

Federal Parent Locator Service

Child Support Enforcement Network

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Release Specifications

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1. Negative Dollar Amounts (OCSE Ref # 354)

The Child Support Enforcement Network (CSENet) application is being modified to recognize negative dollar amounts, and to perform edits accordingly.

1.1 Summary of Changes

It was discovered that negative dollar amounts were treated as if they were positive dollar amounts during the transaction edit routines. For example, a State sent a negative dollar amount in the Arrears-TANF-Amount field but did not include an Arrears-TANF-Thru-Date or an Arrears-TANF-From-Date. The State received an error for the missing Arrears-TANF-Thru-Date and missing Arrears-TANF-From-Date. According to the record layout specifications, this should have been a valid transaction because an Arrears-TANF-Amount value of less than zero is acceptable. OCSE reviewed the impact of negative values in all dollar amount fields, and determined that processing changes were required for the amount fields in the Order Data Block. The amount fields affected by this change are:

- Order-Freq-Amount
- Order-Arrears-Total-Amount
- Order-Arrears-Freq-Amount
- Medical-Amount
- Arrears-TANF-Amount
- Arrears-Non-TANF-Amount
- Foster-Care-Amount

1.2 Description of Changes

States can now send a negative value in the amount fields listed below without being required to place a value in a date or frequency field. The following describes how edits will work when the CSENet application recognizes negative dollar amounts.

- Order-Freq-Amount is required if the Order-Arrears-Total-Amount is blank.
- Order-Freq is required if the Order-Freq-Amount is greater than zero.
- Order-Arrears-Freq is required if the Order-Arrears-Freq-Amount is greater than zero.
- Order-Arrears-Freq-Amount is required if the Order-Arrears-Freq is entered.
- Order-Arrears-Total-Amount is required if the Order-Arrears-Freq-Amount is greater than zero and the Order-Arrears-Freq is entered.
- Arrears-TANF-Thru-Date and Arrears-TANF-From-Date are required if the Arrears-TANF-Amount is greater than zero.
- Arrears-Non-TANF-Thru-Date and Arrears-Non-TANF-From-Date are required if the Arrears-Non-TANF-Amount is greater than zero.
- Foster-Care-Thru-Date and Foster-Care-From-Date are required if the Foster-Care-Amount is greater than zero.

- Medical-Thru-Date and Medical-From-Date are required if the Medical-Amount is greater than zero.

1.3 Impact on States

A negative amount in any of the amount fields, combined with no value in a date or frequency amount field, currently generates a transaction error. As a workaround, States may have coded to provide dates and frequency to prevent an error when conveying negative dollar amounts. This change to the validation routine should not impact these transactions, although if States have chosen to fill these optional fields, the values must be a valid value for the field.

Most of the edit changes will have a loosening effect. It is not expected that States will be required to make coding changes.

The software is being implemented on December 4, 2009, prior to the afternoon cycle.

1.4 Pilot Testing

States may elect to participate in pilot testing from November 2 to November 6, 2009, to verify system programming. Pilot testing provides States with an opportunity to exchange transactions via test data sets with:

- the CSENet Application, using FIPS code 9100000,
- other States that are participating in pilot testing, or
- their own system through ‘loopback’ testing.

States may also elect to test receiving transactions from the CSENet Testdeck application.

CSENet technical representatives will be available to provide analysis and feedback concerning test transactions during this timeframe. To participate in testing, State representatives should contact their CSENet technical representative or the CSENet Service Desk at (800) 258-2736 or CSENet.2000@lmco.com.

1.5 Resource Materials

Appendix A, “CSENET Data Block Record Layout – Excerpt”, contains the single record layout change that supports this software modification.

A. CSENet Data Block Record Layout – Excerpt

This appendix provides the IGD data record layout correction that was identified during analysis for this software modification.

CHART A-1: CSENet 2000 ORDER DATA BLOCK RECORD					
Rules	Field Name	Location	Length	A/N	Comments
1,2,3	Debt-Type	34-35	2	A/N	<p>Required</p> <p>Indicates the type of debt. Valid values for this field are: CS – Child Support SS – Spousal Support MS – Medical Support</p>
1,2,4	Order-Freq.	36	1	A/N	<p>Required</p> <p>If the Order-Freq.-Amount is greater than zero, this field is required. Indicates the frequency of payment. Valid values for this field are: A – Annually B – Biweekly E – Semi-annually M – Monthly Q – Quarterly S – Semi-Monthly W – Weekly</p>
1,4,5b	Order-Freq.-Amount	37-48	12	N	<p>Required</p> <p>The dollar amount that is owed per each frequency above. The Order-Freq.-Amount can equal zero dollars. This field is required when the Order-Arrears-Total-Amount is equal to or greater than zero.</p>