

Minnesota's Employer Table

One of the hard lessons learned by many States in implementing an automated child support enforcement system is that of keeping track of employers and their addresses, as well as the ongoing maintenance of this information. Because companies are so decentralized in this day of computers and telecommunications, finding the address of the office that should receive the appropriate child support documents can be, to say the least, frustrating. Most large corporations have a national corporate office. However, this is usually not the same location where the non-custodial parent actually works. Another location may handle all income withholding orders, while yet another office deals with employment verification requests, employee benefits, and other locate correspondence. Legal service of process might be handled by a legal office at yet a different address, and a private payroll company may produce the actual child support checks. All totaled, this could result in six separate addresses for one corporate employer. How, then, does a child support worker manage to pick the correct address to send the appropriate child support paperwork? The State of Minnesota has developed one solution to this dilemma.

In October 1998, Minnesota initiated a massive clean-up of its employer table. This effort resulted in modifications to its automated child support enforcement system, PRISM. These changes allow the system to store up to six different record types for each employer to hold all of the various addresses and other pieces of information about each employer in its system.

PRISM uses the following six record types to hold information about one employer:

<i>Record Type</i>	<i>Address Information Contained in Record</i>
01 Record	Corporate office address information
02 Record	Work site/branch address information
03 Record	Address to which income withholding orders are mailed
04 Record	Address from which payments/checks are received
05 Record	Address to which employment verifications are mailed
06 Record	Address to which legal service of process is mailed

Only One of each of the record types may exist for each employer. The exception, of course, is the 02 Record. There may be multiple 02 Records for each employer, each associated with a unique work site or branch office for the employer.

These record types may be viewed through several different screens, including the Employer Detail (EMPD), Employer Detail List (EMDL), Noncustodial Parent Income Detail (NCID), and Custodial Parent Income Detail (CPID) screens. The Employer Detail List screen displays detailed information on an employer and all of the record types that exist on PRISM for that employer. An example of the Employer Detail List screen for the employer "Target Corp" is shown below. Notice the corporate headquarters, the three work sites, the income withholding address record, and the verification location record.

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07/31/99                      EMPLOYER DETAIL LIST                      10:01 AM

COMPANY: TARGET CORP                      PRISM EMPLOYER ID: 0000252334
FEIN: 41-0848441
ACTN: RECORD TYPE                      SEQ ALTERNATE NAME AND ADDRESS
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CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS (01)              001 MINNEAPOLIS MN 55440
WORKPLACE (02)                          001 FRIDLEY MN 55432
WORKPLACE (02)                          002 BROOKLYN CENTER MN 55430
WORKPLACE (02)                          003 SAINT CLOUD MN 56301
I/W DESTINATION (03)                    001 BROOKLYN PARK MN 55428
VERIFICATION/BENEFITS/LOCATE (05)      001 APPLE VALLY MN 55124
COMPANY ID: 0000252334 TYPE: ___
DIRECT COMMAND:                               (EMDL)
    
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The Employer Detail (EMDE) screen allows the worker to view all of the pertinent detailed information about one of the record types (01-06) for an employer. It also allows the worker to enter the PRISM employer ID and get the FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number) of the employer. In addition, it allows the workers to search for an employer by name or by FEIN. This screen also displays an active/inactive status flag, which if set to inactive, signifies the employer has not been associated with any PRISM case participant for over one year. A case worker may request that an inactive employer be set to active in order to link the employer to a case participant. A sample of the Employer Detail screen displaying the 01 Record type (Corporate) for the "Target Corp" is shown below.

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07/31/99                      EMPLOYER DETAIL                      10:01 AM

EMPLOYER ID: 0000252334 TYPE: 01 CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS          SEQ NBR: 0001
NAME: TARGET CORP
FEDERAL EIN: 41-0848441
STATE EIN: 0033167000
ALTERNATE NAME: _____
ADDRESS: 33 S SIXTH STREET _____
        PO BOX 1392 _____
CITY: MINNEAPOLIS _____ STATE: MN ZIP: 55440 _____
TEL: 612-555-5273 EXT: ___ FAX: 612-555-1141
TEL: _____
CONTACT - LASTNAME: SEIGERS _____ NAME: FRANK _____ MI: _ TITLE: _____
BANKING - ACCOUNT: _____ ROUTING: _____
        ACH: - (AUTOMATED CLEARING HOUSE)
        HOLD ACH: _
OLD ID-EMPR: 000252334
DIRECT COMMAND:                               (EMDL)
    
```

The employer table can also be accessed from either the Noncustodial Parent Income Detail (NCID) screen or the Custodial Parent Income Detail (CPID) screen. However, on either of these two screens, the worker can only view the Corporate or Work site/branch employer records, as these are the only two records to which case participants can be linked.

During the normal day-to-day child support functions that PRISM handles -- sending income withholding, posting payments, sending employer verifications and legal service of process -- the system will automatically determine which employer address to use based on the action that needs to be taken. Income withholding documents will be sent to the 03 Record type (Income Withholding) address if it exists or the 01 Record type (Corporate) address if an 03 Record type does not exist. Employment verifications will be sent to the 05 Record type (Verification) address if it exists, otherwise they will be sent to the 01 Record type (Corporate) address,

At the time of conversion, Minnesota converted all of its employers that existed in its old system to the new table. Duplicate employers were manually analyzed and verified by workers who ultimately decided which one of the duplicates would remain in the new table. Currently a staff of four workers maintains the employer table, as well as all of the other tables in PRISM. Thus, when a new employer needs to be added to the table, activated, or otherwise modified, a child support worker may send an e-mail form to this group requesting such action. The additions and changes are usually completed on the same day and an e-mail form containing confirmation of the request is returned to the requesting worker. Verification of the employer's information is also completed at that time. Once the employer has been added to the table, the worker adds the employer number to the participant record and the automated wage withholding process is automatically initiated by PRISM. Information on new employers returned from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) is automatically added to the employer table and verified as soon as possible.

This new employer table and its maintenance process have been in place for almost a year and are working very well. Employers are cooperating with Minnesota's Child Support Enforcement Office when asked to provide just one address to which wage withholding orders should be sent. Child support workers like it because it takes the guesswork out of choosing the correct address for an employer. The staff who maintain PRISM's tables like it because it is quick, clean, and efficient.

For further information on the employer table or this process, please contact Steve Grabowski (Policy/Functional Analysis) at 651- 215-6272 or Leslie Ferrell (Maintenance) at 651-215-5620, or you can fax either of them at 651-297-4450.