



Supporting California's Children

# Strategic Plan

2015–2019



Updated June 2015



## *Acknowledgements*

The California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of everyone who contributed to the Strategic Plan. Those deserving special recognition for their efforts:

Alisha A. Griffin	Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Susan Turek	Interim Chief Deputy Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Kathleen Hrepich	Chief Counsel, California Department of Child Support Services
Mary Ann Miller	Assistant Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Vickie Contreras	Deputy Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Robert Jones	Deputy Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Cheryl Stewart	Assistant Director, California Department of Child Support Services
Anne Drumm	Assistant Director, California Department of Child Support Services
George Chance	Regional Administrator, California Department of Child Support Services
Lesley Bell	Regional Administrator, California Department of Child Support Services
Mary Lawrence-Jones	Regional Administrator, California Department of Child Support Services
Elise Wing	Region IX Program Manager, Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement
Michael Wright	Supervising Attorney, Judicial Council of California
Debbie Walton	Director, Mariposa County Dept. of Child Support Services
Tex Ritter	Director, Sierra Nevada Regional Department of Child Support Services
Stephen H. Kennedy	Director, Monterey County Department of Child Support Services
Carrie Topliffe	Director, Santa Barbara County Department of Child Support Services
Barbi Brokhoff	Director, Kings County Department of Child Support Services
Matt Brega	Director, Alameda County Department of Child Support Services
Phyllis Nance	Director, Kern County Department of Child Support Services
Steven Eldred	Director, Orange County Department of Child Support Services
Adele Hendrickson	Executive Director, Central Sierra Child Support Agency
David Oppenheim	Executive Director, Child Support Directors Association



## *Director's Message*

California's child support program has an important role to play in supporting the economic security, health, and social well-being of children of our state. I am delighted to join the California child support community and be an integral part of developing our new five year Strategic Plan.

The needs of families all across California and throughout the world have changed and are continuing to change at a rapid pace and this requires the child support program to keep pace with these changes, reassessing our service delivery and resources. Over the past decade, child support programs have developed a range of innovative strategies designed to engage both parents and intervene early to help parents meet their responsibility and appropriately obtain reliable support for families. In California, our local and statewide efforts included strategies that have contributed to measurable improvements in program performance, while providing real and timely help to parents struggling to support their families. Our new Strategic Plan builds on those successes.

Supporting California children by strengthening parental responsibilities is an overarching theme embedded throughout the new Strategic Plan. This focus ensures that child support is not merely something we collect, but something on which children and families can rely — increased reliability of child support payments to families and decreased amount of unpaid child support. This plan is the product of the collaboration of state and local child support professionals, and stakeholders to achieve a common vision for our future — that children can rely on their parents for the financial, emotional, and medical support they need to be healthy and successful.

The new Strategic Plan also emphasizes excellent and consistent customer service statewide. Those goals cannot be achieved without strengthening existing partnerships and building bridges to new collaborations within government and with external stakeholders. The delivery of child support services (local practices) in terms of timeliness, uniformity, cultural appropriateness, and safeguarding of confidential information will be assessed through the lens of our customers. Specific strategies outlined in this plan include measuring and evaluating customer satisfaction for continuous program improvement as well as identifying key program data elements that will guide the timely review and analysis on the effectiveness of local service delivery.

Over the next five years, together with our partners, stakeholders, and families; our focus will be on improving the outcomes for children, which comes from the certainty that they can count on their parents for support.

Alisha A. Griffin  
Director, California Department of Child Support Services

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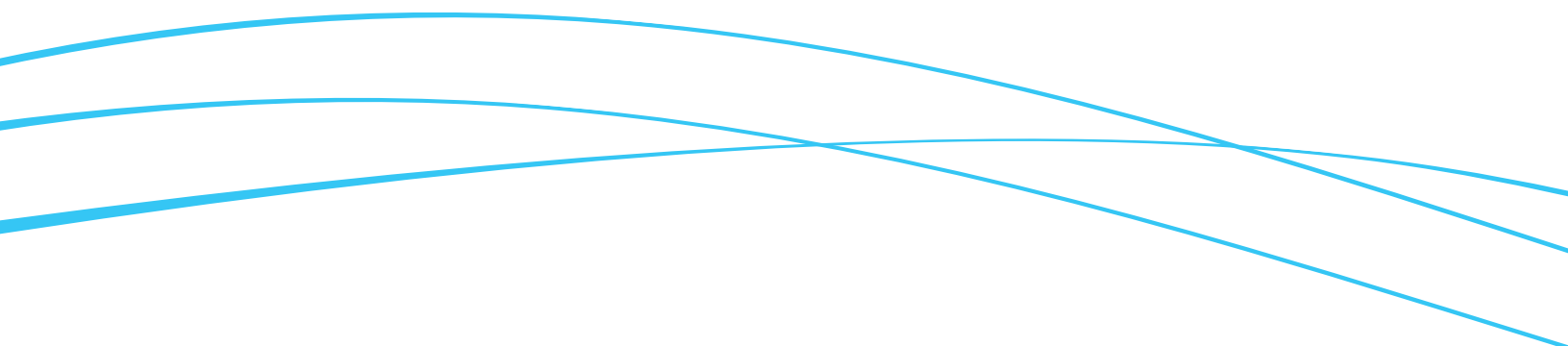
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# Goals

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# Mission Statement

*Promote parental responsibility to enhance the well-being of children by providing child support services to establish parentage and collect child support.*

# Vision Statement

*All parents are engaged in supporting their children.*

## We Value . . .

*Children and Families*

*Customer Service Excellence*

*Operational Excellence and Innovation*

*Collaboration and Cooperation*

*Integrity, Fairness and Respect*

*Professional and Ethical Conduct*

*A Skilled and Knowledgeable Workforce*

# *Goal 1 Increase support for California children*



## Objective 1: *Ensure that families who need child support services receive them*

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### Targets:

1. Increase the number of applications received for child support by 10% within five years.
2. Implement an interactive on-line application form for customers requesting child support services.

### Strategies

- a. Increase accessibility to information and services.
- b. Expand public awareness of child support services.

## Objective 2: *Increase the reliability of child support payments to families and decrease the amount of unpaid child support*

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### Targets:

1. Increase total collections by 2% each year.
2. Increase the percentage of families receiving full child support payments every month from 22% to 32% within five years.
3. Increase the percentage of families that receive at least 75% of the child support payment due each month from 48% to 58% within five years.
4. Decrease the percentage of families who are owed child support and do not receive a payment in the year from 26% to 20% within five years.
5. Increase the percentage of consent orders established from 24% to 40% within five years.

### Strategies

- a. Proactively manage cases.
- b. Analyze and use data to increase collections.
- c. Establish timely and appropriate orders.
- d. Maximize and expand automated processes.
- e. Develop additional methods to assist parents to meet their obligations.
- f. Increase consent orders.

# Goal 2 *Deliver excellent and consistent customer services statewide*

## Objective 1: *Communicate who we are and what we do*

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### Targets:

1. Develop and implement a statewide public awareness plan to promote the services offered by the Child Support Program.
2. Expand electronic outreach and communication to child support customers.

### Strategies

- a. Expand public awareness of child support services.
- b. Educate our customers and partners on the child support program.
- c. Enhance and promote effective communication methods.

## Objective 2: *Address the evolving and diverse needs of our customers*

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### Targets:

1. Ensure access to child support information for all customers with priority to the most commonly spoken languages in California.

### Strategies

- a. Provide services in a culturally sensitive manner.
- b. Communicate in various languages to meet customer needs.





# Goal 2 ... continued ....

## Objective 3: *Ensure our customers receive consistent and uniform services throughout California*

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### Targets:

1. Successfully pass federal and state program and fiscal compliance audits every year.
2. Implement a standard, statewide customer satisfaction survey and increase customer satisfaction by 10 percentage points each year.
3. Develop a state program compliance assessment plan to ensure that operational standards are met by all LCSAs.

### Strategies

- a. Define and improve quality product and service standards and expectations.
- b. Train staff in customer service.
- c. Measure and evaluate customer satisfaction for continuous improvement.
- d. Develop efficient and uniform business processes and practices statewide.

## Objective 4: *Ensure the security and safeguarding of confidential information to maintain a high level of customer confidence*

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### Targets:

1. Successfully pass the DCSS Information Security Office and the federal Internal Revenue Service audits at the state and LCSA levels every year.
2. Identify and implement security enhancements in the child support system and supplemental systems to continue to guard against system incursions and fraud.

### Strategies

- a. Proactively secure information and data from threats and vulnerabilities.
- b. Reinforce our culture of confidentiality and information security.



# Goal 3 *Enhance program performance and sustainability*

## Objective 1: *Improve on program outcomes and federal performance measures*

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### Targets:

1. Reduce the average number of days from case opening to establishing a support order from 195 days to 110 within five years.
2. Increase the percentage of new cases with an order that receive a child support payment within 60 days of case opening from 38% to 47%.
3. Increase the percentage of families who receive at least a partial payment every month from 40% to 48%.
4. Increase the cost effectiveness of the program from \$2.43 to \$3.00 within five years.
5. Develop long-range DCSS and LCSA financial plans.

### Strategies

- a. Set annual goals and explore methods to improve program performance.
- b. Produce accurate, timely reports to monitor performance.
- c. Leverage resources to be more cost effective.
- d. Evaluate and expand efficiencies in operations statewide.

## Objective 2: *Assure that we are a professional, diverse and skilled workforce*

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### Targets:

1. Develop and implement an effective employee recognition program.
2. Implement a targeted recruitment plan to fill critical departmental vacancies and continuously measure its effectiveness.
3. Develop and implement an employee satisfaction survey and show an increase in satisfaction ratings every year.
4. Develop a statewide Centers of Excellence in Training program that will have DCSS and specific LCSAs specialize in training for certain components of the Child Support Program.



## Strategies

- a. Recruit, develop and retain a quality workforce.
- b. Develop innovative, empowered and collaborative employees.
- c. Provide opportunities for knowledge transfer and leadership development.

# Goal 4 *Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships*



## Objective 1: *Partner to improve the lives of children*

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### Targets:

1. Meet quarterly with key state partners to discuss and implement agreed-upon goals.

### Strategies

- a. Ensure planning includes strategic partners at the earliest opportunity.
- b. Cultivate programmatic understanding amongst strategic partners.
- c. Work to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

## Objective 2: *Strengthen the partnership with the Judicial Branch*

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### Targets:

1. Ensure that the disposition of court cases meets federal timeframe standards every year.
2. Work with the Judicial Council of California and county courts to enable all county courts to accept all child support legal documents electronically.
3. Ensure that all child support orders that are required to be registered in the State Case Registry system are registered in that system.

### Strategies

- a. Maximize the effective utilization of court services.
- b. Utilize technology to streamline the exchange of information and legal documents.
- c. Collaborate to achieve quality customer service outcomes.

# Goal 4 ... continued ....

## Objective 3: *Partner with employers to meet the needs of families*

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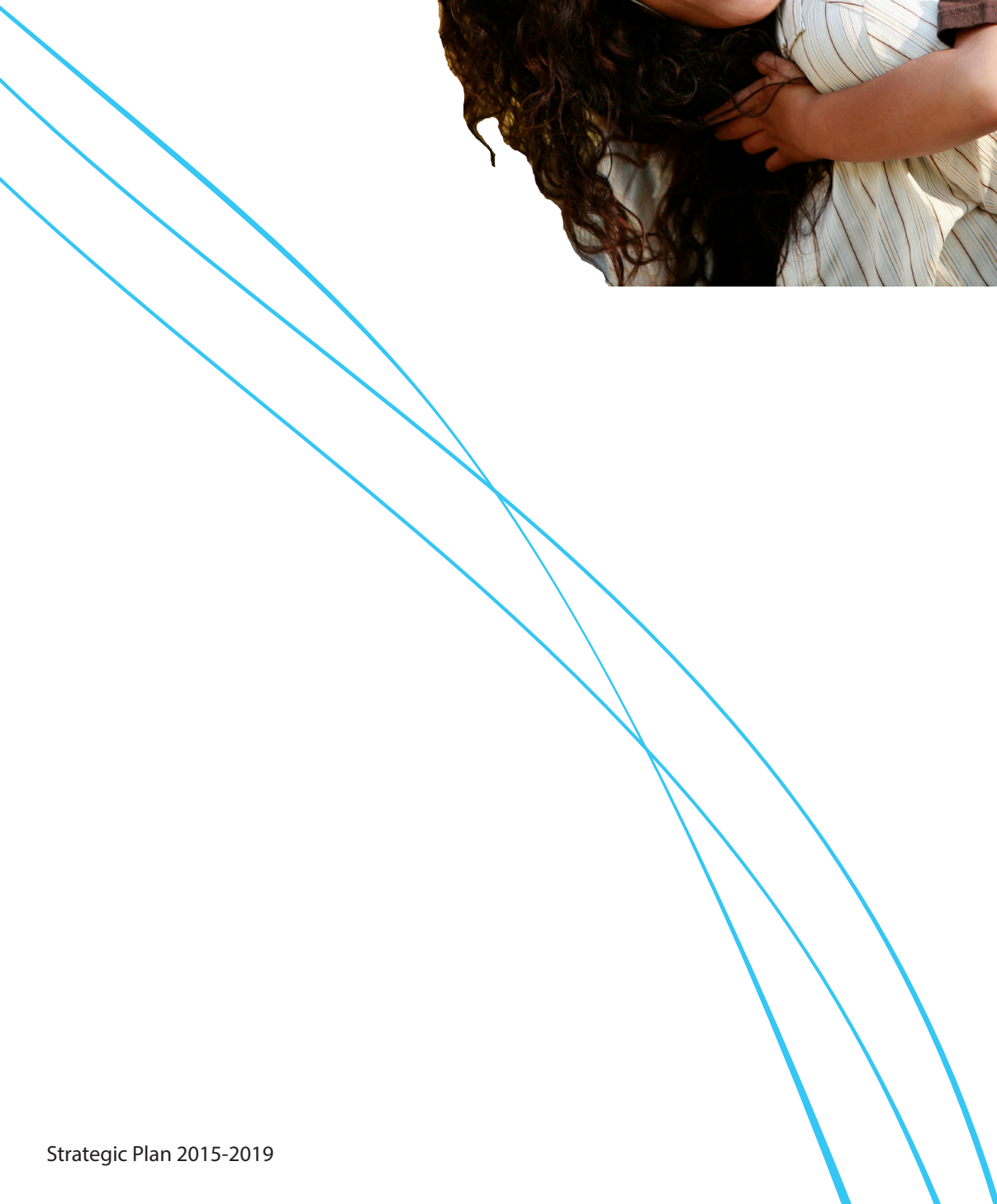
### Targets:

1. Increase collections from income withholding by 15% within 5 years.
2. Increase the percentage of collections that come from income withholding from 67% to 80% within five years.
3. Increase the amount of child support collected from employer lump sum payments by 10% within five years.
4. Increase the number of employers receiving income withholding orders electronically by 25% within five years.
5. Further develop electronic communication pathways with our employer community to improve the accuracy of our employer data and increase electronic data exchanges with employers.

### Strategies

- a. Utilize technology to streamline the exchange of information with employers.
- b. Expand education and outreach to employers.
- c. Effectively meet customer service needs of employers.





# Goal 5 *Be innovative in meeting the needs of families*

## Objective 1: *Use technology to improve the delivery of program services*

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### Targets:

1. Modernize the child support automation system in order to improve program services, reduce maintenance time and costs, ensure ease of system management and flexibility, and enhance security.
2. File liens to collect child support electronically with the five largest financial institutions within five years.
3. Build a data analytics capacity to measure child support performance and analyze business practices.
4. Expand electronic communications with child support customers to enable the department to share information with them more quickly and allow them to more easily access child support information.

### Strategies

- a. Adopt technology solutions to maintain an efficient technology platform.
- b. Identify new technologies and evaluate opportunities to enhance delivery and accessibility of program services.
- c. Implement new and improved business processes and practices.

## Objective 2: *Ensure that policies, procedures and laws meet the needs of families*

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### Targets:

1. Implement changes to child support systems and practices to reflect the changes in the new amendments of the federal Uniform Interstate Family Support Act that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of interstate, international, and tribal case processing.
2. Implement procedural, regulatory and system changes to the Child Support Program to accommodate contemporary family structures.

### Strategies

- a. Identify changing family structures and address the impacts on the child support program.
- b. Pursue opportunities to strengthen, update and align child support laws, regulations, policies and procedures.





**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**  
*Governor, State of California*

**Diana S. Dooley**  
*Secretary, California Health  
and Human Services Agency*

**Alisha A. Griffin**  
*Director, California  
Department of Child  
Support Services*

**California Department  
of Child Support Services**

P.O. Box 419064  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

Toll-free (866) 901-3212  
TTY Toll-free (866) 399-4096

[www.childsup.ca.gov](http://www.childsup.ca.gov)

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