

**CSAC 2017 Challenge Award Nomination**  
**Executive Summary:**  
**Child Support Collections for Multiple Small Counties**

**Overview:** The North Coast Department of Child Support Services (NDCCSS) provides specialized child enforcement services to other small California counties to maximize child support collections from workers compensation payments. The hub of operations of NDCCSS is Humboldt County.

**Challenge:** How to maximize the opportunity to collect child support for parents when the other parent is receiving workers compensation. Workers compensation accounts for a small percentage of child support collections in comparison to other means, such as income withholding orders from employers. As a result many collection opportunities are lost as staff have not developed expertise in this area since the number of cases subject to workers comp collections is relatively small. How then can small counties in California that do not have the opportunity to develop expertise in the regulations and procedures surrounding workers compensation, maximize their ability to collect child support from workers compensation payments?

**Innovative Solution:** The NDCCSS employs a staff member who has developed expertise in workers compensation collection cases. She has had experience with workers compensation both from a child support case management perspective as well as personal dealings when her husband received workers comp and she helped him navigate the system. Over time this employee has developed relationships with colleagues in various agencies that has helped her to learn the ins and outs of the Workers Compensation world, including insurance carriers, Department of Industrial Relations as well as Workers Compensation Appeals Board. Her knowledge has broadened NDCCSS's ability to collect on particularly difficult cases.

Approximately one and one-half years ago, NDCCSS reached out to other small county child support departments in California to offer our expertise in collecting child support in these cases as time after time, the opportunity to collect child support for families in need is lost in these cases. Currently, NDCCSS is collecting child support from workers compensation cases for families in the following small California counties: Yolo, Lake, Mendocino, Lassen, Colusa, Siskiyou, Modoc, Sierra, Nevada, Plumas, Mariposa, Solano as well as Humboldt and Trinity (NDCCSS).

**Originality:** This program is funded out of the operating budget from Humboldt County Department of Child Support Services; no additional funds are expended.

**Budget:** This program is funded out of the operating budget from Humboldt County Department of Child Support Services; no additional funds are expended.

**Results:** Collections on these cases are not often immediate; some do not come to fruition for years when cases are settled. However, increases in child support collections have already been actualized in several counties including Yolo, Lake, and Colusa. The use of additional tools and expertise to collect child support that these and other counties were unfamiliar with, are expected to continue to net additional opportunities to get child support to families who need it and would otherwise go without, in multiple small rural California counties. This project is lauded at State Department of Child Support Services as a way to leverage expertise to optimize the child support that goes out to the families who need it.

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