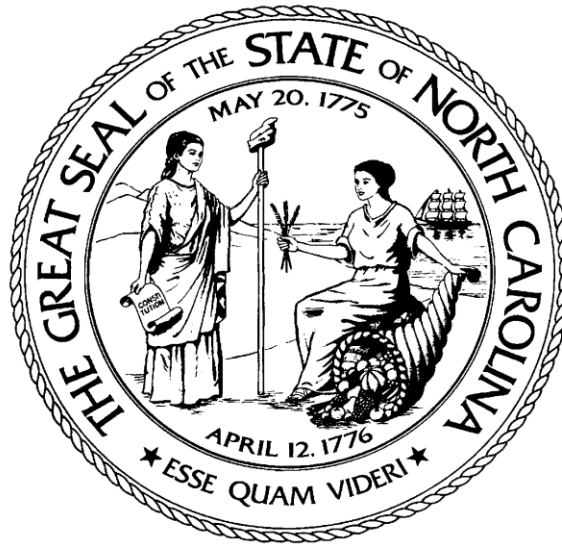


North Carolina Child Support Incentives – Proposed Plan
Session law 2015-241, SECTION 12C.7.(d)



Report to the
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human
and
The Fiscal Research Division

By

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

November 1, 2016

North Carolina Session Law 2015-241 requires the North Carolina Child Support (NCCSS) program to achieve four goals:

- retain up to fifteen percent of the federal earned incentives;
- review the incentives methodology;
- prepare the incentives guide; and
- submit a report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services and the Fiscal Research Division by November 1 of each year regarding the progress of the implementation plan.

NCCSS has accomplished the following:

- Fifteen percent of the federal earned incentives received from the annual federal award was withheld effective July 1, 2016.
- NCCSS developed an Incentives Guide, which includes the incentives performance methodology, incentive overview, suggested use of incentives and instructions for waivers. The child support incentive workgroup, comprised of county child support management has reviewed the information and does not recommend any modification to the logic for incentive calculations. Should the workgroup determine that a new methodology be produced, NCCSS will update counties regarding any modification used in calculating incentive payments, as well as any phase-in approach recommended.
- NCCSS developed policy, which includes the incentives overview and suggested use of incentives.
- NCCSS developed an annual plan for incentives and each county is required to submit its plan by August 1st of each year. This plan documents county reinvestment of federal incentive funding supporting the Child Support Program.

As described below, fifteen percent of the federal incentives will be reinvested in the Child Support Program. The child support technical enhancements will assist local child support agencies in increasing their performance and overall effectiveness.

NCCSS is collaborating with the DHHS Information Technology Division (ITD) to provide a description of technical needs, an analysis of options, proposed information technology solutions, timelines and cost, and how such initiatives will be prioritized and implemented. The State will continue to work with the incentive workgroup as enhancements are prioritized.

Year one (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017) will be spent initiating and planning for technology projects. As part of a planning year, the following will be completed:

- a multi-year project timeline for executing the enhancements over the next two years for the child support program;
- finalized documented functional and technical requirements and cost estimates for an enhanced child support systems environment; and
- implementation of new enhanced functionality to meet federal data reliability audit requirements.
- an online child support application process which will provide citizens a quick and secure means to obtain information and apply for services online. This online application will be received directly by the local child support office and will require the attachment of supporting documentation.

Moving forward into year two (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018), additional enhancements include:

- A document generation solution which will allow the local child support offices to more effectively and efficiently assemble, generate and deliver highly personalized documents that will better serve the judicial system.
- New enhanced functionality in the existing Automated Collection and Tracking System (ACTS).
- Implementation of enhanced locate tools that will assist with low performing cases and will enable staff to reserve time to work cases that require specialized intervention to collect support, resulting in parents meeting their obligations and increased collections.

The above referenced projects will be prioritized and implemented based on project expenditures and the availability of funds.

During the third year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), NCCSS anticipates that the following enhancements be implemented:

- A modernization of the child support website allowing better accessibility and convenience to improve child support compliance.
- A new online chat feature will be implemented on the child support website to complement its automated phone service.
- A mobile application that can be accessed with smartphones and other similar devices will be developed.
- Enhanced reporting tools to provide the ability to better view, evaluate, analyze, and diagnose a variety of child support case attributes. Improving these functions will provide staff with access to more robust information on which to base decisions and child support actions. These tools will also provide those same staff or managers with the ability to monitor the results of their decisions and allow for real time reports so that actions can be immediate. The objectives of such investments are increased collections and data reliability that allow the NCCSS program access to data analytics to help improve its performance and increased collections for families.

As federal regulations change and systems requirements are revised, the NCCSS will continue to evaluate the needs and enhancements for the child support program.