checkbox"/> Parole officer <input type="checkbox"/> Probation officer <input type="checkbox"/> Child support worker (Colorado) <input type="checkbox"/> Child support worker (other state) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> New locate information <input type="checkbox"/> New child support case information <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____



# Colorado Default Evaluation

## Default NCP's 3 Month Follow-up Interview

NCP Name		Date defaulted:
SSN:	ACSES#:	Today's Date:
County:	1- Denver 2- Jefferson	Language: 1- English 2-Spanish

I am calling from the Center for Policy Research. We would like to find out how the child support agency can do a better job communicating with parents about their child support. Your name won't be used on any report and the child support agency won't know what you say. Is now a good time to ask about what happened when the child support agency was trying to set your child support order?

### First, let's talk about your contact with the child support agency.

Did any of the following happen to you when the agency was trying to set your child support order?

	Did you get this?			If yes, was it helpful?			
	Yes	No	Don't remember	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Don't know
Letters from the child support agency telling you that you may owe child support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A phone call from a worker telling you about child support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal papers about child support brought to your house by a process server	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A meeting with a worker to figure out what you owe in child support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A recorded telephone call reminding you to go to your child support meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The child support agency is trying to figure out the best way to reach parents and talk about child support and what they owe. What is the best way for them to reach you and explain your child support situation?

- 1- Letter by mail
- 2- Telephone call to my house
- 3- Face to face meeting at the child support agency
- 4- Legal papers brought to my house by a process server
- 5- Other\_\_\_\_\_

As you understand it...

	True	False	Don't Know
If your children get welfare you will have to pay the money back to the state	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is my job to make sure that child support is being paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your children get welfare the child support agency will try to collect money from you even if the mother doesn't ask for it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To collect child support the agency can take money out of your paycheck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To collect child support the agency cannot take your tax refund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you don't pay, the agency can take your driver's license	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you lose your job or the amount you earn changes you don't need to tell your worker right away	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can ask for your order to be changed if you lose or change your job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have to pay child support even if you don't get to see your children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You know what number to call at the child support agency if you have questions or your work situation changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

We would like to know why some people do not go to meetings with the child support agency. Our records show that you recently missed a meeting with the child support worker assigned to your case. Did you know about this meeting?

- Yes
- No

**If yes, are any of the following reasons why you didn't go?**

**Check all that apply**

- You forgot to go
- You didn't understand what it was about
- You had car or transportation problems
- You had to work
- You had other things going on that day
- You don't trust the child support agency
- Your friends told you not to go
- Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Did you try to reschedule the meeting?

- Yes
- No, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**B. The next questions are about your children.**

B1. How often do you see the children covered by your most recent child support order (the one you got about 3 months ago)?

- 1 -Not at all
- 2. Once or twice a year
- 3 - About every other month
- 4 - Once or twice a month
- 5 - About once a week
- 6 - Several times a week

B4. About how many miles do you live from your child/children? \_\_\_\_\_

B5. A parent sometimes has trouble seeing his child because of transportation or other problems. Do any of these make it difficult for you to see any of your children? (Can select more than one)

a. Lack of transportation	Yes	No
b. Distance or travel time involved	Yes	No
c. Other parent or guardian not wanting you to see them	Yes	No
d. Your work schedule	Yes	No
e. Not wanting to see your children until you feel more "together"	Yes	No
f. Children in Child Protection System, restrictions on visits	Yes	No
g. Other parent has left the state with child and can't be located	Yes	No
h. Mother says you are not the father	Yes	No
i. Child support problems	Yes	No
j. Child unwilling/unreceptive	Yes	No
k. Other _____	Yes	No

**C. The next questions are about your current employment**

C1. Which best describes your current employment situation?

- 1 - Employed full-time
- 2 - Employed part-time
- 3 - Work at pick-up, occasional, or temporary jobs
- 4 - Self-employed
- 5 - Not working

<b>C2. Employed full-time, part-time or self-employed</b>	<b>C2. Work at pick-up jobs or not working</b>
What kind of work is it? How long have you had this job? _____ months	Approximately how many weeks have you been without regular employment? _____ weeks
On average, how many hours do you work at this job per week? _____ hours	Have you been looking for work within the past 3-4 months: 1- Yes 2- No
Does this job provide (circle all that apply) 1 - Paid vacation 2 - Paid sick leave 3 - Medical coverage for yourself 4 - Medical coverage for your children 5 - None of the above	If you have looked for work, why do you think you haven't found work? (Check all that apply) 1 - Lack of GED or high school diploma 2 - Lack training, experience, skills 3 - No work available in your line 4 - Illness, disability, handicap 5 - Too difficult for an ex-offender to find a job 6 - Discrimination (age, race) 7 - Don't have transportation to get to places 8 - No good job leads or referrals 9 - Don't know 10 - Other _____
What is your usual wage before taxes and deductions? \$ _____ per <input type="checkbox"/> hour <input type="checkbox"/> day <input type="checkbox"/> week <input type="checkbox"/> monthly	
How well does this salary cover your financial needs? 1 - Very well 2 - Fairly well 3 - Not very well 4 - Not at all	
Have you tried to find a better paying job within the past 3-4 months? 1 - Yes, and you found one 2 - Yes, but you haven't found one 3 - No, haven't tried	

**D. The next questions are about your child support situation**

Do you know that you had a child support order established within the past 3-4 months?

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- Don't know

D1. Do you remember getting a telephone call reminding you to make your first child support payment?

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- Don't remember

If Yes, how helpful was this reminder call?

- 1- Very helpful
- 2- Somewhat helpful
- 3- Not very helpful
- 4- Not at all helpful
- 5- No opinion

D2. Since getting your child support order, have you talked to the Child Support Agency about your child support situation?

- 1 - No
- 2 - Don't know
- 3 - Yes -

If yes, how helpful was this?

- 1 - Very helpful
- 2 - Somewhat helpful
- 3 - Don't know
- 4- Not very helpful
- 5 - Not at all helpful

D3. How much are you supposed to pay each month in child support (total)? \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Don't Know

Is this amount a fair amount?

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- No opinion

D4. Do you owe past due support (arrears)?

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- Don't know

D5. If yes, how much do you estimate you owe in past due support (total)? \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Don't Know

Is this a fair amount?

- 1- Yes
- 2- No
- 3- No opinion

D6. Since getting your child support order, how much of what you were SUPPOSED to pay in child support, did you ACTUALLY pay (by percentage)? \_\_\_\_\_

(Use prompts if needed: nothing, less than 25%, less than 50%, more than 50%, all).

IF PAYING LESS THAN 100%, ask...

D6. There are lots of reasons why someone may not pay child support. I'm going to mention a few. Tell me if this was a reason why you did not pay all your child support. You can select more than one reason.

You don't have the money	Yes	No
Your child support order is too high	Yes	No
You have another family to support.....	Yes	No
You have some disagreements about visitation	Yes	No
You have some disagreements about how the child support is spent	Yes	No
The child support money you pay goes to the welfare department or the state, not directly to your children	Yes	No
The other parent doesn't need the money.....	Yes	No
The other parent has a new partner who can help support the children	Yes	No
You don't think the child is yours	Yes	No
You didn't want the child	Yes	No
Other _____	Yes	No

D8. In the past few months, have you given the following to any children not living with you, or their other parent?

- 1 - Gave money directly to the child or the other parent
- 2 - Made car payments, purchasing a car, or loaning your car
- 3 - Paid medical bills for them
- 4 - Made mortgage or rent payments for them
- 5 - Bought clothes, furniture, bikes, or other major items for them
- 6 - Bought diapers
- 7 - Paid day care costs
- 8 - Spent money on the children when you're with them
- 9 - Anything else? \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 - None of the above

## Wrap Up

Finally, we'd like to ask a few questions about your reactions to the child support agency and your worker...

E1. How would you rate the child support agency:

Before you got this child support order:

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor

Today:

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor

E4. What else would you like us to know about your experiences with the child support agency?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.  
END.**

# Colorado Default Grant Evaluation Child Support Data Collection Form

**A**

Site:  Denver county      Group:  Experimental Group  
 Jefferson county       Control Group

NCP Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Household#: \_\_\_\_\_

NCP and CP marital status:  Never married     Married       Can't determine

Number of children on the case: \_\_\_\_\_

Order/last modification establishment date: \_\_\_\_\_

Order/last modification effective date: \_\_\_\_\_

TANF status:  Current TANF       Former TANF       Never TANF

Interstate status:  Intrastate       Interstate, responding  
 Interstate, initiating       Direct/Interstate wage assign

Order status:  New order, child support only       Medicaid only       Existing order, new IV-D application  
 New order, paternity and child support       Foster care       Medical support only  
 Modification       Paternity and medical support only

Order established by:  Stipulation       Court       Can't determine  
 Default       No order

Amount to be paid in current support: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Weekly       Monthly  
 Bi-weekly       Other

Total arrears: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Check here if no arrears  
 Check here if no payment amount is specified

Amount to be paid toward arrears: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Weekly       Monthly       Not applicable  
 Bi-weekly       Other

## Payment Data on Sampled Case

**B**

**Payments in the 18 month time period following order establishment**      Time period \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ thru \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

	Current support due	Current support paid	Total payments (current and toward arrears)
Month 1:	\$	\$	\$
Month 2:	\$	\$	\$
Month 3:	\$	\$	\$
Month 4:	\$	\$	\$
Month 5:	\$	\$	\$
Month 6:	\$	\$	\$
Month 7:	\$	\$	\$
Month 8:	\$	\$	\$
Month 9:	\$	\$	\$
Month 10:	\$	\$	\$
Month 11:	\$	\$	\$
Month 12:	\$	\$	\$
Month 13:	\$	\$	\$
Month 14:	\$	\$	\$
Month 15:	\$	\$	\$
Month 16:	\$	\$	\$
Month 17:	\$	\$	\$
Month 18:	\$	\$	\$

**Summary of current support payments in the first 12 months after order establishment**

Time period \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ thru \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Total due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Arrears balance at end of year: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of current support payments in months 13-24 months after order establishment**

Time period \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ thru \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Total due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Arrears balance at end of year: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Enforcement Actions on Sample Case After Order Establishment**

	Any evidence of this <b>in the first 12 months</b> after order establishment?	Any evidence of this <b>at any time</b> after order establishment?
Wage withholding initiated?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Unemployment Insurance intercept?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Credit bureau reporting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
DLS action?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info <input type="checkbox"/> Already suspended	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info <input type="checkbox"/> Already suspended
Professional license suspension?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info <input type="checkbox"/> Already suspended	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info <input type="checkbox"/> Already suspended
Lottery intercept?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Worker's Comp intercept?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Bank or property lien or attachment?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Tax refund offset?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info
Contempt action?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info Contempt Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing held Date: ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Continued Contempt <input type="checkbox"/> Contempt with probation <input type="checkbox"/> Jailed <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot determine	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No info Contempt Outcome <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing held Date: ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Continued Contempt <input type="checkbox"/> Contempt with probation <input type="checkbox"/> Jailed <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot determine

**Status of sample case at data collection**

- Active enforcement case due to nonpayment
- Routine monitoring by enforcement, NCP paying
- Case closed, Reason:  CP requested closure  Long-term incarceration  Child emancipated, no arrears  
 Long-term non-locate  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary and Subsequent Action at Data Collection**

**Total cases in the system with this NCP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total arrears on these cases: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of these cases that were set by default:** \_\_\_\_\_

**At data collection was there a known employer?**  No  Yes

**At data collection was a wage assignment in place?**  No  Yes  Cannot determine

**Following order establishment/modification, was there a (subsequent) modification request filed?**

No  Yes

**If yes, status of request:**

Pending  Denied: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  Modification granted: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Locate status at data collection**

- NCP located  Verified employer name
- NCP not located  Verified NCP home address

**Additional Information About NCP**

**NCP Date of birth:** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Criminal Status**

Any evidence of incarceration?  
 No  
 Yes

Cannot determine  
 Check here if DOC database was not checked

Did the NCP ever show verified employment?

No  
 Yes  
 Cannot determine



**Arrears at order establishment:**

Total: \$  
State owed: \$  
CP owed: \$

**Date of first enforcement action on case:**

**Review and adjustment requested (modification)?**

1-Yes 2- NO

If yes, date of request: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who Requested?**

1- NCP2-CP 3-CSE

Any Payments Received  
**at any time**  
after order establishment?

Wage withholding	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No info
Unemployment Insurance intercept	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No info
Direct/Voluntary Payment	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No info
IRS Tax Intercept	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No info
Workers Comp	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No info

**CONTROL GROUP CASES ONLY**

**Income source used to establish order amount:**

- 1- Affidavit
- 2- CSE 111&111P
- 3- New Hire
- 4- Pay stubs
- 5- Quarterly wage
- 6- Tax returns
- 7- Imputed
- 8- Employment verification letter
- 9- SSI
- 10- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Service:**

1-Served 2-Signed Waiver