



## Program Model — Voluntary Participation

Child support agencies identify and recruit participants for voluntary enrollment in their employment services program. Using specified criteria during case reviews, caseworkers identify parents who meet criteria for enrollment. Caseworkers either make direct contact with the parent to offer enrollment or refer them to program staff for outreach and recruitment. Additionally, other human services programs, community partners, the other parent, or family members can refer a parent for possible participation based on existing relationships and awareness of barriers to payment or employment. Upon identifying an eligible parent, caseworkers may take these steps:

- Contact the parent and provide the information they need to enroll.
- Provide the parent's information to the employment program for initial contact.
- Schedule an initial appointment with employment services and other partners, such as fatherhood. If needed, consider providing initial supportive services such as transportation assistance to attend the appointment.
- Inform the custodial parent that employment services have been offered to the noncustodial parent as a way to improve payment compliance.

In some instances, caseworkers offer incentives or enhanced child support services for enrollment, and follow through on related expectations. These enhanced services may include the following:

- State owed debt compromise
- Suppression or suspension of certain enforcement remedies
- Reinstatement of driver's licenses suspended for nonpayment of support
- Expedited review and adjustment of child support orders
- Referrals to parenting and other community supports
- Initial transportation assistance

Key program elements:

- Led by child support staff who promote the program, actively review cases, and target parents for enrollment
- Partners who promote noncustodial parent employment services and enhanced child support services
- Co-locating child support and employment services staff
- Communication system between all partners for tracking compliance and participation, and also for program management and maintenance

### Things to consider about this model:

- Requires outreach or recruitment efforts to partners and parents
- May appear to provide services and support for someone who isn't fulfilling personal responsibility
- Allows for early intervention before use of enforcement remedies, animosity between the parent and agency, and severe nonpayment for the family
- Requires proper authority