

CHAPTER ONE – CHILD SUPPORT IN THE UNITED STATES

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CHAPTER ONE

CHILD SUPPORT IN THE UNITED STATES

THE CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM

Before the creation of the national child support program, state welfare agencies played a role in child support enforcement. In 1950, Congress amended the laws governing the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program to require state welfare agencies to notify law enforcement officials when a parent had abandoned his or her child, resulting in the payment of government benefits.¹ At that time, most states had criminal nonsupport laws.

Over the next 25 years, there were numerous social changes. Divorce rates rose. Births to unmarried parents rose. Family structures became much more fluid. Congress attempted to address these changes in several ways.

The Social Security Amendments of 1965² authorized the use of Social Security records to locate parents. Under this legislation, states could gain access to the records through the Social Security Administration to obtain recent addresses and places of employment for noncustodial parents.

Next came the Social Security Amendments of 1967,³ providing states access to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) records to obtain noncustodial parents' addresses. This law, which amended Title IV of the Social Security Act, also required state welfare agencies to establish a single unit whose mission was to collect child support and establish paternity for children on public assistance. States had to work cooperatively with each other under child support reciprocity agreements and with courts and law enforcement officials.

Despite these efforts, by 1972, it was clear from the rapid increase in numbers of welfare recipients that the 1967 amendments had not produced the intended results. The Senate Finance Committee, under the chairmanship of Russell Long, compiled data on AFDC costs and child support enforcement and continued to push for a comprehensive Child Support Enforcement Program. Its efforts led to passage of House Resolution 17045 on December 20, 1974. President Ford signed the bill into law on January 4, 1975, as the Social Security Amendments of 1974.⁴ Part B of that law enacted Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, which created the Program for Child Support Enforcement and Establishment of Paternity, referred to as the IV-D program.⁵

¹ Social Security Amendments of 1950, Pub. L. No. 81-734, 64 Stat. 477.

² Social Security Amendments of 1965, Pub. L. No. 89-97, 79 Stat. 286.

³ Social Security Amendments of 1967, Pub. L. No. 90-248, 81 Stat. 821.

⁴ Social Security Amendments of 1974, Pub. L. No. 93-647, 88 Stat. 2351.

⁵ 42 U.S.C. §§ 651–669 (2018) (§ 658 repealed 1998, §§ 661–2 repealed 1996).

This legislation authorized federal matching funds to be used for locating nonresident parents, establishing paternity, establishing child support orders, and collecting child support payments. In 1981, child support agencies also received the authority to collect spousal support on behalf of custodial parents,⁶ and in 1984, agencies were required to obtain orders for medical support as part of most child support orders.⁷ The 1984 Amendments included a number of other important federal funding requirements such as the establishment of advisory child support guidelines and income withholding based on a month's amount of arrears.

Significant federal child support legislation was also passed in 1988,⁸ 1996,⁹ and 2005.¹⁰ These laws strengthened requirements enacted in 1984, such as the establishment of mandatory presumptive guidelines and immediate income withholding. They also included requirements for new hire directories, case registries, state disbursement units, voluntary paternity acknowledgment procedures, and enforcement tools.

The most recent legislation is Public Law 113-183, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, signed on September 29, 2014.¹¹ The child support provisions within this law, among other things, amended the Social Security Act to ensure access to IV-D services for international cases. It also required states, as a condition of receiving federal funds, to enact the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act as “officially adopted as of September 30, 2008 by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws.” Detailed information about these and other provisions are contained in subsequent chapters of this handbook.

The child support program is a partnership among the federal government, states, tribes, and local programs with major support from stakeholders in the private and nonprofit sectors. The federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) administers the program in accordance with Title IV-D and related laws, rules, and regulations. The major role played by the federal government is detailed in Chapter Two: The Federal Role in the Child Support Program. State and tribal child support agencies have basic responsibility for administering the IV-D program, and cases under the program, which are known as IV-D cases. For a complete list of federal laws related to the child support program, see Exhibit 1-1.

⁶ Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Pub. L. No. 97-35, 95 Stat. 483.

⁷ Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984, Pub. L. No. 98-378, 98 Stat. 1305. This law also introduced child support guidelines, income withholding, and state tax refund offset.

⁸ Family Support Act of 1988, Pub. L. No. 100-485, 102 Stat. 2343.

⁹ Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105.

¹⁰ Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-171, 120 Stat. 4.

¹¹ Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-183, 128 Stat. 1919, 1943.

The program provides child support services to custodial as well as noncustodial parents. It provides services both to families who receive public assistance and to those who do not. Parents receiving public benefits (or who formerly received benefits) under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF) (the successor program to AFDC), the federally assisted foster care program, or the Medicaid Program, automatically receive services for free when their cases are referred to the child support program.¹² Parents not receiving public assistance may apply for child support services; there is an application fee of up to \$25, which many states absorb.¹³ In 2005, a requirement was added for states to charge an annual \$25 fee in cases that never received public assistance when \$500 in current support is collected and disbursed to the family in that year.¹⁴ In 2018, Congress increased the fee to \$35 and increased the collection to \$550.¹⁵ States can charge this \$35 fee to child support obligees, collect it from obligors, pay it from the support collected, or pay it from state funds.¹⁶ State child support agencies may, under state law, also assist individuals with non-IV-D cases; but in most instances, those cases do not receive federal funds for providing services. If a tribal IV-D program intends to charge an application fee, the tribal IV-D plan must provide that the fee does not exceed \$25 and does not apply to an individual receiving services under Titles IV-A (TANF), IV-D foster care maintenance assistance, or XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act.¹⁷

Although the focus is on child support, the child support program will also enforce spousal support obligations “for a spouse or former spouse who is living with the child or children, but only if a support obligation has been established for that spouse and the child support obligation is being enforced under the title IV-D program.”¹⁸

CHANGING FAMILY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURES

The IV-D program came into existence more than 40 years ago. Since its inception, the demographics of American society have changed markedly and the numbers of children affected by changing family structures have grown significantly. In 2018, more than one-quarter (26.5%) of all children under 21

¹² It is important to note that some referrals from state Medicaid agencies to state IV-D agencies for medical support enforcement services resulting from applications for medical insurance through the Healthcare Marketplace may be inappropriate. For more information, see [OCSE-IM-14-01: Medicaid Referrals to the IV-D Agency](#) (Mar.13, 2014). See also Chapter Ten: Establishment of Child Support and Medical Support Obligations and Chapter Eleven: Enforcement of Support Obligations, herein.

¹³ 42 U.S.C. § 654(6)(B)(i) (2018); 45 C.F.R. § 302.33(c) (2019).

¹⁴ Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-171, 120 Stat. 4 (codified at 42 U.S.C. § 654(6)(B)(ii) (2018)).

¹⁵ Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-123, § 53117, 132 Stat. 64, 307.

¹⁶ See 45 C.F.R. § 302.33(e) (2019).

¹⁷ 45 C.F.R. § 309.75 (2019).

¹⁸ 45 C.F.R. § 302.31(a)(2) (2019).

years of age had a parent who lived outside their household. This affected about 21.9 million children.¹⁹

Divorce

Divorce rates increased dramatically between 1965 and 1974, when the annual number of divorces nationwide more than doubled to 977,000. By 2018, the National Vital Statistics System reported the U.S. divorce rate was 6.5 for every 1,000 people in the population.²⁰

Births to Unmarried Parents

The number of births to unmarried parents has also increased dramatically in the past 40 years. In 1976, there were an estimated 468,100 births to unmarried women or approximately 15% of all births,²¹ while in 2018, births to unmarried women totaled more than 1,500,000 or 39.6% of all births.²²

Single Parent Households and Child Poverty

Children living in households with one parent or with grandparent caregivers are much more likely to live below the poverty level than those living with two parents.²³

PROGRAM CHANGES

In response to the transformations in the structure of American society and families, the child support program has also evolved.

¹⁹ Timothy Grall, U.S. Census Bureau, P60-269, Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2017 (May 2020).

²⁰ Office of Health Research, Statistics, and Technology, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, Data from the National Vital Statistics System: *National Marriage and Divorce Rate Trends, 2000-2018*.

²¹ Office of Health Research, Statistics, and Technology, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, Data from the National Vital Statistics System, Series 21, No. 36, Data from the National Vital Statistics System: *Trends and Differentials in Births to Unmarried Women: United States 1970-1976* (May 1980). Note: Total is based on 100% of births in selected states and a 50% sample of births in all other states. See also U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics of the United States, and National Vital Statistics Reports (NVSR), Table 78: *Live Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Divorces: 1960 to 2008* (2012), <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2011/compendia/statab/131ed/births-deaths-marriages-divorces.html>.

²² Joyce A. Martin, Brady E. Hamilton, Michelle J.K. Osterman, and Anne K. Driscoll, Division of Vital Statistics, National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 68, No. 13, *Births: Final Data for 2018* (Nov. 27, 2019).

²³ Timothy Grall, U.S. Census Bureau, P60-269, Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2017 (May 2020); Renee R. Ellis and Tavia Simmons, U.S. Census Bureau, *Coresident Grandparents and Their Grandchildren: 2012* (Oct. 2014).

Welfare Reform

Title IV-A of the Social Security Act established the AFDC program in 1935. This program allowed each state to set a monthly grant rate for families with dependent children, who were without the care of one or both parents due to death or a prolonged absence from the home. The federal government reimbursed states for a portion of the AFDC program costs. Effective with the establishment of Title IV-D in 1975, AFDC recipients were required to assign their support rights to the state as a condition for receiving benefits.²⁴ Further, AFDC recipients were required to cooperate with state efforts to identify absent parents and obtain support for their children. The cooperation requirement could be excused if the state determined that the recipient had good cause not to cooperate,²⁵ for example, when cooperation would create a risk of harm to the child.

Congress changed the IV-D program in 1996 as part of welfare reform legislation designed to promote self-sufficiency. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA)²⁶ replaced AFDC with TANF. PRWORA places a limit on the maximum lifetime benefit that a person can receive, and imposes new work requirements for recipients of assistance.

Evolution of the Child Support Program

In addition to transforming welfare, PRWORA made substantial changes to the child support program. It required states, as a condition of receiving federal funds, to enact numerous laws that place greater emphasis on paternity establishment and administrative child support enforcement. It required the establishment of federal and state case registries, which contain information about child support cases and orders, and directories of new hires. It also embraced expanding advances in technology by requiring data matches with income sources and financial institutions to facilitate immediate income withholding and financial account attachments.

Expansion and Collaboration with Other Programs

After PRWORA, the program has continued to evolve. The program now serves many individuals who have never received any type of public assistance. The services it provides range from full-scale establishment and enforcement to simple funds disbursement. Child support programs at both the state and federal levels have also begun to collaborate more closely with other programs to better serve families' varying needs.

²⁴ 42 U.S.C. § 608(a)(3) (2018).

²⁵ 42 U.S.C. § 654(29) (2018).

²⁶ Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105.

Tribal nations. The child support program has expanded to include tribal nations. To receive federal funding to operate child support programs, sovereign tribal nations must meet the objectives of Title IV-D of the Social Security Act and comply with federal tribal regulations, many of which differ from those that govern state child support programs. These policies are consistent with the government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes and take into account the unique characteristics and circumstances of tribal communities.

Tribal child support programs offer services to Native American families consistent with tribal values and cultures. Like their state counterparts, tribal child support programs locate custodial and noncustodial parents, establish legal fatherhood (paternity), establish child support orders, enforce orders, and offer referrals to other agencies, as appropriate. More than 60 tribes operate child support programs, which include startup and comprehensive tribal child support programs.²⁷

Government agencies. Child support agencies have found allies in other government programs that serve children and families and share common goals. For example, many child care and Head Start programs use their referral services to provide information to clients about paternity establishment and support enforcement. They also provide training to their own workers on these topics. Some jurisdictions require that those receiving child care services cooperate in paternity establishment and child support enforcement. In addition, child support agencies have undertaken new initiatives with their state foster care agencies and government agencies that serve the military and veterans.

Private entities and nonprofit organizations. Because child support touches the lives of so many people, including those who have never received public assistance, child support agencies also work closely with nongovernment entities. Employers assist through income withholding, a function that is fully automated in many cases. In fact, more support is paid through income withholding than any other remedy. Financial institutions assist child support agencies through the reporting and seizure of assets. Private organizations and nonprofit groups, including faith-based groups, have also begun to work more closely with child support agencies. Recognizing the importance of fathers in the lives of their children, child support agencies collaborate with fatherhood programs. There are programs that help unemployed noncustodial fathers obtain training or employment, assist in the development of parenting time agreements, and offer parenting classes. Cooperation with organizations that address domestic violence has resulted in collaborative efforts to assist survivors with paternity establishment and support enforcement, protect survivors from contact with their abusers during court proceedings, and help survivors achieve self-sufficiency. Many other programs bring parental partners together in order to

²⁷ Regulations for tribal IV-D programs can be found at 45 C.F.R. Part 309.

strengthen family relationships, enhance economic stability, and improve health care coverage.

Program Benefits

The child support program is a partnership of the federal, state, tribal, and local governments and others to promote parental responsibility so that children receive support from both parents when they live in separate households. The national child support program is one of the largest income-support programs for families, contributing money to family budgets to help pay for the basics – shelter, food, child care, transportation, and clothing. Child support supplements and stabilizes family income, increasing self-sufficiency and avoiding public assistance costs.

For the child. Although its primary role is financial, the child support program also offers significant social, economic, and medical benefits to children. It helps foster a sense of parental responsibility, heritage, and self-esteem. Establishing paternity for a child born to unmarried parents and having a noncustodial parent contribute financially to a child's upbringing (that might otherwise come from public funds) benefit the child and society. In addition to providing income for the family, a noncustodial parent may be able to provide a child with access to such "social entitlements" as Social Security benefits, pension benefits, veterans benefits, and other rights of inheritance.

Children gain other important advantages from having legally identified parents who are involved in their lives. As well as providing a sense of family heritage, paternity establishment can be a first step in creating a psychological and social bond between a father and his child. Further, it may be in the child's best interest to maintain contact with his or her parents for medical reasons. Knowledge of both parents' medical histories can help predict susceptibility to certain medical disorders and aid in diagnosing illness.

Because legally establishing paternity provides such significant benefits to both children and their parents, a new federal regulation, effective January 2017, gives states the option to allow parents to request paternity establishment services only.²⁸

For the taxpayer. The millions of dollars that the child support program collects each year represent a direct benefit to state and local taxpayers. Collections made on behalf of families receiving public assistance are used to reimburse assistance paid to these families and help these families become self-sufficient.

In addition to its direct revenue-generating aspects, the child support program produces indirect taxpayer benefits by providing services to families not receiving public assistance who, without income from child support, might turn to

²⁸ 45 C.F.R. § 302.33(a)(6) (2019).

public assistance. Similarly, through program efforts, sufficient support is collected on behalf of some families receiving public assistance to eliminate their dependence on welfare and related assistance programs. This has become increasingly important since passage in 1996 of PRWORA, which imposes time limits on public assistance benefits a family can receive.

Program Achievements

Clearly the best measure of the nationwide effectiveness of the child support program is its performance. Each year OCSE prepares a report to Congress. Those reports indicate a steady improvement in performance. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 1997, the program collected \$13.35 billion from a child support caseload of 19.1 million.²⁹ Twenty-two years later, in FFY 2019, states distributed collections of approximately \$28.7 billion from a child support caseload of 13.6 million.³⁰ In addition, states collected and distributed almost \$3.7 billion in non-IV-D payments made through income withholding orders that did not receive IV-D child support services.³¹ During FFY 1997, state child support agencies established paternity for almost 1.3 million children, including in-hospital Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgments.³² In FFY 2019, approximately 1.4 million paternities were established by state child support agencies.³³ In FFY 1997, state child support agencies located the income, assets, and/or employers of 6.4 million noncustodial parents;³⁴ in FFY 2019, approximately 7.43 million noncustodial parents and putative fathers were located through the Federal Parent Locator Service.³⁵

In addition, the program has proved increasingly cost effective. During FFY 1997, the program collected \$3.89 for every \$1 that states and the federal government spent on the program.³⁶ In FFY 2019, \$5.06 was collected in support for every dollar spent.³⁷

²⁹ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY1997 Annual Report to Congress (Dec. 1, 1997).

³⁰ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2019 Preliminary Data Report, Table P-1: *Financial Overview for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years* and Table P-2: *Statistical Overview for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years* (June 2020CS0). Please note that tribal data will be reported in the FY 2019 Annual Report to Congress but does not appear in the Preliminary Data Report.

³¹ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2019 Preliminary Data Report, Table P- 21: *Collections Forwarded to Non-IV-D Cases for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years* (June 2020).

³² Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY1997 Annual Report to Congress (Dec. 1, 1997).

³³ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2019 Preliminary Data Report, Table P-71: *Total Number of Paternities Established or Acknowledged for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years* (June 2020).

³⁴ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY1997 Annual Report to Congress, Table 34: *Absent Parents Located to Establish and Enforce or Modify an Order, FY 1997* (Dec. 1, 1997).

³⁵ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2018 Preliminary Data Report, Table P-105: *Federal Systems Number of Unique Persons with Known and Unknown SSN Located through the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS), FY 2019* (June 2020).

³⁶ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY1997 Annual Report to Congress (Dec. 1, 1997).

³⁷ Office of Child Support Enforcement, FY 2019 Preliminary Data Report, Table P-36: *Cost-Effectiveness Ratio for Five Consecutive Fiscal Years* (June 2020).

Strengthening Families

It is important that we have effective child support enforcement tools coupled with services that strengthen families. Working with both parents, we can:

- Refer unemployed parents to services,
- Facilitate healthy relationships and cooperation between the parents, and
- Connect families to health care.

We want child support to be a source of income that children can rely on. While we continue to be an enforcement program, we recognize that many custodial and noncustodial parents struggle to support their children. We continue to change and improve to help parents provide reliable support for children.

Through the child support program, we can:

- Encourage father involvement by working with public schools, Head Start, home visitation programs, and access and visitation services;
- Increase the economic stability of both parents through collaborations with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, workforce, fatherhood, prisoner reentry, veterans and other programs;
- Build and support healthy family relationships;
- Promote health care coverage for children and their parents and help to reduce health disparities in minority populations;
- Identify ways to reduce family violence by collaborating with domestic violence and child welfare programs; and
- Work with high schools and other programs to raise public awareness of the responsibilities of parenthood.

As the program expands in ways designed to strengthen families and make them more self-sufficient, the child support program will also continue to strive for right-sized orders and use appropriate enforcement methods to help ensure consistent support payments. Child support attorneys and other child support professionals have important roles to play in this endeavor.

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CHAPTER ONE

TABLE OF STATUTES AND AUTHORITIES

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42 U.S.C. § 654(6)(B)(ii) (2018)	3
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EXHIBIT 1-1

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Year	Legislative History
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1950	Congress passed the first federal child support enforcement legislation requiring state welfare agencies to notify appropriate law enforcement officials upon providing Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) with respect to a child who was abandoned or deserted by a parent. 42 U.S.C. § 602(a)(11).
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The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (URESA) (amended in 1952 and 1958).

1965	Public Law (P.L.) 89-97—The Social Security Amendments of 1965 permit state or local welfare agencies to obtain from the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare the address and place of employment of a noncustodial parent who owes child support under a court order for support.
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1967	P.L. 90-248—Under the Social Security Amendments of 1967, states may obtain from the Internal Revenue Service the addresses of noncustodial parents who owe child support under a court order for support. In addition, each state must establish a single organizational unit to establish paternity and collect child support for deserted children receiving AFDC. States must work cooperatively with each other under child support reciprocity agreements and with courts and law enforcement officials.
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1968	The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved the revised Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (RURESA).
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1973	The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved the Uniform Parentage Act (UPA) (revised in 2002 and 2017).
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1975	P.L. 93-647—After three years of Congressional attention to child support enforcement issues, the Social Services Amendments of 1974 created title IV-D of the Social Security Act, which was signed into law on January 4, 1975. 42 U.S.C. §§ 651 et seq. Under Title IV-D:
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- The Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, now the Secretary of Health and Human Services, is required to establish a separate organizational unit to oversee the operation of the Child Support Enforcement program. Responsibilities include: (1) establishing a parent locator service; (2) establishing standards for state program organization, staffing, and operation to ensure an effective program; (3) reviewing and approving state plans for the program; (4) evaluating state program operations by conducting audits of each state's program; (5) certifying cases for referral to the federal courts

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to enforce support obligations; (6) certifying cases for referral to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for support collections; (7) providing technical assistance to states and assisting them with reporting procedures; (8) maintaining records of program operations, expenditures, and collections; and (9) submitting an annual report to Congress.

- Primary responsibility for operating the child support program is placed on the states. To be eligible for Federal financial participation (FFP) reimbursement for expenditures, each state must have an approved state plan indicating that: (1) the state has designated a single and separate organizational unit to administer the program; (2) the state will establish paternity and secure support for individuals receiving AFDC and for others who apply directly for child support services; (3) child support payments will be made to the state for distribution; (4) the state will enter into cooperative agreements with appropriate courts and law enforcement officials; (5) the state will establish a State Parent Locator Service (SPLS) that uses state and local parent location resources as well as the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS); (6) the state will cooperate with any other state in locating an absent parent, establishing paternity, and securing support; and (7) the state will maintain a full record of collections and disbursements made under the plan.
- Specific procedures are required for distributing child support collections made on behalf of families receiving AFDC.
- States are to be paid incentives for collections made in AFDC cases.
- Monies due and payable to federal employees are subject to garnishment for the collection of child support.
- To be eligible for AFDC, each applicant for, or recipient of, AFDC must make an assignment of support rights to the state; must cooperate with the state in establishing paternity and securing support; and must furnish his or her Social Security Number (SSN) to the state.

P.L. 94-88—In August 1975, states were allowed to obtain waivers from particular program requirements under certain conditions until June 30, 1976 and to receive federal reimbursement at a reduced rate. This law also eased the requirement for AFDC recipients to cooperate with state child support agencies when such cooperation would not be in the best interests of the child. It also provided for supplemental payments to AFDC recipients whose grants would be reduced because of implementation of the child support program.

- 1976** P.L. 94-566—Effective October 20, 1976, state employment agencies were required to provide noncustodial parents' addresses to state child support agencies.

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1977 P.L. 95-30—Effective May 23, 1977, the Tax Reduction and Simplification Act of 1977 amended Title IV-D as follows:

Provisions relating to garnishment of a federal employee's wages for child support were amended to: (1) include employees of the District of Columbia; (2) specify the conditions and procedures to be followed to serve garnishments on federal agencies; (3) authorize issuance of garnishment regulations by the three branches of the Federal Government and by the District of Columbia; and (4) define further certain terms used.

- The state plan was required to provide for bonding of employees who receive, handle, or disburse cash and to ensure that the accounting and collection functions be performed by different individuals. 42 U.S.C. § 654(14).
- The incentive payment provision was amended to change the rate to 15% of AFDC collections (from 25% for the first 12 months and 10% thereafter). 42 U.S.C. § 658(a).

P.L. 95-142—Effective October 25, 1977, the Medicare Medicaid Anti-Fraud and Abuse Amendments of 1977 established a medical support enforcement program under which states could require Medicaid applicants to assign to the state their rights to medical support. State Medicaid agencies were allowed to enter into cooperative agreements with any appropriate agency of any state, including the child support agency, for assistance with enforcing and collecting medical support obligations. Incentives were also available to localities making child support collections for states and to states securing collections on behalf of other states.

1978 P.L. 95-598—The Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1978, signed into law on November 6, 1978, repealed a section of the Social Security Act that had barred the discharge in bankruptcy of assigned child support debts. This section of the Social Security Act was restored in 1981. 42 U.S.C. § 656(b).

1980 P.L. 96-178—FFP for non-AFDC services was extended until March 31, 1980, retroactive to October 1, 1978.

P.L. 96-265—The Social Security Disability Amendments of 1980, signed into law on June 9, 1980, increased federal matching funds to 90%, effective July 1, 1981, for the costs of developing, implementing, and enhancing approved automated child support management information systems. Federal matching funds were also made available for child support enforcement duties performed by certain court personnel. In another provision, the law authorized the use of the IRS to collect child support arrearages on behalf of non-AFDC families. Finally, the law provided state and local child support agencies with access to wage information held by the Social Security Administration and state

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employment security agencies (SESAs) for use in establishing and enforcing child support obligations.

P.L. 96-272—The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 contained four amendments to Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. FFP for non-AFDC services was made available on a permanent basis. States became eligible to receive incentive payments on all AFDC collections as well as interstate collections. As of October 1, 1979, states were required to claim reimbursement for expenditures within two years, with some exceptions. The imposition of the 5% penalty on AFDC reimbursement for states not having effective child support programs was postponed until October 1980.

1981 P.L. 97-35—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 added five amendments to Title IV-D. The IRS was authorized to withhold all, or part of, certain individuals' federal income tax refunds for collection of delinquent child support obligations. Child support agencies were required to collect spousal support for AFDC families. For non-AFDC cases, state agencies were required to collect fees from noncustodial parents who were delinquent in their child support payments. Child support obligations, which were assigned to the state, no longer were dischargeable in bankruptcy proceedings. States were authorized to withhold a portion of unemployment benefits from noncustodial parents delinquent in their support payments.

1982 P.L. 97-248—The Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982 was signed into law on September 3, 1982. The following provisions affected the child support program:

- FFP was reduced from 75 to 70%, effective October 1, 1982. Incentive payments were reduced from 15 to 12%, effective October 1, 1983. Congress also repealed a provision for reimbursement of certain court personnel costs that exceed the amount of funds spent by a state on similar court expenses during calendar year 1978.
- The mandatory non-AFDC fee imposed by P.L. 97-35 was repealed, retroactive to August 13, 1981. States were allowed to elect either not to recover costs or to recover costs from collections or from fees imposed on noncustodial parents. State authority to collect spousal support in certain non-AFDC cases was clarified.
- As of October 1, 1982, members of the uniformed services on active duty were required to make allotments from their pay when support arrearages reached the equivalent of a 2-month delinquency.
- Beginning October 1, 1982, states could reimburse themselves for AFDC grants paid to families for the first month in which the collection of child support is sufficient to make a family ineligible for AFDC.

P.L. 97-253—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982, effective September 8, 1982, provided for the disclosure of information obtained

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under authority of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to various programs, including state child support agencies.

P.L. 97-252—The Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act, signed into law on September 8, 1982, treated military retirement or retainer pay as property to be divided by state courts in connection with divorce, dissolution, annulment, or legal separation proceedings.

1984 P.L. 98-378—The Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984 required improvements in state and local child support programs in four major areas:

Mandatory Practices

All states were required to enact statutes providing for the use of improved enforcement mechanisms, including: (1) mandatory income withholding procedures; (2) expedited processes for establishing and enforcing support orders; (3) state income tax refund interceptions; (4) liens against real and personal property, security or bonds to assure compliance with support obligations; and (5) reports of support delinquency information to consumer reporting agencies. In addition, state law had to allow for the bringing of paternity actions any time before a child's 18th birthday, and all support orders, issued or modified after October 1, 1985, were to include a provision for wage withholding.

Federal Financial Participation and Audit Provisions

To encourage greater reliance on performance-based incentives, federal matching funds were reduced by 2% in FY1988 (to 68%) and another 2% in FY1990 (to 66%). Federal matching funds became available at the 90% rate for developing and installing automated systems, including computer hardware purchases, to facilitate income withholding and other newly required procedures.

State incentive payments were reset at 6% for both AFDC and non-AFDC collections. These percentages could increase to as much as 10% for both categories for very cost-effective states, but a state's non-AFDC incentive payments were limited by the amount of incentives payable for AFDC collections. The law further required states to pass incentives on to local child support agencies where these agencies have participated in the costs of the program.

The requirement for an annual audit of state child support agencies was dropped in favor of an audit once every three years. The focus of the audits was altered so that, beginning with the FY1986 audit period, a state's effectiveness would be evaluated on the basis of

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program performance as well as operational compliance. Graduated penalties of from 1 to 5% of total payments to the state under the AFDC program would be imposed if a state were found not to have complied substantially with federal requirements over successive periods. The penalty could be suspended, however, if the state were to take corrective action, over a maximum period of one year, to come into substantial compliance.

Improved Interstate Enforcement

The proven enforcement techniques discussed above were to be applied to interstate cases as well as intrastate cases. Both states involved in an interstate case could take credit for the collection when reporting total collections for the purpose of calculating incentives. In addition, the law authorized OCSE to commission special state demonstration grants, beginning in FY1985, to fund innovative methods of interstate enforcement and collection. The federal audits would focus on state effectiveness in establishing and enforcing obligations across state lines.

Equal Services for Welfare and Non-Welfare Families

Congress stated in the Social Security Act that, in creating the child support program, it intended to aid both non-welfare and welfare families. Several specific requirements were directed at improving state services to non-welfare families. All mandatory practices had to be available to both types of cases; the interception of federal income tax refunds was extended to non-welfare cases; incentive payments became available for collections in non-welfare cases; when families are terminated from AFDC, they automatically were to receive non-welfare support enforcement services, without being charged an application fee; and states were required to publicize the availability of non-welfare support enforcement services.

Other Provisions

In addition to the above, states were required to: (1) collect support in certain foster care cases; (2) collect spousal support, in addition to child support, when both were due in a case; (3) notify AFDC recipients at least yearly of the collections made in their individual cases; (4) establish a state commission to study the operation of each state's child support system and report findings to the state's governor; (5) formulate guidelines for determining appropriate child support obligation amounts and distribute the guidelines to judges and other individuals with authority to establish obligation amounts; (6) offset the costs of the program by charging various fees to non-

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welfare families and to delinquent noncustodial parents; (7) allow families whose AFDC eligibility was terminated as a result of the payment of child support, to remain eligible for Medicaid for four months; and (8) seek to establish medical support awards in addition to cash awards for support. In addition, the FPLS was made more accessible and more effective in locating absent parents. Sunset provisions were put in effect for the extension of Medicaid eligibility and federal tax refund offsets for non-AFDC families.

1986 P.L. 99-509—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 required states to provide that support installments are vested as they fall due and, therefore, are judgments entitled to full faith and credit. It also allowed prospective modification from the date the opposing party received notice of the motion for modification.

1988 P.L. 100-485—The Family Support Act of 1988, enacted on October 13, 1988, made many important changes to the child support program. The major provisions were:

Immediate Wage Withholding

For IV-D cases, states were to provide for immediate wage withholding in orders issued or modified on or after November 1, 1990, unless one of the parties demonstrates and the court finds that there is good cause not to require it or there is a written agreement between both parties for an alternative arrangement. In non IV-D cases, immediate wage withholding was to apply to all orders initially issued on or after January 1, 1994.

Disregard of Child Support

The child support disregard was to be applied to a payment made by a non-custodial parent in the month it was due even though it was received in a subsequent month.

Guidelines for Child Support Award Amounts

Judges and other officials were required to use state guidelines for support awards, unless the decision-maker entered a written finding that applying the guidelines would be unjust or inappropriate in the case. States were to review their guidelines every four years.

Beginning two years after enactment, if a state determined, under its plan for review and adjustment of orders, that an order being enforced under the program should be reviewed, the state must, at the request of either parent or of the child support agency, initiate a review of the order and adjust it, if appropriate.

Beginning five years after enactment, states were to begin to review and adjust individual case awards every three years in AFDC cases,

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unless it is not in the best interests of the child and neither parent has requested review.

In other IV-D cases, the review and adjustment process had to be available every three years if a parent requests it.

States were required to notify each parent subject to an order in effect in the state that is being enforced under title IV-D: (1) of any review of the order, at least 30 days before the commencement of the review; (2) of their right to request a review; and (3) of any proposed adjustment or determination that there should be no change to an order, allowing the parent at least 30 days for challenge.

Notice of Support Collected

Beginning January 1, 1993, states were to inform families receiving AFDC of the amount of support collected on their behalf on a monthly basis, rather than annually as previously required. States could provide quarterly notice if the Secretary of HHS determines that monthly reporting imposes an unreasonable administrative burden.

Performance Standards for Paternity Establishment

States were required to meet federal standards for establishing paternity beginning in FY92. A state's paternity establishment percentage had to (1) be at least 50%; (2) be at least equal to the average for all states; or (3) have increased by three percentage points from FY1988 to FY1991 and by three percentage points each year thereafter.

States had to require all parties in a contested paternity case to take a genetic test at the request of any party. States could charge individuals not receiving AFDC for the costs of genetic tests to establish paternity.

States were encouraged to adopt a simple civil process for voluntarily acknowledging paternity and a civil procedure for establishing paternity in contested cases.

The federal matching rate for laboratory testing to establish paternity was set at 90%.

Standards for Providing Services and Distributing Collections

The Secretary of HHS was required to issue regulations establishing time standards that states must meet in responding to requests for establishing and enforcing support orders, locating absent parents, establishing paternity, and collecting support. The standards must

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include time limits governing distribution of amounts collected as child support under the child support state plan.

Mandatory Automated Systems

Each state that did not have a statewide automated tracking and monitoring system in effect was required to submit an advance planning document that met federal requirements by October 1, 1991. By October 1, 1995, each state had to have an approved system in effect. The federal matching rate of 90% for this activity expired after September 30, 1995.

Additional Information Source for Parent Locator Service

The Secretaries of Labor and HHS were to enter into an agreement to give the FPLS access to wage and unemployment compensation claims information useful in locating absent parents.

Use of Social Security Number to Identify Parents

Each state, in the administration of any law involving the issuance of a birth certificate, was to begin requiring each parent to furnish his or her Social Security Number (SSN), unless the state found good cause for not requiring the parent to furnish it. The SSN cannot appear on the birth certificate, and the use of the SSN is restricted to child support purposes, except under certain circumstances.

- 1989** P.L. 101-239—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 made permanent the requirement that Medicaid benefits continue for four months after a family loses AFDC eligibility as a result of collection of child support payments.
- 1990** P.L. 101-508—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 permanently extended the provision allowing states to ask the IRS to collect child support arrearages of at least \$500 out-of-income tax refunds otherwise due to non-custodial parents in non-AFDC cases. The minor child restriction was eliminated for adults with a current support order who are disabled, as defined under OASDI or SSI. The IRS offset was allowed to be used for spousal support when spousal and child support are included in the same support order.
- P.L. 101-508 also extended the life of the Interstate Child Support Commission from July 1, 1991, to July 1, 1992, required the Commission to submit its report no later than May 1, 1992, and authorized the Commission to hire its own staff.
- 1992** P.L. 102-521—The Child Support Recovery Act of 1992 imposed a federal criminal penalty for the willful failure to pay a past-due child support obligation, with respect to a child who resides in another state, that has remained unpaid for longer than a year or is greater than \$5,000. For the first conviction, the penalty was to be a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for not more than six months; for a second

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conviction, a fine of not more than \$250,000 and/or imprisonment for up to two years was to be imposed.

P.L. 102-537—The Ted Weiss Child Support Enforcement Act of 1992 amended the Fair Credit Reporting Act to require consumer credit reporting agencies to include, in any consumer report, information on child support delinquencies provided by, or verified by, state or local child support agencies, which antedates the report by seven years.

The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act (UIFSA) (amended in 1996, 2001, and 2008).

1993 P.L. 103-66—The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 increased the percentage of children for whom the state must establish paternity and required states to adopt laws requiring civil procedures to voluntarily acknowledge paternity (including hospital-based programs).

P.L. 103-66 also required states to adopt laws to ensure the compliance of health insurers and employers in carrying out court or administrative orders for medical child support. It included a provision that forbade health insurers from denying coverage to children who are not living with the covered individual or who were born outside of marriage.

1994 P.L. 103-383—The Full Faith and Credit for Child Support Orders Act (FFCCSOA) required each state to enforce, according to its terms, a child support order by a court (or administrative authority) of another state. FFCCSOA offered conditions and specifications for resolving issues of jurisdiction.

P.L. 103-394—The Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1994 protected child support from being discharged in bankruptcy. Among many provisions, the new law provided that filing a bankruptcy petition does not operate as an automatic stay for an action to establish paternity, or to establish or modify a child support or spousal support order. Under the law, a bankruptcy debtor may not avoid a judicial lien securing a support debt. It also provided protection against trustee avoidance, facilitated access to bankruptcy proceedings, and assigned child support a priority for collecting claims from debtors.

P.L. 103-403—The Small Business Administration Reauthorization and Amendments Act required that recipients of financial assistance not be more than 60 days delinquent in paying child support.

P.L. 103-432—The Social Security Amendments of 1994 required state child support agencies to periodically report parents, who are at least two months delinquent in paying child support, to credit bureaus. It modified the benchmarks under the paternity establishment percentage formula used to determine the states' substantial compliance, and it required HHS to provide free access for the Justice Department to the

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FPLS in cases involving the unlawful taking or restraint of a child and/or the making or enforcing of a child custody determination.

1996 P.L. 104-193—The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) dramatically changed the nation's welfare system into one that required work in exchange for time-limited assistance. The law also contained comprehensive child support enforcement provisions based in large part on recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Interstate Child Support.

Under the law, each state was to operate a child support program meeting federal requirements to be eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grants. Provisions included:

Federal Case Registry and National Directory of New Hires New Hire Reporting System

PRWORA established a Federal Case Registry of Child Support Orders (FCR) and a National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) to track delinquent parents across state lines. It also required that employers report information on all new hires to state agencies for transmittal to the NDNH.

Streamlined Paternity Establishment

The law required states to streamline the legal process for establishing paternity. It also expanded the voluntary in-hospital paternity establishment program, and required the use of a state form for voluntary paternity acknowledgment.

Uniform Interstate Child Support Laws

PRWORA provided for uniform rules, procedures, and forms for interstate cases, by requiring states to (1) enact UIFSA 1996; and (2) enact stronger enforcement techniques such as enhanced income withholding, financial institution data match, interstate liens, and license suspension. It amended the Full Faith and Credit for Child Support Orders Act. It also mandated use of federal forms in interstate cases.

Centralized State Systems Computerized State-Wide Collections

The law required states to establish central registries of child support orders and state directories of new hires, as well as centralized collection and disbursement units.

Families First

Under a new "Family First" policy, families no longer receiving assistance were given priority in the distribution of child support arrears.

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Access and Visitation Programs

In an effort to increase noncustodial parents' involvement in their children's lives, the law included grants to help states establish programs that support and facilitate noncustodial parents' visitation with, and access to, their children.

1997 P.L. 105-33—The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 made a number of amendments to the Social Security Act, including creating the Children's Health Insurance Program in Title XXI to help provide medical coverage to children of working poor families, who are not eligible for private health insurance and who are earning too much to receive Medicaid. The Balanced Budget Act also amended section 454 of the Social Security Act regarding cooperation/good cause, and the FPLS language in section 453 to clarify the authority permitting certain re-disclosures of wage and claim information. Also, this Act authorized, for the first time, the direct funding of Tribal support programs, with Congress giving OCSE greater flexibility in providing direct funding for such programs and requiring OCSE to promulgate regulations before issuing grants directly to Tribes.

P.L. 105-34—The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 amended the Social Security Act by requiring, beginning October 1, 1999, that the Federal Case Registry of Child Support Orders include the names and social security numbers of children on whose behalf child support is owed, and that such information also be included in state case registries. Furthermore, the Secretary of the Treasury shall have access to the Federal Case Registry of Child Support Orders for the purpose of administering the tax provisions that grant tax benefits based on support or residence of a child.

P.L. 105-89—The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 made the Federal Parent Locator Service available to child welfare services for enforcement of custody and support orders.

1998 P.L. 105-200—The Child Support Performance and Incentive Act of 1998 (CSPIA) generally provided for an alternative penalty procedure for states that fail to meet federal child support data processing requirements, and it reformed federal incentive payments for effective child support performance. The law also required the creation of a Medical Support Working Group to identify any impediments to effective enforcement of medical support and to recommend appropriate remedies. [The Medical Support Working Group's report was issued in August of 2000.] The legislation also modified PROWRA to facilitate the data match for multistate financial institutions. With passage of P.L. 105-200, OCSE uses its national file of delinquent obligors for a data match with multistate financial institutions and transfers matched date to state agencies.

P.L. 105-306 included technical amendments to CSPIA that reduced, by 20%, the penalty for state failure to meet the deadline for compliance with child support data processing and information retrieval

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requirements. This law also amended the effective date for state enactment of certain medical support requirements.

P.L. 105-187—The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act established felony violations for the willful failure to pay legal child support obligations in interstate cases.

1999 P.L. 106-113—The Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY ending Sept. 30, 2000, contained several provisions affecting child support. Section 454A of the Social Security Act is amended by requiring state child support automated data processing and information retrieval systems to disclose to Private Industry Councils certain information on noncustodial parents for the purpose of contacting them regarding their participation in the welfare-to-work program. The Act also provided that if a state plan would be disapproved for failure to establish a disbursement unit for child support payments, but the state had submitted, by April 1, 2000, a corrective compliance plan acceptable to the Secretary, then the Secretary shall not disapprove the state plan for spousal and child support (but the amount otherwise payable to state will be reduced as a penalty). The Act also required the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, to submit a report to Congress on the feasibility of lowering the threshold amount of an individual's support arrearage, from \$5,000 to \$2,500, before the Secretary of State must refuse to issue a passport to such an individual.

P.L. 106-169—The Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 narrowed the hold harmless provision for state share distribution of collected child support.

2000 P.L. 106-394—The Federal Employees Health Benefits Children's Equity Act amended 5 U.S.C. § 8905 to add subsection (h), which allows the federal government to enroll an employee and his or her family in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program when a state or administrative authority orders the employee to provide health insurance coverage for a child of the employee, but the employee fails to do so. Prior to the enactment of P.L. 106-394, federal agencies were unable to ensure the health coverage of a child even if a court or administrative support order would require compliance by other employers.

2005 P.L. 109-8—The Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act contained a number of child support provisions helpful to states and families seeking to establish paternity and support orders and to enforce child support obligations. The provisions, set forth in Title II, Subtitle B "Priority Child Support," include: (1) defining a "domestic support obligation;" (2) providing that enforcement by income withholding, license suspension, credit bureau reporting, tax refund intercepts, and enforcement of medical obligations are exempt from automatic stay provisions; (3) giving domestic support obligations first priority in distribution of available funds; and (4) instructing bankruptcy trustees to provide appropriate written notice and certain information to an obligee and child support agency. The amendments also improved guidelines concerning the nondischargeability of certain debts for

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alimony, maintenance, and support, and set forth the duties of the Bankruptcy trustee in communication with the claim holder, as well as the appropriate state child support agency of the debtor's last known address.

- 2006** P.L. 109-171—Child support provisions in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 made many changes to the child support Program. These provisions eliminated pre-assistance assignment of support rights; required that all child support orders include a provision that either or both parents must provide medical support; allowed states to enforce medical support against the custodial parent; required child support agencies to collect co-pays, deductibles, and unreimbursed medical expenses for a child; reduced the federal matching rate for lab costs associated with paternity establishment from 90% to 66%; required states to impose an annual fee of \$25 in each case in which an individual has never received AFDC or TANF and for whom the state has collected at least \$500 of child support; allowed states to pass through support to families on TANF; eliminated states' ability to claim federal matching funds for performance incentives earned; lowered the arrearage amount that triggers denial of a passport to a noncustodial parent who owes past-due child support from \$5,000 to \$2,500; and created new federal grants for fatherhood and marriage initiatives.
- 2008** The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved amendments to the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act. The 2008 amendments were not designed to make any fundamental changes to the Act, but rather to modify UIFSA's current international provisions to comply with the United States' obligations under the Hague Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance. A new Article 7 was added to UIFSA that only applies to Convention cases. The amendments also address modification jurisdiction when parties have moved from the issuing state or foreign country.
- 2009** P.L. 111-5—The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act temporarily (for FY2009 and FY2010) reinstated federal matching of child support incentive payments.
- 2014** P.L. 113-183—Child support provisions in the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 were designed to streamline enforcement of child support in international cases. The provisions, under Title III of the Act, "Improving International Child Support Recovery," included:

Amendments to Ensure Access to Child Support Services for International Child Support Cases

Among other changes, the legislation authorized the Secretary of HHS to implement child support treaties, extended the eligibility for IRS tax offset to collections made pursuant to applications from foreign reciprocating countries and Hague Convention countries,

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and required states to enact UIFSA 2008 as a condition of receiving federal funds.

Child Support Enforcement Programs for Indian Tribes

Amendments to sections 453(c)(1) and 1115(b) of the Social Security Act provided tribal access to the Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS). The law also provides that an Indian tribe or tribal organization operating a IV-D program must be considered a state for purposes of authority to conduct an experimental, pilot or demonstration project.

Sense of the Congress Regarding Offering of Voluntary Parenting Time Arrangements

Congress noted that establishing parenting time arrangements when obtaining child support orders is an important goal that should be accompanied by strong family violence safeguards, and that states should use existing funding sources to support the establishment of parenting time arrangements, including child support incentives, Access and Visitation Grants, and Marriage Promotion and Responsible Fatherhood Grants.

Data Exchange Standardization for Improved Interoperability

The legislation required data exchange standardization.

Report to Congress

The Secretary of HHS was directed to review and provide recommendations for cost-effective improvements to the Title IV-D child support program and ensure that the plan addresses the effectiveness and performance of the program, analyzes program practices, identifies possible new collection tools and approaches, and identifies strategies for holding parents accountable for supporting their children and for building the capacity of parents to pay child support, with specific attention given to matters including front-end services, ongoing case management, collections, tribal-state partnerships, interstate and intergovernmental interactions, program performance, data analytics, and information technology.

Electronic Processing of Income Withholding

This section amended section 454A(g)(1) of the Social Security Act to require that by October 1, 2015, states must electronically transmit income withholding orders to employers, at the option of the employer, using electronic transmission methods prescribed by the Secretary of HHS.

2017 The National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws and the American Bar Association approved amendments to the Uniform Parentage Act, which was last revised in 2002. UPA (2017) makes five

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major changes to the UPA. First, it seeks to ensure the equal treatment of children born to same-sex couples. Second, it includes a provision for the establishment of a *de facto* parent as a legal parent of a child. Third, it includes a provision that precludes establishment of a parent-child relationship by the perpetrator of a sexual assault that resulted in the conception of the child. Fourth, it updates the surrogacy provisions in the Act. Finally, UPA (2017) includes a new article – Article 9 – that addresses the right of children born through assisted reproductive technology to access medical and identifying information regarding any gamete providers.

2018 P.L. 115-123—The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 increased the annual \$25 fee a custodial parent must pay after \$500 has been collected to \$35 once \$550 has been collected and disbursed.