

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

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



December 21, 2011

CSS LETTER: 11-14

ALL IV-D DIRECTORS
 ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
 ALL BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: ADJUSTING CHARGING INSTRUCTIONS AT CASE CLOSURE

The purpose of this letter is to provide policy direction to local child support agencies (LCSAs) regarding when and how far back charging instructions may be adjusted in the event a case is not closed timely. This direction is being given to ensure the policy is applied consistently and accurately throughout the state.

Case closure is an integral component of the federally mandated state Data Reliability Audit (DRA). The Department of Child Support Services must be able to defend any account adjustments and provide complete and reliable data in a DRA.

Effective October 1, 2011, LCSAs must choose from one of the following account adjustment options when a case was not closed timely:

- End date charging instructions effective the last day of the current month.
- End date charging instructions effective the last day of the month of the qualifying closure event, only if the 60-day notice of intent to close was not required.

The only qualifying closure reasons that allow the charging instructions be end dated back to the date of the closure event are:

- Locate Only
- Recipient Requests Closure
- Good Cause Granted
- Opened in Error

For example, if a case is eligible for closure under "Recipient Request Closure" and the custodial party requested case closure on March 25, 2011, but the case worker did not act on the request until April 5, 2011, the charging instructions may be end dated effective March 31, 2011.

<u>Reason for this Transmittal</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> State Law or Regulation Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Law or Regulation Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Court Order or Settlement Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Clarification requested by One or More Counties
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiated by DCSS

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A complete list of account adjustment rules are available in the "Creating and Updating Case Accounts" Quick Reference Guide (QRG). Additional case closure details can be found in the Case Closure Tool. Both resources are located at California Child Support Central.

If a case is reopened after charging instructions were adjusted at case closure, the LCSA must follow current procedures described in the "Opening a IV-D Case" and "Creating and Updating Case Accounts" QRGs, conduct an audit and reinstate balances as appropriate. To ensure a defensible audit trail for the DRA, LCSAs must clearly document any adjustments to charging instructions in the case activity log.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Cindi Pocaroba at (916) 464-5883.

Sincerely,

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KAREN ECHEVERRIA
Acting Deputy Director
Child Support Services Division