



## 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 are still being 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.
- 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 worked on ways to keep more cases active in the diversion program; moved to noting up Show Cause Hearings more quickly without providing extended continuances for minimal showings of compliance; and shifted as many cases as possible onto an every other month court appearance. A number of respondents have claimed they are unable to work due to COVID-19 related issues. This has slowed our ability to fast track non-compliant cases to a Show Cause Hearing.

The Family Support Division has begun working 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. As of July 2021, we have learned that Clallam County Family Support Division is one of the only places providing sample collection services in Western Washington. Labcorp and the Department of Child Support are currently referring parties to our office for appointments for the service. We have also returned to our monthly visits to DSHS Forks Office and are providing the service, by appointment, there as well. COVID-19 safety protocols remain in place.

Due to a recent safety scare for the division, a panic button system has been installed in the Family Support Office (at the expense of the department). This has been an ongoing request for the last 10 years and the team at the office is very appreciative of this improvement.

## 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.
- WAPA-SEP has offered increased virtual training opportunities. The Family Support Division continues to review these offerings and participate in those that will fill training needs within the department.

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.

## 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 currently working 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

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	6/30/21 Actual
Support Enforcement Cases (July - June)	105	101	52
Contempts	40	28	6
Modifications	21	17	10
Paternity	39	50	21
Other	5	6	15
Total Hearings	430	386	148

## Grant Funding Sources

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

## Revenues

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	6/30/21 Actual	2022 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	230,225	300,486	153,713	270,000
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	41,252	-20,129	-9,223	46,580
Total	271,477	280,357	144,490	316,580

## Expenditures

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	6/30/21 Actual	2022 Budget
Salaries and Wages	165,524	170,187	88,645	185,657
Personnel Benefits	72,444	77,714	40,682	81,453
Supplies	993	3,173	1,034	3,800
Other Services and Charges	32,516	29,283	14,129	35,670
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	0	0	0	10,000
Interfund Payments for Services	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	271,477	280,357	144,490	316,580

## Staffing

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	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	2021 Budget	2022 Budget
Full Time Equivalent	2.90	2.90	2.53	2.53