



## Prosecuting Attorney - Child Support 00100.842.

### Mission Statement

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Seek the Just Result

### Function

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The Family Support Division represents the Division of Child Support (DCS) of the State of Washington. The Family Support Division carries out judicial establishment of paternity and child support, enforcements for failure to pay court-ordered child support, and modifications to existing child support orders. The Family Support Division also represents the State of Washington in collection actions on parents owing a duty of child support.

### Trends/Events

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- In February of 2021, RCW 26.09.320 required all child support orders, past and future, to contain language ordering abatement of child support obligations for individuals serving long term (six months or more) incarceration. WAPA-SEP developed language to be added to Child Support Orders and the Clallam County Family Support division elected to address this issue by filing a Motion to Amend Order of Support. The State is sending us cases with judicial orders which need this process expedited due to current or impending long term incarceration of the non-custodial parent. We are also reaching out to the local defense bar, giving them the option to notify our office if they have a client in this position.
- In 2020, the state instituted higher confidentiality and protection of private information requirements for all Family Support offices handling DCS Title IV D work. The updated contract that Clallam County has entered with the state will require additional security protocols to the Family Support Division which have been instituted. These include locking offices, locking file storage, clear desk / computer screen policies, updated purge procedures, visitor verification and office entry/exit logs, and employee reminders regarding dissemination of personal tax information. The Family Support Division continues to implement these policies and address any new confidentiality concerns raised by the State as we are made aware of them. In May of 2022, The Family Support Division created office policy around security procedures. POLICY 200, Family Support Division Security and Confidentiality Policy and Procedures, outlines the department's security procedures in line with State and Federal mandates and best practices.

- Many changes continue to be made to the pattern forms for Washington State Family Law cases. While WAPA-SEP has been able to keep up with some of these changes, others have been less timely. The Clallam County Family Support Division is working to maintain current forms to the extent possible using both the SEMS merge files from WAPA-SEP and seeking out updated pattern forms from the State Courts website.

Clallam County Superior Court has shifted the Family Support / Contempt docket from 4 days per month to 2 days per month. This has caused a consolidation of the case load for hearings. In an effort to keep the calendar to no more than 30 cases, we have re-designed our contempt diversion program to a pre-file model. The goals are 1. to identify cases that can be efficiently addressed through diversion and return them to the State without filing a contempt action once regular payments are established, 2. identify cases that should not be filed as contempt actions due to disability or financial hardship, 3. identify cases where we cannot locate the individual for service and return those cases to the State before filing a contempt action, and 4. proceed to file contempt actions and obtain orders re contempt in cases that are not suitable for diversion.

The Family Support Division continues to work collaboratively with the Dependency Court through the Finding Fathers program. This has allowed us to identify cases and locate parties that will eventually work their way to our office for the establishment of parentage and entry of a child support order. We are in the courtroom to provide genetic testing sample collection. We are also able to alert the court to any parentage cases running concurrent to the dependency. This has allowed us to locate several individuals who are necessary for our cases to move forward.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 shutdowns, virtually all LabCorp genetic testing collection sites, including those associated with the County Prosecutors' Family Support Divisions, ceased operations due to being closed to the public. After some consideration and due to our unique office design, the Clallam County Family Support Division began to provide this service on an appointment only basis with masks, a Plexiglas window between our office and our lobby, enhanced cleaning protocol and social distancing. Many families from outside of Clallam County were referred to our office for genetic testing collection services. The Clallam County Family Support Division continued to provide genetic testing collection for out of county families, as well as Clallam County families, through May of 2022.

## Goals

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- We are continuing to envision and expand our contempt for failure to pay child support diversion program. It is our intention to improve reach (retention) and outcomes (consistent payment / wage withholding) of cases in the program through more extensive follow-up and resource referrals with our pre-file diversion program.
- Obtain webcams and audio technology for full participation in virtual meetings and webinars.

Re-evaluate compensation for all positions to ensure the office remains competitive in the labor market.

- We are working to update technology within the division to include separation between state and county functions and data.

- We are working to restore our monthly Family Support visits to Forks to provide paternity interviews and genetic testing services for families living in the west end of the county.

## Challenges

- COVID-19 restrictions continue to slow our progress on goals for Contempt cases. While the court has resumed issuing bench warrants for failure to appear, these cases do not involve criminal behavior or threats to public safety. The jail is still limiting the number of inmates. Child support warrants are rarely served (unless there are additional crimes to be addressed) and respondents are often released by the jail with a court date, to maintain room for serious offenders. While the bench warrants have reduced the case load addressed by the court each month, they have essentially put these cases on indefinite hold. We are continuing to work with defense counsel to re-engage these individuals and quash warrants.
- Addressing technology needs continue to be a challenge, as both the county and state IT departments need to coordinate for upgrades and repairs.

## Workload Indicators

	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual
Support Enforcement Cases (July - June)	101	87	49
Contempts	28	10	20
Modifications	17	16	6
Paternity	50	37	19
Other	6	24	4
Total Hearings	386	246	173

## Grant Funding Sources

1. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
2. Department of Health and Human Services (Federal)

## Revenues

	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual	2023 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	300,486	306,066	150,813	317,000
Charges for Goods and Services	0	0	0	0
Fines and Forfeits	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	0	0	0	0
General Tax Support	-20,129	-11,899	-1,764	8,699
Total	280,357	294,167	149,049	325,699

## Expenditures

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	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	6/30/22 Actual	2023 Budget
Salaries and Wages	170,187	178,860	92,139	198,698
Personnel Benefits	77,714	80,219	40,382	87,531
Supplies	3,173	4,318	1,021	3,100
Other Services and Charges	29,283	30,770	15,507	14,270
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	0	0	0	0
Debt Service: Principal	0	0	0	22,100
Interfund Payments for Services	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	280,357	294,167	149,049	325,699

## Staffing

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	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Full Time Equivalent	2.90	2.53	2.53	2.53