

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET



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DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES
Department of Health and Social Services
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Virtual, conducted via Zoom

Comments available online at <https://dhss.delaware.gov/>

Good Afternoon Representative Carson, Senator Paradee, members of the Joint Finance Committee and members of the public.

I am Ted Mermigos, and I have the pleasure of serving as Director of the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS). Joining me today is Julie Shahan, the Division's Deputy Director and Heather Morton, our Division's Chief of Administration.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, present our accomplishments and the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Governor's Recommended Budget.

DIVISION OVERVIEW

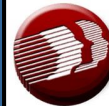
Collect, distribute, disburse and account for child support collections from non-custodial parents to families in Delaware and across the country

Locate non-custodial parents

Establish paternity for children born out-of-wedlock

Establish and modify financial and medical court orders

Respond to inquiries from the public, state and federal partners



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At the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS), we are actively working 77,000 Child Support cases.

Our mission at the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) is to deliver quality customer support by partnering with parents to improve the lives of children and their families. This is achieved through obtaining accurate child support orders to meet financial, medical and emotional needs to promote family self-sufficiency and the best outcome for children.

Each of our core functions listed above represents a discrete, yet interrelated process which must be completed to achieve success in securing financial support for families.

COLLECTIONS AND PAYMENTS

Source of Payments

Payment Types	FY 2018 %	FY 2019%	FY 2020%
Electronic	65%	66%	68%
Business Checks	27%	27%	22%
Personal Payment	5%	5%	4%
Other	3%	2%	6%
Total:	100%	100%	100%



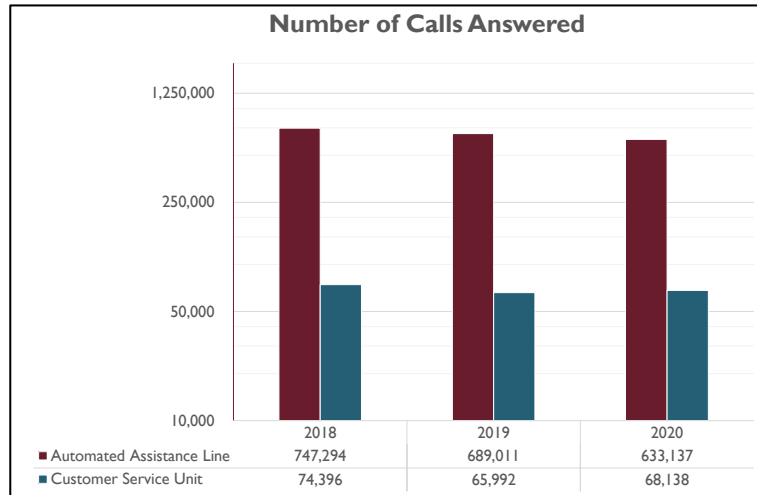
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In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, DCSS collected \$97 million dollars, which represents an increase in \$10 million dollars from FY 2019. And, our second consecutive year with an increase in collections since FY 2018.

Although many Delawareans suffered job losses in 2020, DCSS experienced an increase in collections. We attribute the increase to our automated interface with the Department of Labor's, Division of Unemployment Compensation, as well as the interception of Economic Impact Payments (EIP) as part of the CARES Act. These **two** special collections opportunities allowed DCSS to distribute an additional approximate amount of \$11 million dollars to children and their families in FY 2020.

In FY 2021, our goal is to maintain a similar collection level, as we are always striving to increase collections to assist the families of Delaware. We are continuously exploring new ways to provide easy, safe and reliable payment options.

CUSTOMER SERVICE UNIT CALLS



In 2020, DCSS's Customer Service Unit received approximately 633,000 calls to the Automated Assistance Line (AAL). The AAL is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for individuals calling about case status and payment information. For complex questions Child Support Specialists are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

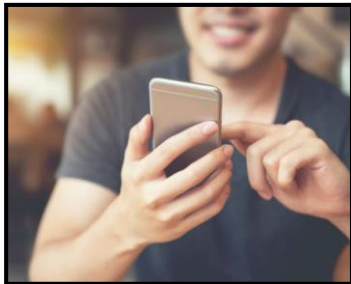
In 2020, DCSS Child Support Specialists answered 68,000 telephone calls, an increase over 2019.

The Division of Child Support Services is always looking for ways to improve communication with our customers. In addition to our Customer Service Unit, DCSS has a robust Customer Website for communicating with our custodial and non-custodial parents, as well as social media sites.



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LOOKING AHEAD



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I am happy to inform you that the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) will be launching our Proactive Customer Notification (PCN) system in Spring 2021. This communication tool will allow DCSS to communicate with our customers the way most people choose to communicate today, which is largely by text messaging and email. This new system provides automated notifications using mobile platforms regarding key actions such as court date reminders, payment due dates, or when a payment has been logged and distributed. Notifications are sent based on customer specified events and time frames received from the Delaware Child Support System.

We know that once implemented, the PCN will minimize customer-initiated contact while keeping pace with modern technology. DCSS is working to be proactive in providing information versus customers having the need to contact the agency for case details.

FY 2022 GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

FY 2021 Governor's Recommended Budget (\$ in thousands)

	GF	ASF	NSF	Total
FTEs	55.0	2.5	128.6	186.1
Dollars (\$)	\$5,636.6	\$1,263.4	\$26,434.7	\$33,216.8

Budget Definitions:

GF – General Funds
 ASF – Appropriated Special Funds
 NSF – Non-Appropriated Special Funds
 FTEs – Full Time Equivalent Positions



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NOTE: Dollars may not add due to rounding

The slide above shows DSSC's budget included in the FY 2022 Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB).

Our Division's GRB is:

- \$5,587.8 [Five Million, Five Hundred Eighty-Seven Thousand, Eight Hundred dollars] in General Funds (GF)
- \$1,263.4 [One Million, Two Hundred, Sixty-Three Thousand, Four Hundred dollars] in Appropriated Special Fund (ASF) Spending Authority; and
- \$26,434.7 [Twenty-Six Million, Four Hundred, Thirty-Four Thousand, Seven Hundred dollars] in Non-Appropriated Special Funds (NSF).



THANK YOU

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Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share some of our Division's accomplishments and vision for the next year.

I am happy to answer any questions.