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Countywide Operational Performance Review – Santa Barbara Child Support Services Department

Updated April 2024

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Contents

Executive Summary

The County of Santa Barbara (the County) contracted with KPMG LLP (KPMG) in May 2019 to conduct an operational and performance review of all County departments. KPMG conducted a review of the Child Support Services Department (the Department) commencing in November 2023. The purpose of this review was to provide a high-level assessment of the Department to identify strengths and opportunities across key focus areas with the goal of enhancing overall operational efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery provided by the Department.

The following focus areas per division were developed in conjunction with the CEO's Office and the Department to guide the focus of this review. These focus areas are outlined in the graphic below.

	Organizational Structure	Effectiveness of the Telework model in terms of accountability, performance management, customer service, staff morale, and alignment to leading practices.
	Governance Structure	Transition planning processes related to readiness for leadership turnover.
	Coordination with Key Partners and Stakeholders	Effectiveness of the Whole Person approach to care in providing participants with a warm hand-off to complimentary departments dependent on need.
	Staffing Model	Evaluating opportunities to right-size the Santa Barbara Office.
	Technology Enablement	The efficiency and effectiveness of self-service kiosks and updated enrollment process and the management of potential security risks and processes in place for the adoption of teleparticipation for court hearings.

Figure 1: Source: KPMG

Scope and Methodology

Over a seven-week period, the KPMG Team conducted the following activities:

— Approximately 20 interviews with Department leadership and staff to understand the organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, operations, and processes of the Department.

— Analysis of available data and policy documents to understand the demands upon and the operations of the Department.

— A benchmarking review was also conducted across the eight benchmark counties specified in our contract at the request of the CEO's Office. Please refer to the Appendix for detailed full-time equivalents (FTE) and budget benchmarking across the Department.

Figure 2: Source: KPMG

Description

The Department supports children's futures, assisting parents and guardians by establishing, collecting, and distributing child and medical support for minors. The Department's work is an important part of the State of California's (the State) effort to nurture and protect children and help them and their families achieve self-sufficiency. Services are available to all families, regardless of income or immigration status. Finally, the program is funded by State and federal funds, with centralized authority residing in the State Department of Child Support Services (DCSS).

Mission

The Department's mission is to serve children and families by establishing parentage and enforcing support orders in a fair and equitable manner.
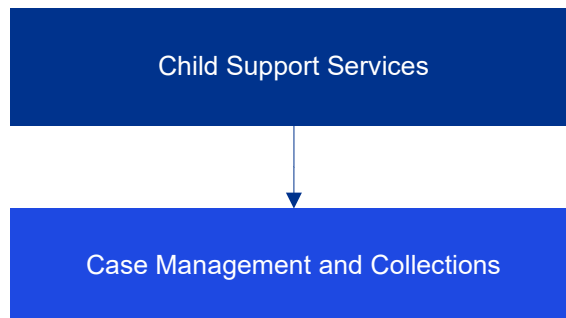
Figure 3: Source: KPMG

Budget Information for Fiscal Year 2023–2024

$11.2 million	$0	$0	75
Operating Expenses	**Capital Assets**	**General Fund Contribution**	**FTEs**

Figure 4: Source: KPMG

County Benchmarks

The benchmarks utilized to develop the average FTEs and budget listed below relate to the eight benchmark counties of Monterey, Solano, Sonoma, Tulare, Placer, San Luis Obispo, Marin, and Santa Cruz. Please see County Budget and FTE Benchmarks Appendix for further detail.

		Santa Barbara	Average
Recommended FY 2023–2024	Division FTE	75.00	55.33
	Percent of Enterprise	1.62%	1.52%
	FY2023–2024 Division Budget ($'000)	11,272	9,212
	Percent of Enterprise	0.76%	0.65%
Adopted FY 2022–2023	Division FTE	68.00	62.84
	Percent of Enterprise	1.52%	1.66%
	FY2022–2023 Division Budget ($'000)	10,011	9,407
	Percent of Enterprise	0.72%	0.70%
Actual FY 2021–2022	Department FTE	61.12	64.84
	Percent of Enterprise	1.41%	1.75%
	FY2021–2022 Department Budget ($'000)	9,094	8,992
	Percent of Enterprise	0.69%	0.72%

Figure 5: Source: KPMG

Commendations

The below commendations were identified during the course of the review and recognize the dedication of the Department to its mission.

Successful implementation of flexible scheduling

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department was required to transition toward virtual service delivery. Recognizing the benefits of flexible scheduling in terms of employee satisfaction and retention, the Department transitioned toward a hybrid staffing structure after the pandemic. The structure provides flexible scheduling to staff, whether that be virtual, in-office, or hybrid. Across all interviews, staff reported satisfaction with the model and identified it as a key retention factor. It has also proven to be a key factor in attracting experienced staff, with over 100 applications recently received for an advertised child support officer position.

Development of a Tableau dashboard to monitor staff productivity

Recognizing that enhanced performance management processes are required as a result of transition to a hybrid wok structure, the Department developed a Tableau dashboard to monitor employee activities. This included a display of case numbers per employee (by time of case occurrence), number of phone calls and text messages sent by employees, as well as number of assigned activities completed. Managers and supervisors review the dashboard daily and follow up with staff members proactively where performance is not aligned to expectations.

Rightsizing of Santa Maria and Santa Barbara offices

Due to requirements related to transitioning to a hybrid structure, the Department rightsized its Santa Maria office location in 2022. This resulted in annual savings of $100,000 through a 60 percent reduction in office space. The Department is currently in the process of rightsizing its Santa Barbara office location to replicate these benefits. In doing so, Department leadership are collaborating with General Services to help ensure they comply with County processes and have developed a plan to guide the rightsizing. It is scheduled for completion in early 2024 and is likely to result in further cost savings for the Department.

Strong transition planning processes

The Department has experienced several leadership changes as a result of the retirement of the Department Head and the Managing Attorney. Department leadership have planned for these changes over the past several months to enable a smooth transition. For example, Department leadership effectively utilized their budget to allow for an overlap between the retiring Department Head and Managing Attorney to support work shadowing and training. Department leadership also developed a repository of useful documents for replacement staff to reference.

Establishment of Parenting Court pilot

The Department is piloting a Parenting Court to assist child support obligors who are facing contempt of court charges based on their failure to pay child support. The program is a restorative court designed to help the obligors identify and overcome the barriers that are preventing them from financially supporting their children. The Parenting Court will also connect participants to resources that will help them learn parenting skills and better navigate custody and visitation issues. Parenting Court is seen as a leading practice model that supports individuals in receiving the services they need, including job skills, substance abuse, and/or mental health services to reduce barriers to payment.

Deep and demonstrated commitment to mission

At all levels of the Department, there is a demonstrated commitment to mission. It is clear that the Department is deeply committed to serving its customers and families by establishing parentage and enforcing support orders in a fair and equitable manner.

Renew '22 Mapping

The recommendations made within the operational review have been aligned to the Renew '22 transformation behaviors to enable the recommendations to continually drive toward the Renew '22 strategic vision, as seen in the figure below. The colored tiles identify the Renew '22 transformation behaviors that align to each recommendation.

			Transformation behaviors				
			Alignment with vision	Data-driven decision-making	Strategic thinking	Risk taking	Collaborative problem-solving
Participant service delivery	1.1	Perform an analysis of child support orders with arrears to identify opportunities for targeted intervention.		■	■		■
	1.2	Strengthen early intervention strategies to support vulnerable participants in receiving the resources required to meet child support payments.	■	■			■
	1.3	Improve workload allocation processes for locate cases to streamline processes and reduce resolution times.		■	■		
	1.4	Enhance marketing and outreach activities to effectively identify and target participant populations in need of service.	■	■	■	■	
Collaboration with key stakeholders	2.1	Explore opportunities to increase data sharing capabilities with other County departments to better support participants who experience complex social issues.	■	■	■		■
	2.2	Enhance collaboration with the courts and human services agencies to support participants' diverse needs and strengthen the whole-person approach to care for the family.	■	■	■		■
Technology enablement	3.1	Update processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby to increase staff efficiency and reduce participant wait times.	■		■		

Figure 6: Source: KPMG

Prioritized Timeline

The following report consists of seven recommendations that were developed as part of this review. Proposed high-level timing and prioritization for each recommendation is depicted below. Please refer to the Appendix for a more detailed timeline by month.

			High-level timeline			
			Months 1–3	**Months 4–6**	**Months 7–9**	**Months 10–12**
Participant service delivery	1.1	Perform an analysis of child support orders with arrears to identify opportunities for targeted intervention.	■	■		
	1.2	Strengthen early intervention strategies to support vulnerable participants in receiving the resources required to meet child support payments.		■	■	■
	1.3	Improve workload allocation processes for locate cases to streamline processes and reduce resolution times.		■		
	1.4	Enhance marketing and outreach activities to effectively identify and target participant populations in need of service.	■			
Collaboration with key stakeholders	2.1	Explore opportunities to increase data sharing capabilities with other County departments to better support participants who experience complex social issues.		■	■	■
	2.2	Enhance collaboration with the courts and human services agencies to support participants' diverse needs and strengthen the whole-person approach to care for the family.		■	■	■
Technology enablement	3.1	Update processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby to increase staff efficiency and reduce participant wait times.	■			

Figure 7: Source: KPMG

Operating Model Maturity Scale

The figure below summarizes the Department's current-state operating model as well as the target state that can be achieved by implementing the recommendations in the following sections. The purple boxes indicate each office's capabilities at the time of the review, and the gold boxes illustrate the level of maturity that KPMG believes is attainable through the recommendations in this report. Each operating model layer describes a continuum of maturity related to optimal service delivery.
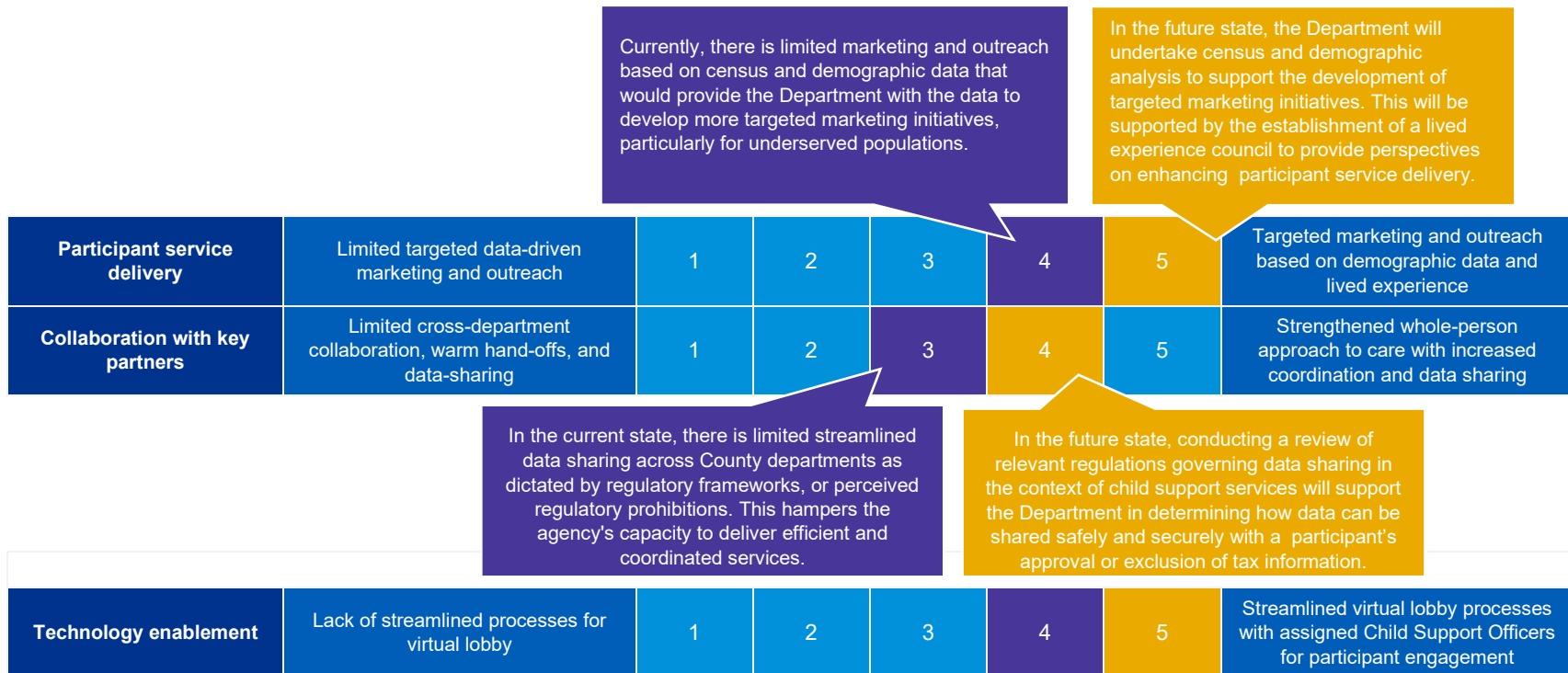
Currently, there is limited marketing and outreach based on census and demographic data that would provide the Department with the data to develop more targeted marketing initiatives, particularly for underserved populations.

In the future state, the Department will undertake census and demographic analysis to support the development of targeted marketing initiatives. This will be supported by the establishment of a lived experience council to provide perspectives on enhancing participant service delivery.

Participant service delivery	Limited targeted data-driven marketing and outreach	1	2	3	4	5	Targeted marketing and outreach based on demographic data and lived experience
Collaboration with key partners	Limited cross-department collaboration, warm hand-offs, and data-sharing	1	2	3	4	5	Strengthened whole-person approach to care with increased coordination and data sharing

In the current state, there is limited streamlined data sharing across County departments as dictated by regulatory frameworks, or perceived regulatory prohibitions. This hampers the agency's capacity to deliver efficient and coordinated services.

In the future state, conducting a review of relevant regulations governing data sharing in the context of child support services will support the Department in determining how data can be shared safely and securely with a participant's approval or exclusion of tax information.

Technology enablement	Lack of streamlined processes for virtual lobby	1	2	3	4	5	Streamlined virtual lobby processes with assigned Child Support Officers for participant engagement

Figure 8: Source: KPMG

Participant Service Delivery

The below recommendations are associated with enhancing participant service delivery in the Department.

1.1	Perform an analysis of child support orders with arrears to identify opportunities for targeted intervention.

Benefit

Performing a detailed analysis of child support orders in arrears will offer the following key benefits to the Department:

— By consistently reviewing caseloads in arrears based on the type of arrears and timeframe in arrears (e.g., 30-day, 60-day, 120-day, 1–2-year, 3+ years arrears), the Department will be able to develop proactive, targeted intervention strategies to better manage caseloads—increasing the likelihood of payments.

— It will support the achievement of federal performance measures, increasing Department-wide cost effectiveness through higher federal performance-based incentive payments.

Current State

The Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement monitors the performance of county agencies and applies incentive payments through five key performance measures. One of these performance measures focuses on the collection of arrears payments that relate to accrued unpaid support orders. More specifically, this measure compares the number of child support cases in arrears to the number of cases where payments toward arrears were made within the federal fiscal year (FFY). This performance measure incentivizes Child Support Services departments to maximize the number of payments made against cases in arrears regardless of the value of those payments.

As of September 2023, the Department maintains an arrears balance of $158,813,098 for all fiscal years, including 10 percent annual interest. In FFY 2023, an average of 64.9 percent of cases were making payment towards arrears. This has declined by approximately 15 percent since FFY 2021. This is due to a postpandemic decline in unemployment benefit due to the expiration of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program.

Currently, Child Support Officers (CSOs) within the Enforcement Team manage various case types, including cases with payment arrears. The Department has developed a Tableau dashboard to track workload and performance against metrics for all cases including those with payment arrears. The dashboard categorizes cases based on delinquency timeframes (i.e., 30-day, 60-day, 120-day, 1–2-year) The dashboard also provides notifications when a payment is more than seven days late. In addition, the system generates specific tasks that alerts CSOs when regular payments or payments from income withholding orders or unemployment have stopped in a case for over 30 days.

Despite these efforts, interviewees advised that they typically become aware of nonreceipt of payment following a phone call or email from a parent who receives support. For example, interviewees reported limited knowledge of the ability to breakdown cases in arrears by length of time in arrears within the dashboard. This would allow staff to more proactively implement targeted intervention strategies, such as referral to service need (e.g., workforce development board) or debt reduction. Rather, interviewees reported that cases with payment arrears are typically prioritized based on the frequency with which parents who receive support contact the Department about nonpayment.

This can often result in a reactive approach to the management of arrears that may **prolong resolution** through an inability to proactively identify cases in arrears and intervene where appropriate. Vulnerable participants without the means to make payment may subsequently be held in contempt of court after three months of nonpayment—despite the root cause of nonpayment being outside of the program's control (e.g., loss of employment, mental health issues). The contempt of court process can be lengthy, costly, and often unsuccessful, further prolonging the time that the parent receiving support requires federal assistance or fails to receive financial support from the paying parent.

Comparative Practices

Orange County Child Support Services,[1] **California,** uses analytics to predict who is at high risk of failing to pay support and identifies the factors that could get the parent into compliance more effectively. This approach is data-driven—based on the County's extensive research into the factors that help parents fulfill their obligations. The ultimate goal being to identify the key reasons behind nonpayment of child support and coordinate the necessary supports with the aim of reducing the number of children living in poverty.

With better analytics, the agency gathers everything it knows about the parent, analyzes it, and assigns a score, which details information concerning ability to pay and the factors that might encourage full or timely payments. Parents with significant challenges—unemployment, criminal records, or homelessness—receive a "seedling" score classification that lets caseworkers know that this parent needs more time and help to be able to pay. Others are classified as "saplings" or "young trees" if they have one deficit that could make a significant difference in their ability to pay.

Orange County research shows that a person with a high school diploma or general education diploma (GED) pays 44 percent more support over the life of that child than a high school dropout. With that knowledge, a caseworker might decide to encourage night school. A parent with an old felony conviction hindering employment might be sent to a public defender to get the conviction expunged. If the conviction is recent, then the parent might be referred to employers who hire those recently released from prison.

Results:

Within six months of implementation, the system has been embraced by the County's 60 caseworkers who use it daily. Among the successes:

— Using a scoring tool, a caseworker was prompted to find additional government benefits for a disabled parent that enabled him to pay $100 a month that he owed in child support.

— Another parent was referred to low-cost medical help for a nagging health problem that was interfering with work.

Caseworkers can review the score with a customer, then collaboratively design an earnings improvement plan that meets the customer's needs, interests, and skills. Building a success plan with parents that is tailored to them specifically, where they can see the possible results, adds a key benefit for customer engagement.

Colorado Child Support Services – Early Intervention for Arrears[2]**:** The Colorado Child Support Services program targeted cases with missed payments and existing cases with arrears for additional deployment of its early intervention strategies. With these strategies in place, caseworkers more promptly learned about changes in parents' circumstances, such as the loss of employment. This timely information resulted in an increase in modifications of child support orders, subsequently increasing collections on cases that would have otherwise likely accrued an arrears balance. Additionally, these strategies also increased collection on cases with arrears. It is important to note that most of the

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[1] Orange County Child Support Services Uses Analytics to Provide Better Options for Parents (govtech.com)
[2] Microsoft Word - cover, toc, appendix covers.doc (state.co.us)

payments made for cases with arrears were one-time payments and did not result in ongoing compliance.

Recommendation

The Department should update its Tableau dashboard and conduct a detailed analysis of current arrears by arrears type (e.g., arrears greater than 30 days, 90 days, 120 days, 365 days, and 2–3 years and a breakdown of arrears owed to the State versus those owed to the parent who receives support). This analysis will support the development of targeted strategies by arrears category, which may include referral to debt reduction or deployment of early intervention strategies. In the future state, the Department should also explore the adoption of predictive analytics to more proactively identify targeted intervention strategies.

Suggested Action Steps to Implement Recommendation

Action one: Update the Tableau dashboard to provide greater detail on cases in arrears. As a first step, the Department should update its dashboard to include more detailed data about cases in arrears. This will allow CSOs to proactively and consistently review data for cases in arrears and make data-driven decisions surrounding management of these cases. Proposed changes to the dashboard include:

— Percentage of cases in arrears where payment was received in the last month (calculated to align with federal performance measures)

— Number of cases in arrears by timeframe and type (i.e., breakdown of arrears owed to the State versus those owed to the parent who receives support) per team and per staff member

Action two: Utilize the data points outlined in action one to deploy targeted efforts on resolving the cases with arrears. In the future state, there is an opportunity for the Department to train staff on dashboard capabilities, particularly as it relates to timeframe in arrears and arrears type. This will support CSOs in undertaking more robust tracking of arrears data and subsequently deploying targeted strategies focused on collecting payment or using other methods to resolve child support cases with arrears. The strategies should consider the following activities:

— Implement early intervention strategies for cases in arrears by 1–89 days. Model early intervention strategies have been outlined in recommendation 1.2.

— Where early intervention programs are unsuccessful, CSOs should route the case to the Department's Review and Adjustments team to consider whether the case may be eligible for order modification.

— Where cases with arrears owed to the State continue to remain unresolved, CSOs should promptly refer these cases to be considered for the State's Debt Reduction Program.

Action three: Create a standard operating procedure (SOP) related to the management of cases with arrears. The State, in collaboration with the University of California, San Diego, is currently conducting a collectability study, which is expected to result in changes to policies and procedures relating to the collection of arrears. In the future state, following the results of the collectability study, the Department may benefit from having a guideline or playbook in place to help CSOs manage and prioritize cases with arrears. In developing this guideline, the Department may consider the following key steps:

— **Step one:** The Department should review its historical performance related to collection on cases with arrears and the average collection on these cases per CSO. Based on this information, Department leadership should develop a target for each CSO that can potentially help the Department reach its federal performance target for arrears. The target should be included within the SOP.

- **Step two:** The Department should develop a rubric to prioritize the targeted activities detailed in action two. For example, early intervention strategies should be deployed first, followed by the potential modification of orders and/or referral to the State's Debt Reduction Program.

- **Step three:** Once the prioritization rubric has been finalized, the Department should create a step-by-step process flow incorporating the targeted activities and the order in which they should occur.

- **Step four:** The Department should collate the outputs of steps one to three into the guideline.

- **Step five:** The Department should conduct a briefing session for CSOs to review the guideline and provide feedback. Adjustments should be made to the guideline, where necessary, based on feedback provided. During this feedback cycle, the Department should also incorporate findings from the Lived Experience Council mentioned in recommendation 1.4 to help account for participant experience.

- **Step six:** The Department should continue to review the guideline at least annually to help ensure its contents and processes remain accurate. The targets established by Department leadership in step one should also be updated in accordance with the federal performance measure for the associated federal fiscal year.

- **Step seven:** Lastly, the Department should track the outcomes related to the deployment of this strategy, so that the process can continuously be improved. For example, the Department should track the percentage of unemployed participants that are referred to the workforce development board or a financial aid resource and return to making payments.

Action four: Explore opportunities to implement predictive analytics: Finally, in the future state, the Department should explore opportunities to implement predictive analytics to predict which cases may be at high risk of failing to pay support. This would allow the Department to identify targeted early intervention strategies that could support the noncustodial parent in remaining compliant in the future. In undertaking this action, the Department should consider the following:

- Whether the key capabilities required under any predictive analytics solution

- Whether the Department has the skills and capabilities to develop the tool internally or whether a Request for Information process should be initiated to identify available vendors

- Funding for the development/purchase of the tool

- Developing an implementation plan for solution adoption.

1.2	Strengthen early intervention strategies to support vulnerable participants in receiving the resources required to meet child support payments.
Benefit	

Strengthening early intervention strategies may result in the following key benefits for the Department:

- It may reduce rates of payment default among parents who pay support by helping to ensure they have access to necessary supports, services, and information before the negative cycle of debt has time to begin.

- It may increase the number of cases with payments in arrears by helping to ensure that appropriate early intervention strategies are deployed at the outset of a payment default. In turn, this may increase cost effectiveness by enabling the Department to achieve higher federal performance-based incentive payments.

Current State

Currently, the Department operates a Post Order Early Intervention Program (POEIP) that provides participants with an orientation at the outset of a child support order to inform them of the terms of their court order, their rights, and obligations, as well as the potential consequences of failure to comply with the order. During the POEIP orientation, CSOs complete the following activities:

— Describe the background of the child support program and its current function

— Inform all parties of the Department's enforcement procedures

— Discuss the terms of the child support order with the parent who receives support and the parent who pays support

— Introduce the various channels where payments can be made (e.g., over the phone, at eligible convenience store partners, online, and kiosks)

— Convey the potential consequences of not making payments on time

— Inform the parent who pays support that they will be charged 10 percent interest on arrears.

As valuable as this information is, the POEIP could include additional behaviorally informed intervention strategies:

— **Communication options:** Interviewees indicated that participants sometimes visit the office for assistance because they are not aware that there are other ways to contact their assigned CSO, make payments, or answer general questions. Interviewees noted that in circumstances where a participant understands they can perform tasks and receive assistance virtually, they are typically more satisfied with the process.

— **Customized cover sheets:** When the Department shares documents associated with an order to a parent who pays support by mail or other means, there is an opportunity to include a personalized cover sheet prompting contact with a CSO and highlighting potential case impacts if they fail to make contact. This can be a valuable way to inform paying parents that they are a part of the process and have the ability to provide input.

— **Follow-up communications to solicit positive behavior:** The Department could incorporate language to solicit positive behavior from paying parents into its follow-up communications. For example, encouraging the parent who pays support to participate in the child support process, so that they can vocalize their input or needs related to complying with the order.

Additionally, the Department has started a coaching initiative with a small cohort of six CSOs. The goal is to build on their existing knowledge and customer service skills. As part of this initiative, the Department has engaged with a consultant to provide trainings to the cohort, which includes training on motivational interviewing and other techniques to promote better relationship building and outcomes with participants. However, training surrounding motivational interviewing has not yet been standardized or expanded across all CSOs within the Department.

Recommendation

In the future state, the Department should enhance and expand its POEIP strategies to include a focus on adjusting the behaviors and identifying changes in circumstances for parents who pay support. The Department should also enhance its training for all CSOs to include a larger focus on motivational interviewing and behavioral intervention, which may assist with participant engagement to develop positive relationships with challenging participants, motivate behavior change, and encourage timely payments.

The following are examples of early intervention strategies and training practices that the Department may consider adopting based on leading practice research:

Michigan Office of Child Support[3] – Macomb County[4]: The Michigan Office of Child Support (OCS) implemented motivational interviewing in Macomb County, before statewide implementation, to help its child support participants have an improved experience and provide them with the support needed to make significant positive changes in their lives. The OCS released these techniques within its learning management system (LMS) for mandatory completion by all caseworkers. The recorded sessions in the LMS focus on asking open-ended questions and exploring customer needs to provide information for additional resources.

Colorado Child Support Services (Phase 1 – Denver, Garfield, Pitkin, and Rio Blanco Counties)[5] – Behavioral Intervention[6]: The Colorado Child Support Services program decided to deploy behavioral intervention strategies to increase payment amounts and the percentage of parents who made payments after order establishment. These strategies were implemented using a phased approach starting with the Denver, Garfield, Pitkin, and Rio Blanco Counties and then expanded statewide. The programs in these Counties utilized loss aversion, reminders, simplification, and several other tools with parents who pay support. Key activities included:

— Conducting a payment meeting when new orders are established or payments are missed and reviewing a decision tree with the participant that recommended the best payment method based on the parent's payment habits.

— Sending personalized reminders by text, email, or phone aligned to the parent's preferred payment method.

— Follow-up monitoring to intervene as soon as a payment is missed.

This helped the program increase the amount paid by parents by nearly 20 percent in the first three months of an order. For parents who had more than one case, this strategy increased the amount paid by an average of $405. Payment meetings were considered the most impactful activity related to the implementation of behavioral intervention.

Cuyahoga County Office of Child Support Services (OCSS)[8]: The Cuyahoga County OCSS used simplification, a behavioral strategy, to increase the proportion of parents who reached important milestones in the modification review process. The agency started by providing parents with greatly simplified modification paperwork and reminders to complete it along the way. More specifically, a one-page modification was sent with an option to fast track the modification review if both parents agreed, staff conducted follow-up calls five days after the revised affidavit was mailed, and additional outreach occurred through letters, text messages, and automated telephone reminders ten days before the submission deadline. As a result, the number of affidavits and reviews completed increased by 2 percentage points. While the simplification of the affidavit did not result in significant change, the additional strategy of removing the eligibility determination process step for parents whose eligibility could be easily determined using existing administrative data achieved an 11.3 percentage point increase in modification affidavits returned to the agency. This change allowed the agency to focus on initiating the modification review process for parents meeting certain criteria, such as incarceration or inquiries about modifying orders that had not received modification reviews in the previous 36 months .

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[3] 2020-020, Introduction of the Resource Guide for Referring Child Support Customers to Available Resources (michigan.gov)
[4] https://michildsupportpundit.blogspot.com/2019/07/encouraging-better-compliance-with.html
[5] https://childsupport.state.co.us/sites/default/files/2019-05/BICS%20Phase%20I%20Overview.pdf
[6] Tools for Better Practices and Better Outcomes (hhs.gov)

The Department should consider the following key actions to strengthen its early intervention strategies:

Action one: Expand current early intervention strategies to other types of delinquent cases. In the future state, the Department may consider utilizing additional early intervention strategies. The following are the examples of early intervention strategies the Department may consider:

Informing participants about the various channels of communication they can utilize to contact their assigned CSOs:

— **Step one:** The Department should review all the possible channels of communication it has in place to assist with participant needs.

— **Step two:** The Department should list the channels of communication in a document or checklist. This document or checklist should also include security guidelines for communication with Department staff and the court. For example, each program participant should verify they are communicating with Department staff in communications to avoid sharing sensitive information with fraudulent parties.

— **Step three:** The Department should survey CSOs about the relative effectiveness of each communication option. It may be that they overwhelmingly feel that one option (texting, email, messages through a portal, etc.) is most likely to be effective with this group. Feedback from this survey should be incorporated within the document or checklist.

— **Step four:** Staff members that are part of the POEIP team should utilize the checklist to make sure they communicate all the forms of contact available to each participant during initial outreach. These staff members should also reiterate the need for participants to verify they are communicating with Department or court staff to avoid the release of sensitive information and other data security incidents.

Customizing the cover sheets provided with documents shared during initial contact with parents:

— **Step one:** The Department should create a one-page personalized document to include with mail and service packages sent to parents who pay support at the outset of engagement. The Department might consider incorporating the following criteria into the document:

  o Providing the paying parent with a sense of control in the opening statement. For example, letting them know they have the right to provide input related to their child support order

  o Highlighting the mechanisms available for the parent who pays support to contact the Department and access payment information

  o Stating the consequences related to not contacting the Department and/or failing to make the payments required by the child support order.

— **Step two:** The Department should test this document with a select group of participants and adjust based on feedback.

— **Step three:** The Department should include this one-page cover document in all service packages and documentation sent to parents who pay support.

Personalizing follow-up communications to solicit positive behavior:

— **Step one:** The Department should review the threshold at which paying parents are reluctant to communicate to set a trigger point for sending a follow-up letter and/or email. For example, if the Department notices that after two phone call attempts, paying parents continue to be nonresponsive, this can be the trigger for more formalized follow-up.

— **Step two:** The Department should create a personalized follow-up letter and email template that will be sent to nonresponsive parents. The Department can consider including the following criteria in the template:

- o Encouraging the parent who pays support to provide input in the opening statement by providing the benefits of cooperation and their options or privileges related to the payment process

- o Describing the importance of communicating with a CSO

- o Including all channels of communication the parent who pays support can use to contact the Department; to avoid creating choice overload, the Department should consider prioritizing and emphasizing one or two channels that CSOs agree are most likely to encourage engagement

- o Providing a deadline to create a sense of urgency

- o Highlighting potential consequences the paying parent may face as a result of being nonresponsive.

— **Step three:** The Department should provide CSOs with the email and letter template, so that they can send it out after the communication trigger point established in step one is reached.

Action two: Enhance training for CSOs to include a stronger focus on motivational interviewing and behavioral intervention. In undertaking this action, the following key steps should be undertaken:

— **Step one:** The Department should expand training modules to be included in the current CSO training curriculum that provide staff with tools and resources to do the following:

- o **Motivational interviewing:**[7]

  - o Developing a strong relationship with the participant

  - o Determining a particular change that the participant would like to achieve; this change should be positive and treated as a goal

  - o Helping the participant express their motivation for change

  - o Planning to help the participant cultivate the changes and goals they want to achieve.

- o **Behavioral interventions:**[8]

  - o Simplifying communication of processes, responsibilities, and complex information related to child support orders

  - o Personalizing written communication to help encourage participants to participate in recommended activities

  - o Focusing on loss aversion since participants tend to prefer avoiding losses than acquiring gains

  - o Promoting actions by conveying how similar persons or society would act in similar situations to influence positive behavior

  - o Providing reminders for dates and deadlines frequently to help participants overcome procrastination.

— **Step three:** The Department should release the training to all existing CSOs and deploy it to new CSOs shortly after they are hired.

— **Step four:** The Department should create a performance mechanism to track the effectiveness of these modules. Potential key performance indicators include:

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[7] Motivational Interviewing: A Primer for Child Welfare Professionals
[8] Tools for Better Practices and Better Outcomes (hhs.gov)

- o Number of positive reviews from new or existing participants where these frameworks have been deployed

- o Participant compliance with deadlines related to payments and information sharing

- o Number of goals achieved by participants (positive lifestyle changes as a result of the Department's ongoing support).

— **Step five:** The Department should update its training materials on a regular basis (annually) to continuously incorporate leading practices and adjust to participant needs.

1.3	**Improve workload allocation processes for Locate cases to streamline processes and reduce resolution times.**

Benefit

Improving workload allocation processes for Locate cases may result in the following key benefits for the Department:

— It will support the Department in placing more emphasis on Locate cases, this may enable the department to locate a noncustodial parent and establish parentage at an earlier stage. In turn, enabling custodial parents to receive child support order payments timely and reducing reliance on benefits, such as Temporary Assistance for Needed Family (TANF).

— It will support the Department in helping transition Locate cases to active cases with an established support order in a timely manner, which will subsequently help safeguard funding given the Department's paying caseload will increase.

Current State

In order to notify a noncustodial parent that a child support case has been opened, establish parentage, and take other actions, the Department requires certain personal details for the noncustodial parent (i.e., name, address, employer, income/assets, etc.) to be able to serve the parent with legal action. In circumstances, where the custodial and noncustodial parent are separated or no longer have a relationship, such contact details may be unknown. In these circumstances, federal regulation 45 CFR 303.3 requires that the Department use all appropriate means to locate noncustodial parents.

As of December 2023, the Department has 109 open Locate cases related to establishing paternity/maternity with workload associated with these cases allocated across the Department's Enforcement Team. In seeking to locate a noncustodial parent, the state system has an automatic Locate feature for all open Locate cases that interfaces with other state and federal systems that continuously searches for locate date and asset information. However, in certain instances, more challenging cases require access to a large variety of different systems, websites, or agencies. These systems/agencies have been outlined in the table below.

Systems, websites, and agencies consulted during Locate activities			
1	Social Security Administration (SSA)	7	Accurint
2	Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)	8	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
3	Employment Develop Department (EDD)	9	Sheriff's Tool/Website
4	Franchise Tax Board	10	Google
5	Internal Revenue Service (IRS)	11	Social Media (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, X, etc.)

| 6 | Central Registry | 12 | Santa Barbara County Social Services |

Across interviews, staff reported that certain Locate cases can be time consuming to manage effectively, and that cases with an open child support order must be prioritized over Locate cases. This results in staff having limited capacity to focus on monitoring and managing Locate cases. For example, interviewees reported not having worked on a Locate case for over six weeks due to workload associated with active cases that have established child support orders. The current workload allocation for Locate cases results in the following potential implications:

Participant implications:

— **Inability to establish parentage:** In instances where a noncustodial parent is not located, paternity or maternity cannot be established and, therefore, a child support order cannot be made.

— **Prolonged resolution:** Locate cases may remain unresolved for a prolonged period of time. It is often found that noncustodial parents tend to be harder to find the longer they are in the "Locate" phase. This results in a custodial parent not receiving necessary child support or being referred to temporary assistance or social services programs such as TANF.

Department implications:

— **Reduced funding:** For the Department, funding is typically based on the number of active cases (i.e., cases where a child support order can be made) managed by the Department. Therefore, the Department may be at risk of reduced funding if it is not able to convert its current Locate caseload.

Comparative Practices

Tioga County, New York, has developed a position know as a Support Investigator. The position is responsible for verifying the absence of a legally responsible relative from a household, locating the individual, and assessing the possibility of obtaining reimbursement of funds. The position requires successful candidates to have the follow key minimum qualifications:

a.   Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with Bachelor's Degree in social sciences, human services, or related field; and one year of full-time interviewing or investigating experience or its part-time equivalent involving public contact; OR

b.   Graduation from high school or possession of a high school equivalency diploma and five years of full-time experience or its part-time equivalent as defined in (a) above; OR

c.   An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (a) and (b) above.

Recommendation

In the future state, the Department should improve the processes in place to allocate workload related to Locate cases to CSO staff. There are a number of options open to the Department in implementing this recommendation. For example, as outlined in the action steps below, the Department may identify 2–3 staff members that are dedicated to managing Locate cases with a reduced enforcement caseload. Alternatively, the Department may identify a staff member that will manage more complex Locate cases where staff experience key difficulties in obtaining the necessary information to locate a noncustodial parent.

Suggested Action Steps to Implement Recommendation

The Department should consider the following key options to restructure the allocation of workload as it relates to Locate cases:

Option one: Identify a number of CSOs to manage a combination of Locate cases and enforcement cases. In the future state, the Department may consider identifying several CSOs who have the skills and capabilities, as well as a strong track record, to manage Locate cases. However, in order to support these CSOs in continuing to have a diverse workload, they should also continue to manage a reduced number of enforcement cases. The following are the key steps that should be undertaken if this option is considered to best meet the Department's needs:

— **Step one:** As a first step, Department leadership should identify the optimal number of staff members who will be required to manage Locate cases in combination with a reduced enforcement caseload. In considering this, the Department should take into account the following:

   o   Number of Locate cases across the Department

   o   Average time/hours spent on a Locate case

   o   Average time/hours spent on an enforcement case

   o   Optimal Locate/Enforcement case mix based on average time/workload associated with Locate and Enforcement.

— **Step two:** As a next step, the Department should identify the CSOs who will lead the management of Locate cases. This may be undertaken by considering tenure, evaluating past performance in successfully resolving Locate cases, and considering CSO skills and interest in undertaking Locate-related activities via staff surveys of focus groups.

— **Step three:** Thirdly, the Department should develop Locate caseload allocation processes to standardize allocation of workload related to Locate and promote equitable and balanced caseloads.

— **Step four:** The Department should communicate the changes to staff members and provide any necessary training on update processes related to Locate cases.

— **Step five:** Lastly, the Department should regularly review the career paths, incentives, and resourcing needs to adjust the structure of this Locate staff cohort, where necessary, and promote the continued success of the strategy.

Option two: Identify a CSO to manage Locate cases identified as complex. As an alternate option, the Department may consider identifying a CSO who will manage complex Locate cases. Complex cases relate to cases that cannot be located through the Federal Parent Locator Services or other key tools utilized by the Department and may need more intensive manual research. They may also relate to international Locate cases.

Under this option, the current workload allocation model would remain. However, in instances where a CSO has significant difficulty in resolving a Locate case, they would escalate that case to the CSO designated to manage complex Locate cases. In undertaking this option, the following key steps should be undertaken:

— **Step one:** Similar to option one, as a first step, the Department should identify a CSO to manage complex Locate cases.

— **Step two:** As a next step, the Department should develop formal criteria to define "complex" Locate cases. Examples may include Locate cases where no successful outcome has been achieved in three months or cases where an individual does not have an online presence (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn).

— **Step three:** As a next step, Department leadership should identify the optimal caseload mix for the staff member designated to manage complex Locate cases. In considering this mix, the Department may analyze the number of complex Locate cases currently managed by the

Department, the length of time they may take to resolve, as well as average workload associated with enforcement cases.

— **Step four:** Additionally, the Department should develop caseload allocation processes to standardize the process for when a CSO should seek to escalate a Locate case.

— **Step five:** The Department should communicate the changes to staff members and provide any necessary training on update processes related to Locate cases.

— **Step six:** As a final step, the Department may explore recruiting a dedicated staff member with a background and/or training in intelligence or investigations, such as a former law enforcement or intelligence professional, to manage Locate cases on behalf of the Department. Individuals with a background in this work may bring innovative approaches, and relevant practices from adjacent fields, to locating difficult-to-find or elusive individuals potentially improving outcomes, retention of staff in specialized investigative roles, and job satisfaction for staff focused on Locate cases.

1.4	**Enhance marketing and outreach activities to effectively identify and target participant populations in need of service.**

Benefit

Enhancing the Department's current marketing approach will offer a number of key benefits:

— It will enable the identification of underserved community members and development of targeted engagement approaches to improve service utilization by these groups.

— It may augment the Department's ability to maintain a consistent caseload and associated funding, preventing potential budgetary fluctuations.

Current State

As of September 2023, the Department managed a total caseload of 10,167 cases with cases declining by 6 percent between 2022 and 2023. It is important to note that in recent times, due to the enactment of various regulations, Child Support Services agencies across the country have been experiencing similar trends.

In the interest of expanding outreach and increasing community awareness of service offerings, the Department has established a nine-person community outreach team. This team organizes community outreach through attending community events, facilitating public presentations, and undertaking digital promotion through social media (primarily Facebook). However, based on a review of available data, only 3 percent of individuals engaged through attending such events submit an application. Furthermore, the Department's Facebook page has just over 200 followers, less than 2 percent of its current caseload, and the Department receives minimal interaction across its posts in the form of comments and likes. The limited engagement and interaction via community events or through social media would suggest there are opportunities to better identify or target potential participant populations in need of service across the County.

Finally, staff interviewed expressed that historical service approaches taken by the Department and its peer departments across the State had built a community perception of these organizations as enforcement-oriented. For example, interviewees noted that the Department can often be viewed as a "collection agency" rather than a supportive agency. Further, staff noted that, historically, aspects of the service and its communication can be complex for applications, which risks further deterring participation by some potential participants. As such, there is an opportunity to continue efforts to reorient the

Department to reflect its key mission of establishing equitable support orders and helping to ensure that children have the necessary provisions to support a happy and healthy life.

The Department's current approach to community engagement can result in the following key challenges:

— Undersubscription to services relative to estimated community need

— A lack of awareness of child support service offerings among potential populations in need of service

— An inability or unwillingness on the part of some potential participants to navigate complex processes associated with the Department

— A lack of understanding of services and processes by potential participants due to limitations in information provided (e.g., language barriers)

— Negative public perceptions that prevent or deter engagement with the Department.

In the future, these challenges may result in certain implications for the Department and its target population:

— **Increased unmet need:** Parents and/or children in need of service may not receive the necessary support to obtain child support payments. This may result in increased risk of poverty and/or reliance on government assistance and other community supports.

— **Loss of funding:** A downward trend in caseloads will result in reduced funding, ultimately limiting the resources available to act on unmet need. This will force the Department into a more reactive cycle of managing challenges that have bypassed eligibility for early intervention and cycle into crisis.

Recommendation

In the future, the Department should enhance its marketing and outreach investments. This may include undertaking a needs analysis and outreach plan, developing a Lived Experience Council to target feedback from those with lived experience, and finally, implementing targeted digital advertising and search engine optimization as a result of segmentation and targeting (e.g., Google Ads).

Comparative Practices

The following are examples of outreach or marketing strategies that the Department may consider adopting based on leading practice research undertaken:

Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement (VDCSE)[9]: The VDCSE has used its digital marketing grant funds, sponsored by the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), to implement Google Search ads. The grant was issued to 12 states and 2 tribal child support agencies to conduct a two-year digital marketing demonstration to increase participation in child support programs. Although the participants were awarded funds through an application process, digital marketing funds still remain available to child support programs throughout the country.

VDCSE identified 40 localities to target using search advertising (19 cities and 21 counties). These cities/counties accounted for approximately 41 percent of the state's population. Localities were selected based on detailed analysis incorporating eligibility for child support services and the percentage of community members receiving services to help ensure that the areas selected were most likely to benefit from VDCSE services. VDCSE's campaign included search engine optimization analyses and Google Search ads that guided prospective participants to the Division's website to complete a contact form. The contact form was used to track and communicate with participants interested in child support

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[9] Digital Marketing for the Virginia Child Support Program - Final Brief (hhs.gov)

services. Those who failed to fill out a contact form were remarketed through other social media platforms.

Results and outcomes:

— Through these efforts, the VDCSE experienced a 12 percent increase in applications from Never Assisted Cases (i.e., participants who have never received public benefits).

— VDCSE found search advertising to be an effective method of digital advertising and was further enhanced by the support of organic social media marketing (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) as well as paid advertising through a number of social media platforms.

San Diego, California[10]: The San Diego County Department of Child Support Services (SDDCSS) reviewed 2018 U.S. Census data and identified that 42 percent of single-parent households potentially eligible for child support services in San Diego were Spanish-speaking. However, only 10 percent of its caseload identified Spanish as the primary language. To enhance its marketing efforts surrounding this community, SDDCSS created a variety of flyers in both Spanish and English to highlight events, general information, and specific services. The Department identified nearly 200 schools in areas that it considered would benefit from child support services. As such, they utilized the platform Peachjar to issue a total of 330,897 emails to parents residing in these areas.

Results and outcomes:

During this initial three-month pilot, the Department was able to achieve the following:

— A 22 percent increase in the number of Spanish-speaking individuals visiting its website

— A 34 percent email open rate, which is higher than the 21 percent industry standard for government emails through using the chosen platform, Peachjar.

Michigan Office of Child Support: The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Office of Child Support (OCS) deployed a Community Advisory Council in early 2021.[11] The council consists of between 8 and 12 members selected by OCS and rotated on a regular basis. Members must adhere to attendance requirements and receive gift cards for their time. Members are encouraged to provide policy or process recommendations that must be agreed upon in a consensus fashion.[12]

Results and outcomes:

— With the implementation of the Community Advisory Council, the OCS has expressed the insight and feedback received is extremely helpful in improving operations and providing support services.[13]

— MDHHS also noticed an improvement in the process of handling Child Support program complaints.

— Lastly, MDHHS is experiencing increased trust with community members through this initiative. For example, the OCS made a change related to the way participants were referred by using terms like "case members," "program participants," and "parents" instead of "customers."[14]

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[10] Building Program Awareness through Digital Marketing Interventions (hhs.gov)
[11] A Starter Kit on Engaging People With Lived Experience in Child Support Programs (hhs.gov)
[12] Advisory Council Charter revised June 2022 (michigan.gov)
[13] Child Support advisory council seeks parents, caregivers (michigan.gov)
[14] MDHHS Child Support Advisory Council drives change in dept; Diverse membership providing input to ensure fairness and transparency (michigan.gov)

Suggested Actions Steps to Implement Recommendation

The Department should consider the following actions to enhance its marketing and community outreach. It is important to note that the State is currently considering a state-wide approach to marketing. All marketing and outreach opportunities outlined below should be undertaken in alignment with the State's marketing approach.

Action one: Develop and implement a needs analysis and outreach plan. The Department should adopt a strategic approach to its future outreach practices by developing an outreach plan based on community needs. This will support the Department in making more informed, data-driven decisions when considering community outreach strategies. This may be completed by undertaking the following key steps:

— **Step one:** The Department should decide the key objectives it would like to achieve through this initiative. Objectives recommended to establish include but are not limited to increasing awareness of child support services, increasing participation with the Department, and improving the perception of the child support program as a whole.

— **Step two:** The Department should conduct a participant analysis to determine the community members currently served and their needs. This analysis can be used to develop profiles encompassing commonalities between current program participants to inform the segmentation and targeting efforts outlined in the following steps. The profiles should be inclusive of two components, demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, education level, employment history, etc.) and needs (e.g., services the Department is providing to them, additional resources they have been given, or other County agencies they have been directed to).

— **Step three:** As part of a segmentation analysis, the Department should review census or other available demographic data to identify specific criteria and traits that align with participant profiles and needs developed in step two. The criteria should be specific and focus on aspects of geography (areas within the County) where demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, education level, employment etc.), behaviors (e.g., how often they interact with the Department), and psychographics (e.g., lifestyle, hobbies, opinions, etc.) are aligned to the various profiles created earlier.

— **Step four:** The Department should assess the geographical segments created in step three and evaluate them against the objectives established in step one. This will support the Department in prioritizing which segments it must focus its marketing and outreach efforts. This assessment can look to review the following aspects of each segment: severity of need, geographical size, and the level of existing infiltration by the Department. It is important to note that these are suggested aspects and there may be additional factors the Department may determine should be considered.

— **Step five:** Once the initial prioritization has occurred, the Department should review the target segments and participant profiles created earlier against information and insights gathered from the Lived Experience Council established in action two. Changes should be made to the profiles and prioritized as needed.

— **Step six:** The Department should conduct A/B or another form of prototype testing to assess the outreach strategies outlined in the plan established in step one and the digital advertising techniques discussed in the previous step. Prototype testing is a way for organizations to pilot strategies they wish to implement. More specifically, A/B prototype testing consists of comparing two slightly different forms of digital content by showing them both to audience segments to see which performs best. If A/B testing is used, then each advertisement should include at least two variations to help diversify and test engagement. For example, the VDCSE deployed a campaign focused on advertising applications with two variations: "Child Support Made Simpler | Apply Today" and "Child Support Made Simpler | Enroll Online Today | Easy-to-Understand Form."

— **Step seven:** The Department should deploy more robust digital advertising, including search engine optimization of searches related to its website. As outlined in the leading practice section of this recommendation, several child support programs across the country have experienced successful results by adopting Google Search ads and other, similar forms of advertising and search engine optimization to help increase caseload. The Department should consider the following key criteria at a minimum in considering digital advertising for the participants and segments identified in step five:

  o Tailor advertisements to target audience based on market segmentation undertaken in action one. For example, one campaign may advertise applications and enrollment links to custodial parties while another will advertise parentage establishment to noncustodial parties.

  o Utilize targeted phrasing to prompt user engagement in search engine advertisements. For example, defining a service in a short sentence or highlighting a participant's potential pain point can be successful phrasing options.

— **Step eight:** The Department should regularly review census and other data related to the changing demographics and trends of the County to continue to support community outreach strategies that align with the needs of the community.

— **Step nine:** Engagement metrics should be constantly assessed to make appropriate adjustments to advertisements. The Department should focus on the following metrics: impressions (the number of times an advertisement is shown during a search) and conversions (the number of times a user performs a specific action after clicking the advertisement).

Action two: Develop a Lived Experience Council to obtain feedback and improve service delivery.
The Department may consider creating a Lived Experience Council where participants in the child support program have an opportunity to provide feedback related to service delivery, inform the Department on evolving participant needs, and create buy-in to increase retention and engagement in services. The following are the key steps that should be considered in undertaking this action:

— **Step one:** The Department should identify a diverse group of participants with lived experience in the child support program to partake in the Lived Experience Council. This can be done by partnering with community organizations or engaging participants through social media or other forms of outreach. It is recommended that the council includes representation from all caregivers (mothers, fathers, grandparents, etc.) and demographic diversity, including but not limited to age, languages spoken, ethnicity, economic class, education level, and geography.

— **Step two:** The Department should recruit the participants identified in step one. Child support programs across the country have found success by incentivizing participation in lived experience councils to recruit participants and maintain adequate engagement (e.g., gift cards). It is also important to note that certain programs recruited council participants on a rotational basis to maintain equity and collect diverse perspectives (e.g., a participant spends eight months on the council before being replaced).

— **Step three:** The Department should conduct a pilot council meeting with a sample of the participants recruited in the previous step to develop an understanding of the ideal meeting structure, level of participant involvement, and logistical needs. The findings from this pilot council meeting can be used to inform the following steps related to establishing responsibilities and meeting guidelines.

— **Step four:** The Department should develop a charter that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the council and its members to support consistent governance. In addition to the charter, the Department should also develop and communicate a meeting schedule to council participants. Meetings can be chaired by Department leadership; however, they should act a forum for council members to offer feedback, discuss experiences, and offer suggestions for service improvement.

— **Step five:** To help ensure the Lived Experience Council meetings are successful, the Department should also create meeting agendas and share materials with participants prior to the meetings. The

focus should be on listening to participants and leaning into conversations that express frustration and confusion to obtain actionable feedback for improving service delivery. Meeting frequency should take schedule constraints into account, but other programs found success in deploying a strict attendance mechanism. For example, if participants missed a total of three meetings within a calendar year, they would be contacted to identify potential challenges and needs for additional support.

— **Step six:** The Department should document meeting minutes and utilize the feedback and suggestions in supporting the development strategies for service enhancement.

Action three: Review online resources and digital presence to align with the goals outlined in the outreach plan. Utilizing the feedback gathered from the Lived Experience Council and the insights from advertising in various community segments in actions one and two, the Department should review the online resources it provides through various social media channels and its website. The Department should consider undertaking the following steps:

— **Step one:** The Department should examine all of its current online resources to determine if they align with the outreach plan established in action one. For example, if participants that speak a specific language are being targeted, then it would be beneficial to make sure the online resources are tailored to accommodate those participants.

— **Step two:** Subsequently, the Department should also analyze the use of its online resources. The most frequently used resources can inform participant needs and highlight inefficiencies in communicating child support procedures.

— **Step three:** Lastly, the Department should continuously review the speed in which it takes participants to answer their questions using online resources, e.g., tracking how long it takes to explore the various methods to make a child support payment through the Department website. This can also be a component of the Lived Experience Council discussed in action two for additional feedback collection.

Collaboration with Key Stakeholders

The below recommendations are associated with enhancing collaboration with key stakeholders in the Department.

2.1	Explore and adopt opportunities to increase data sharing capabilities with other County departments to better support participants that experience complex social issues.

Benefit

Exploring and adopting leading practices for data sharing in locations such as Sonoma County, California; New York City; Arapahoe County, Colorado; and other sites that are successfully sharing data and conducting a review of relevant laws and regulations governing data sharing will offer the following key benefits to the Department:

Leading practices in data-sharing:

— Exploring and potentially adopting leading practices will provide valuable insights into successful models of data sharing that could be adapted to the County.

— The potential adoption of a data sharing exchange will support the Department and County in promoting a more coordinated care management system. It will allow CSOs and staff across the other County departments to identify the most vulnerable participants and any potential gaps in service offerings.

Conducting a review of relevant laws and policies:

— Continuing to conduct a review of relevant laws and policies will provide a clear understanding of the legal landscape surrounding information exchange, particularly in cases where participant approval is required or when tax information is in the source or target system.

— It will explain how to mitigate legal risk and comply with IRS Regulations and use of Federal Tax Information (FTI) for child support enforcement purposes, while also streamlining processes and enabling the Department to better serve participants.

Current State

Currently, as a result of its function, the Department has access to personally identifiable participant information, including participants' names, addresses, Social Security numbers, employment histories, tax information, and more.

While certain key information related to Social Security and taxes should never be shared, the absence of streamlined data sharing across County departments for other data types (e.g., name, employment history) as dictated by regulatory frameworks, or potential regulatory prohibitions, hampers the Department's capacity to deliver efficient and coordinated services. For example, across interviews, staff reported that they cannot share any available participant information with complementary agencies such as the housing authority to support a participant in obtaining housing.

This inability to share data on participants with other internal departments within the County results in the following:

— It reduces overall collections of child support by limiting the Department's ability to assist parents who wish to pay child support but do not have the ability or access to resources to do so.

— It limits the County's collective impact in resolving complex societal issues.

— It hampers the likelihood of support to custodial parents by not effectively providing noncustodial parents with access to resources that would help ensure timely payment.

<div align="center">**Recommendation**</div>

The Department should expand current reviews of relevant laws and regulations governing data sharing in the context of child support services to determine how data can be shared safely and securely, particularly when the source or target data system might include FTI. Depending on the purpose and the partner with which the data would be shared, this process should include seeing the participant's explicit permission to share their data as additional County services are requested.

<div align="center">**Suggested Action Steps to Implement Recommendation**</div>

Action one: Expand reviews of the legal and regulatory requirements around data sharing between programs. Conduct a review of relevant laws and regulations governing data sharing in the context of child support services to determine how data can be shared safely and securely. This review should include an analysis of circumstances when seeking participant approval for data sharing is necessary or recommended or how to ensure the security of FTI when present in the source or target systems:

— **Step one:** Conduct an assessment of the specific needs and challenges within the Department related to data sharing. Map the current processes and identify key areas where data could be exchanged to improve operational efficiency and improved participant deliveries. For example, when referring a participant to employment services, what type of data could help speed up the referral process? Identify key objectives in the exchange of the data.

— **Step two:** Evaluate current regulations and policies for data sharing and identify legal issues that may facilitate or hinder information exchange. Evaluate whether the policies are outdated or no longer relevant or whether the prohibited data can be parceled out to enable compliance with regulations.

— **Step three:** Evaluate the technology currently used by child support and its likely data sharing partners. Assess whether the child support system has limitations that could be improved upon or if there are areas where data that is regulated can be kept secure while still allowing exchange of approved data.

— **Step four:** Lastly, using the findings in the previous steps, create an execution plan to categorize regulatory behaviors into those that can be resolved by altering current practices and those that may require additional intervention. The Department should follow this plan and prioritize altering its data sharing practices initiating enhanced data sharing and collaboration.

Action two: Explore and deploy leading practices for data sharing in locations such as Sonoma County, California; New York City; Arapahoe County, Colorado; and other sites that are successfully sharing data. Extract leading practices related to data sharing in other child support

agencies across the State and country to determine which can best support the Department when it comes to data sharing capabilities:

— **Step one:** Investigate the data sharing practices of other local child support programs, such as those in Sonoma County, California; New York City; and Arapahoe County, Colorado. Consider requesting learning exchanges with these agencies to discuss the strategies, lessons learned, policies, and technologies that have contributed to their success.

— **Step two:** Form a small, experienced, cross-departmental team comprising representatives from child support, information technology (IT), County Counsel, and other relevant departments to collaboratively work on data sharing leading practices.

— **Step three:** Align the leading practices and strategies identified to the execution plan developed as part of action one and conduct necessary steps to augment the Department's current data sharing practices.

2.2	Enhance collaboration with the other human services agencies and the court to support participants' diverse needs and strengthen the whole-person approach to care for the family.

Benefit

Enhancing collaboration with other human services agencies and the court will offer the following key benefits for the Department's participants:

— It will improve participants' access to information from other government and community-based programs, and subsequently access to the services these families need.

— It will also allow for greater capacity to address the needs of children receiving support and improve the reliability of financial support from noncustodial parents.

— It may also help the County address broader social needs, such as housing, employment, and healthcare, by increasing collaboration across various departments while focusing on addressing children's needs.

Current State

Currently, the Department collaborates with other County departments and agencies through the following programs:

— **Parenting Court:** The Parenting Court is a restorative court designed to support obligors to identify and overcome the barriers that are preventing them from financially supporting their children. It seeks to connect participants at risk of contempt of court to appropriate services and programs to support future payment. In operating the Parenting Court, the Department collaborates with several County and community organizations. These organizations include the Superior Court of California, Santa Barbara Court Commissioner, the Public Defender's Office, County of Santa Barbara Family Law Facilitator, Family Service Agency, and the Workforce Development Board. The Court Commissioner may also make referrals to Behavioral Wellness Justice Alliance if the parent paying support presents a need for such services. Established as a pilot program in August 2023, the Parenting Court is currently still in its infancy and as of December 2023 had only three participants. In the future, the Department intends to expand to 20 participants.

— **Workforce Development resource referrals:** The Department has also developed partnerships with Santa Barbara Workforce Development Board to provide workforce services to parents who pay support. In December 2023, the Department has referred one participant to the Workforce Development Board.

— **Health and human services resiliency strategies:** The Department is part of the County's initiative to develop and implement health and human services resiliency strategies post-COVID-19. Currently, as part of this initiative, the Department collaborates with the Departments of Social Services, Public Health, Behavioral Wellness, First Five, and Community Services and the Office of Emergency Management. This collaboration aims to develop processes to help ensure that current and future services will not only support all individuals through the current crisis but also lift the marginalized and underserved above the pre-COVID-19 experience.

— **Mobile Farmworker Resource Center:** The Department collaborates with the Department of Social Services to offer key services in a mobile unit geared towards agricultural workers who otherwise might not be able to access service.

— **Information sessions:** Finally, the Department offers informational sessions about its service offerings to the staff of the County and partner agencies. The Department also provides trainings to its staff on the services offered by other County departments and agencies.

Despite this collaboration and partnership, a limited number of participants have been referred to programs such as the Parenting Court and Workforce Development. Without providing participants with resources and additional support, they may be prone to missing payments, which is consequential because the Department continues to have arrears of $158 million.

Furthermore, there are limited strategies and systems in place to support a whole-person approach to care which proactively seeks to support the needs of the family. For example, in circumstances, where a parent or child is in need of housing, social services, and/or behavioral health services, the Department provides the participant with the number or email address of the appropriate department or service with no formal transfer or follow-up to determine whether the participant received the needed services. This is particularly important given research suggesting that high-needs participants such as those experiencing homelessness or mental health challenges often require support in navigating systems and obtaining services. Therefore, providing such participants with a phone number or email address may not result in successful access to the support necessary for them to make on-time child support payments.

Limited adoption of a whole-person approach to care may result in increased risk of nonpayment of child support orders where individuals experience key challenges, such as loss of employment, homelessness, and/or mental health issues, etc. Subsequently, this may increase risks of incarceration, usage of emergency services, or referral to court proceedings, which carry higher costs to the County without the benefit of addressing underlying needs of the participant.

Recommendation

In the future state, the Department should adopt a whole-person approach to care similar to that adopted across several counties in the State of Colorado and the County of Sonoma. For example, this may involve implementing an up-front assessment for new participants to proactively evaluate service(s) need coupled with providing a warm hand-off and referral to the agency that can provide the service(s) required by the participant.

Comparative Practices

Sonoma County, California[15]: In April 2017, Sonoma County established a goal to identify the most vulnerable residents and develop coordinated strategies to improve their well-being, self-sufficiency, and recovery. However, to achieve this goal, the County recognized that they needed the organization, tools, and technology to transform how services were delivered to its citizens.

As a result, ACCESS Sonoma was born, led by the County Safety Net Collaborative, which includes representation from the following key departments: Child Support Services, Health Services, Human Services, Community Development Commission (housing), Probation, District Attorney, Sheriff, the Courts, Public Defender, Information Systems Department, and County Council. ACCESS Sonoma has a four-pronged approach: an Interdepartmental Multidisciplinary Team (IMDT) staffed by representatives from all of the Safety Net Collaborative departments, an Integrated Data Hub/Watson Care Manager developed in partnership with IBM, a system of governance led by the County's Safety Net Collaborative, and partnerships with community-based organizations and academic institutions. The result is coordinated care from across Safety Net Collaborative departments for vulnerable residents. Care that is informed and supported by an innovative information and care management system, with strategic direction from the Safety Net Collaborative.

The County partnered with IBM to develop the Integrated Data Hub, which brings together participant information from the County's mental health, substance use, social services, housing, criminal justice, and other siloed databases and then masters it into a singular "golden participant record" that gives a 360-degree view of information affecting a participant's well-being and self-sufficiency. The system uses a cloud-based participant care plan, which allows the IMDT to access the care plan wherever they happen to be engaging with the participant. The power of the golden participant record combined with the ability to access the care plan at any time and from anywhere makes this an innovative approach to offering true wrap-around services.

State of Colorado: In recent years, the State of Colorado has shifted child support practices towards a more family-centered, supportive model that has become known as the 2Gen Project.[16] Within Child Support Services, the 2Gen approach aligns to the whole-person approach to care. The program views 2Gen as a "shift from strictly an enforcement and solely parent-focused system to one that connects whole families to resources and interventions that benefit the entire family." The resources and interventions are matched to the family's needs and may include job skills training, employment support, child development and education, parenting skills and visitation, health and well-being, financial literacy, transportation, and other community supports. As part of this transition toward 2Gen, the State of Colorado developed what it termed a "universal screener," known as the Family Resources Assessment, to more clearly spot parents who pay support who might need 2Gen services. The following are case studies describing some of the strategies counties in Colorado have taken when implementing 2Gen services to support a more coordinated, whole-person approach to care:

Eagle County, Colorado[17]: The Child Support Office in Eagle County connects its child support case management system to a platform called HSConnects to detect participants it shares with other agencies. The goal is to efficiently deliver coordinated whole-person services. Eagle County has also developed an Integrated Customer Service Team that combines staff from Child Support Services; public benefits (known as Economic Services); Public Health; and Child, Family, and Adult Services to deliver a broader range of services to families that need them. The team deliberately takes a case-by-case approach to care. Yet those discussions also lead to ideas for larger-scale changes that can better integrate services across the County.

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[15] ACCESS Sonoma (ca.gov)
[16] Transforming Colorado's Child Support Services to a Two-Generation Approach: Lessons Learned from Implementing an 11-County Pilot Study (coloradolab.org)
[17] Transforming Colorado's Child Support Services to a Two-Generation Approach: Lessons Learned from Implementing an 11-County Pilot Study (coloradolab.org)

Montrose County, Colorado[18]: Montrose County draws partially on braided TANF funding to employ a caseworker who works exclusively on delivering 2Gen services, including fatherhood, motherhood, parenting coaching, and employment coaching. Focusing on comprehensive, holistic service delivery, the 2Gen caseworker is given ample time to build meaningful relationships with participants using techniques such as motivational interviewing. The 2Gen caseworker keeps abreast of employment services in the County by serving on the Montrose Workforce Board.

Prowers County, Colorado[19]: Prowers County often takes on programming that is not available in the community and that may not be a part of traditional core services typically provided by Human Services. The programming helps increase participant awareness of additional resources, while also providing them with the opportunity to pursue activities related to job readiness and professional goal setting. For example, a program called Crossroads and Journeys, which is a growth group supporting participants in finding their life purpose, is provided on-site through Child Support Services. Parenting classes and adult education/GED classes are also provided on site. Referral to these programs do not require a formalized process (i.e., MOU) because they are provided in-house and often by Child Support Services staff directly.

Suggested Action Steps to Implement Recommendation

Action one: Conduct an assessment of current caseloads to identify participant needs. The first action the Department should take is to determine the needs of its participants based on the current caseload. The needs identified will help inform decisions related to collaboration with other County departments and a push for the whole-person approach to care. This may be undertaken by conducting the following steps:

— **Step one:** As a first step, the Department should task each CSO with conducting an assessment of current cases to proactively identify needs of participants. The focus of this assessment should be determining needs of participants who may warrant referral to another County department or programs (e.g., Parenting Court, Workforce Development etc.).

— **Step two:** The results of the assessment should be reported to Department supervisors and management staff. This may support the Department in increasing participation in existing programs and services, helping to ensure that the participants are receiving the necessary support and potentially reducing current arrears.

— **Step three:** Lastly, the Department should review the needs established in the earlier steps and perform a prioritization analysis to identify which needs can be handled by the current County resources available versus those that may require additional effort or access to external resources. During this analysis, the Department should expect the needs to fall into three categories: unmet needs that can be resolved using existing County resources, unmet needs that may require external resources (e.g., programming) to be resolved, and unmet needs that will require the creation of new resources.

Action two: Align participant needs to County resources to address participant challenges that can be resolved more promptly. The Department should utilize the categorization of participant needs developed as part of action one to connect participants with those needs to the appropriate County resources. This may be undertaken by conducting the following key steps:

— **Step one:** As a first step, the Department should inform CSOs to connect participants with needs that fall into the first category classified in action one (unmet needs that can be resolved with existing

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[18] Transforming Colorado's Child Support Services to a Two-Generation Approach: Lessons Learned from Implementing an 11-County Pilot Study (coloradolab.org)
[19] Transforming Colorado's Child Support Services to a Two-Generation Approach: Lessons Learned from Implementing an 11-County Pilot Study (coloradolab.org)

County resources) with the appropriate programs such as the Workforce Development Board. This hand-off can be enhanced by the data sharing practices outlined in recommendation 2.1.

— **Step two:** The Department should identify external resources, outside of those it already collaborates with, that can help with the second categorization of participant needs (unmet needs that may require external resources). This may require additional time and effort to form the proper relationships to facilitate this hand-off of participants.

Action three: Formalize the referral process to develop a more coordinated whole-person approach to care. The Department should establish a formalized process to effectively promote the whole-person approach to care. This process will include the foundation created by actions one and two but should also include the performance monitoring of these hand-offs and creation of additional resources to keep up with changes in participant needs:

— **Step one:** The Department should continue to hold regular meetings with key County departments to discuss shared participant needs and consider opportunities to adopt a more whole-person approach to care. All stakeholders in these meetings can also discuss the performance of the efforts outlined in action two.

— **Step two:** As a next step, the Department should engage with the Lived Experience Council recommended for establishment under recommendation 1.4 to obtain their perspective on adopting a whole-person approach to care and the key strategies that may support Child Support Services participants.

— **Step three:** The Department should develop a needs assessment tool to proactively identify those participants and families that may benefit from a more whole-person approach to care. Alternatively, the Department may adopt the Family Resource Assessment Tool utilized by counties across the State of Colorado. Whatever the tool adopted, it should seek to identify and assess participant need across various areas, including employment, education, social services, public health, and behavioral health.

— **Step four:** The Department should consider establishing a dedicated CSO to manage cases that would benefit from a whole-person approach to care. In considering a suitable CSO for this role, the Department may consider redeploying one of the CSOs who currently participates in the coaching initiative discussed in recommendation 1.2 to undertake this role. The benefit of this approach is that such CSOs will be trained in motivational interviewing, which will be a critical element to engaging participants who may benefit from a whole-person approach to care.

— **Step five:** Develop processes with complementary departments to adopt a warm hand-off to other County departments or local agencies. A warm hand-off can take the form of a three-way phone call or virtual meetings with both the participant and the complementary agency.

— **Step six:** As outlined in recommendation 2.1, the Department, in collaboration with other key departments, should consider opportunities to enhance data sharing, while continuing to remain in line with state and federal regulations. This will allow the Department to identify if the warm hand-off recommended for adoption under step five worked or if further intervention is required.

— **Step seven:** After piloting the need assessment tool and process to existing participants, the Department should apply this whole-person care approach to new participants through assigned CSOs and/or in conjunction with early intervention activities.

— **Step eight:** Lastly, the Department should focus on performance measurement and tracking related to these efforts. The Department may monitor the success of referrals in collaboration with the assisting County departments and track the utilization of additional resources provided to participants and feedback received through the Lived Experience Council. The tracking of these measures should be used to continuously improve the process and maintain alignment to leading practice.

Technology Enablement

The recommendation below is associated with enhancing technology enablement in the Department.

3.1	Update processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby to increase staff efficiency and reduce participant wait times.

Benefit

Updating processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby will provide the Department with the following key benefits:

— It will make the virtual lobby process more efficient by reducing the time spent by administrative staff coordinating virtual engagement between a CSO and a Department participant or potential participant. Administrative staff can then redirect time to other key focus areas, such as managing mail and uploading applications.

— It will reduce interruptions and losses of task momentum among CSOs due to ad hoc participant presentations.

— It may reduce wait times for the Department's participants or potential participants who visit the Department's office to engage with a CSO, boosting participant satisfaction.

Current State

The Department has implemented a virtual lobby system, which supports the Department in assisting its customers virtually when they visit the Office in person or when they visit the website.

Department Offices – Virtual Lobby Engagement

The virtual lobby is monitored by an administrative staff member, known as a receptionist, who typically works virtually. When a participant enters the lobby, the receptionist subsequently admits them to a virtual lobby (i.e., Zoom meeting) via an in-office computer tablet, greets the participant, and obtains information on participant request. It is important to note that, for privacy reasons, only one participant at a time is admitted to the virtual lobby.

In instances where a participant's request requires engagement with a CSO, the receptionist locates the participant in the Child Support System, places the participant in a Zoom breakout room, and reaches out to a CSO via Microsoft Teams messaging to request availability to connect with the participant. Once a CSO has confirmed availability, they issue the Zoom breakout room link to the CSO. The CSO subsequently connects with the participant.

Website – Virtual Lobby Engagement

Participants can request to meet with a CSO via the Department's website. Utilizing this approach, a participant is directed to a Zoom meeting link. The participant is greeted by the receptionist via Zoom and the process follows the process for Department offices outlined above, where the receptionist uses Microsoft Teams to identify an available CSO and subsequently connects the participant and CSO via Zoom breakout rooms.

Across interviews, staff reported that often times the virtual lobby process can be time consuming. For example, in certain instances, receptionists have to message three or four CSOs to identify a CSO available to connect with the participant. Furthermore, per department policy, the receptionist must provide each CSO with two minutes to respond. Finally, across interviews, staff reported that CSOs often have limited certainty on when they may receive a request to engage with a participant. A number of

CSOs also noted that regular interruptions can be result in inefficiencies in task completion as staff can lose momentum.

The current process results in a number of key implications.

— **Inefficient use of administrative staff time:** It can result in inefficient use of administrative staff time as such staff must often message numerous CSOs to confirm availability. This can take between four and ten minutes per participant engagement.

— **Reduced CSO efficiency:** Regular interruptions for CSOs can result in inefficiency and loss of momentum. Per research completed by UC Berkley, interruptions can have a key impact on workload efficiency. For example, the length of recovery following interruption depends on the complexity of the task being undertaken, but can range anywhere from 8 minutes to 25 minutes.[20]

— **Prolonged wait times:** It can also result in prolonged wait times for participants who may remain alone in a Zoom breakout room until a receptionist identifies an available CSO.

The following graphic offers a visual depiction of the customer's journey as he/she navigates virtual engagement with the Department.
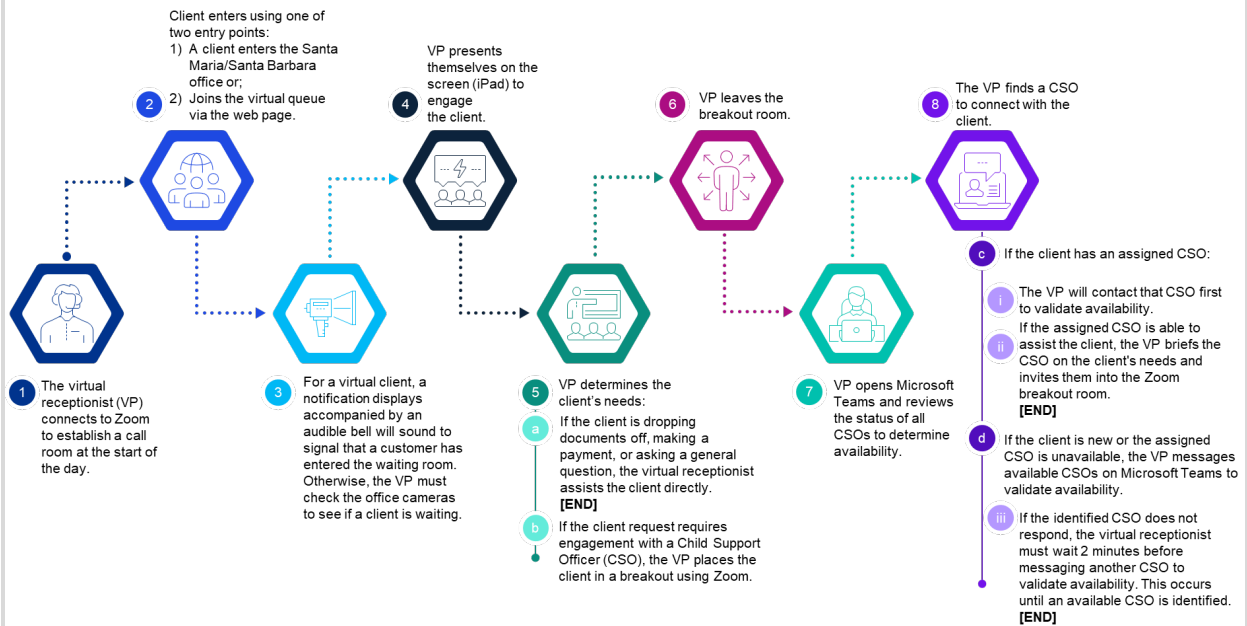
Figure 9: Source: KPMG

Recommendation

In the future, the Department should develop a schedule that assigns two CSOs at a time to support the virtual lobby. This will prevent the need for the receptionist to reach out to varying CSOs to identify availability for participant engagement. If the Department does not have capacity to support this, then they may implement specific office hours for walk-in appointments and assign two CSOs to support the virtual lobby during these times. This latter change may also allow receptionists to redirect their focus to other key tasks across the Department.

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[20] The Impact of Interruptions | People & Culture (berkeley.edu)

Suggested Action Steps to Implement Recommendation

Action one: Adopt a schedule that assigns a CSO or CSOs to support virtual lobby participant engagement as needed. As a first step, the Department should develop a schedule that assigns one to two CSOs at all times to support virtual lobby participant engagement. CSOs may be assigned for one or two hours a day, or they may be assigned for a full day on a rotation. Transitioning to a schedule will prevent the need for administrative staff to reach out to a varying number of CSOs and reduce related workload burden and participant wait times. The new schedule should be communicated to CSO staff in advance of any change. It should also be regularly monitored and updated to help ensure it is achieving the necessary goals.

Action two: Consider transitioning to specific office hours for walk-ins. If the Department does not have capacity to support the suggestion in action one, then they may implement specific office hours for walk-in appointments. The days and times selected should be based on current office demand and should be regularly reevaluated to help ensure they continue to meet participant need. For example, based on the analysis of available data and interviews, Mondays are the busiest walk-in days while Fridays have the lowest walk-in numbers. However, data was not available on walk-in times. The Department may consider collecting this data in the future if they decide to transition to office hours, to help ensure the office hours selected are high-demand times. During the designated office hours, each CSO may be assigned a one- or two-hour period to be available for participant engagement or similar to the above they may be assigned for a full day on a rotation.

Appendix

Department Recommendation Table

Department recommendations relate to the systems and processes needed for the Department to more efficiently manage its operations and provide services to County residents. The following table outlines the recommendations and related actions for each major focus area, including participant service delivery, collaboration with key stakeholders, and technology enablement.

#	Department Recommendations
Participant Service Delivery	
1.1	Perform an analysis of child support orders with arrears to identify opportunities for targeted intervention. — **Action one:** Update the Tableau dashboard to provide greater detail on cases in arrears. — **Action two:** Utilize the data points outlined in action one to deploy targeted efforts on resolving the cases with arrears. — **Action three:** Create a standard operating procedure (SOP) related to the management of cases with arrears. — **Action four:** Explore opportunities to implement predictive analytics.
1.2	Strengthen early intervention strategies to support vulnerable participants in receiving the resources required to meet child support payments. — **Action one:** Expand current early intervention strategies to other types of delinquent cases. — **Action two:** Enhance training for CSOs to include a stronger focus on motivational interviewing and behavioral intervention.
1.3	Improve workload allocation processes for Locate cases to streamline processes and reduce resolution times: — **Option one**: Identify a number of CSOs to manage a combination of Locate cases and enforcement cases. — **Option two**: Identify a CSO to manage Locate cases identified as complex.
1.4	Enhance marketing and outreach activities to effectively identify and target participant populations in need of service. — **Action one:** Develop and implement a needs analysis and outreach plan. — **Action two:** Develop a Lived Experience Council to obtain feedback and improve service delivery. — **Action three:** Review online resources and digital presence to align with the goals outlined in the outreach plan.
Collaboration with Key Stakeholders	
2.1	Explore and adopt opportunities to increase data sharing capabilities with other County departments to better support participants that experience complex social issues. — **Action one:** Expand reviews of the legal and regulatory requirements around data sharing between programs. — **Action two:** Explore and deploy leading practices for data sharing in locations such as Sonoma County, California; New York City; Arapahoe County, Colorado; and other sites that are successfully sharing data.

2.2	Enhance collaboration with the other human services agencies and the court to support participants' diverse needs and strengthen the whole-person approach to care for the family. — **Action one:** Conduct an assessment of current caseloads to identify participant needs. — **Action two:** Align participant needs to County resources to address participant challenges that can be resolved more promptly. — **Action three:** Formalize the referral process to develop a more coordinated whole-person approach to care.
Technology Enablement	
3.1	Update processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby to increase staff efficiency and reduce participant wait times. — **Action one:** Adopt a schedule that assigns a CSO or CSOs to support virtual lobby participant engagement as needed. — **Action two:** Consider transitioning to specific office hours for walk-ins.

Figure 10: Source KPMG

County Benchmarks

Benchmark comparisons were conducted with the eight comparison counties specified in our contract at the request of the CEO's office.

	Budgets actual in $'000	Santa Barbara	Average	Monterey	Solano	SLO	Placer	Tulare	Santa Cruz	Marin	Sonoma
Recommended FY 2023–2024	Department FTE	75.00	55.33	82.00	79.00	34.00	47.00	n/a	n/a	25.00	65.00
	Percent of Enterprise	1.62%	1.52%	1.40%	2.44%	1.15%	1.64%	n/a	n/a	1.00%	1.52%
	Department Budget	11,272	9,212	12,164	13,427	5,365	7,327	n/a	n/a	5,260	11,730
	Percent of Enterprise	0.76%	0.65%	0.64%	0.83%	0.64%	0.57%	n/a	n/a	0.67%	0.54%
Adopted FY 2022–2023	Department FTE	68.00	62.84	82.00	85.00	34.75	47.00	129.00	33.00	26.00	66.00
	Percent of Enterprise	1.52%	1.66%	1.43%	2.63%	1.19%	1.68%	2.57%	1.18%	1.07%	1.54%
	Department Budget	10,011	9,407	11,647	13,174	5,013	7,266	15,597	5,914	4,837	11,804
	Percent of Enterprise	0.72%	0.70%	0.63%	0.94%	0.62%	0.59%	0.93%	0.65%	0.67%	0.53%
Actual FY 2021–2022	Department FTE	61.12	64.84	83.00	85.00	36.75	47.00	129.00	34.00	26.00	78.00
	Percent of Enterprise	1.41%	1.75%	1.50%	2.71%	1.29%	1.74%	2.58%	1.27%	1.06%	1.88%
	Department Budget	9,094	8,992	11,095	12,569	5,016	6,769	14,416	5,211	4,048	12,809
	Percent of Enterprise	0.69%	0.72%	0.67%	0.93%	0.70%	0.66%	0.96%	0.60%	0.59%	0.61%

Figure 11: Source: KPMG

Interview Schedule

This section provides detail on the meetings held with the Department during the review. Throughout the review period, the KPMG team held over 20 interviews and focus groups with Department staff to understand the organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, operations, and processes of the Department.

Meeting Name	KPMG/Gray Peaks Attendees	Participant Attendees	Date
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Josefina Felix (Child Support Supervisor)	Puneet Kapoor, Banjo Anderson	Josefina Felix	11/9/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Joni Maiden (Department Director)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor, Alex Rothman, Banjo Anderson	Joni Maiden	11/9/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Juanita Hernandez (Child Support Supervisor)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Juanita Hernandez	11/9/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Mette Richardson (Assistant Director)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor, Maureen Leif, Alex Rothman, Banjo Anderson	Mette Richardson	11/10/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Maria Aguila (Child Support Manager)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor, Maureen Leif	Maria Aguila	11/13/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Lucia Reyes (Project Manager)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor, Joe Mamlin	Lucia Reyes	11/13/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Alan Hammel (EDP Office Automation)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Alan Hammel	11/14/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Focus Group Session with Sally Padilla, Amanda Gonzales, and Juanita Hernandez (Child Support Supervisors)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Amanda Gonzales, Sally Padilla	11/14/2023
DCSS Data Questions/Discussion	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Mette Richardson, Maria Aguila, Joni Maiden, Kelly McLaughlin, Lucia Reyes, Jennifer Diaz, Justin Arnold	11/14/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Dave Collins (CS Attorney III)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Dave Collins	11/14/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Kelly McLaughlin (Managing Attorney)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Kelly McLaughlin, Justin Arnold	11/15/2023

Meeting Name	KPMG/Gray Peaks Attendees	Participant Attendees	Date
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Focus Group Session with Melissa Alvarez, Miriam Lopez, and Tiffany Soto (Child Support Officers and Senior Child Support Officer)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Melissa Alvarez, Miriam Lopez, Tiffany Soto	11/15/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Focus Group Session with Ashley Rodriguez, Larissa Burke, Martin Nava, and Ericka Galvan (Senior Child Support Officers)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Martin Nava, Larissa Burke, Ashley Rodriguez, Ericka Galvan	11/15/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Focus Group Session with Patricia, Cristal, Kelly, and Alicia (Child Support Officers)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Cristal Guzman, Kelly Ardian, Patricia Gonzalez	11/15/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Focus Group Session with Rocio Ramirez, Sherri Tuton, and Yesenia Robledo (Child Support Officers)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor, Maureen Leif, Joe Mamlin	Rocio Ramirez, Sherri Tuton	11/20/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Justin Arnold (Upcoming Managing Attorney)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Justin Arnold	11/21/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Jennifer Diaz (Child Support Manager)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Jennifer Diaz	11/21/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Carlos Quezada (Child Support Officer)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Carlos Quezada	11/29/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Rosa Lopez, Lorena Delgado, Maria Anderson (Administrative Office Professionals and Child Support Officer)	Puneet Kapoor	Maria Anderson, Rosa Lopez, Lorena Delgado	12/11/2023
KPMG Review of Child Support Services – Meeting with Martin, Juanita, and Laura (Lobby Central)	Olivia Rabbitte, Puneet Kapoor	Martin Nava, Juanita Hernandez, Laura Lyons	12/12/2023

Figure 12: Source: KPMG

Data Inventory

The below chart outlines the data received from the Department to complete the Departmental Review.

Data Item	Description
County of Santa Barbara 2021 Single Audit Final with CAP.pdf	County of Santa Barbara 2021 Single Audit Final with CAP
FY2324 DCSS Org Chart Oct 2023.pptx	FY2324 DCSS Org Chart October 2023
KPMG Lost Time - Confidential.xls	KPMG Lost Time
Appearing in Court via Zoom.docx	Process for appearance in Court via Zoom
LBP-Table of Contents.docx	LBP-Table of Contents
POEIP.docx	Post Order Early Intervention Program
Preparing Notice of Motion.docx	Process for preparation related to Notice of Motion
Virtual Receptionist and Zoom Interviews.docx	Virtual Receptionist and Zoom Interviews
KPMG Budget Financial Status 5 yr.xls	KPMG Budget Financial Status 5 years
2021 - Santa Barbara local Customer Service survey results.pptx	2021 – Santa Barbara Local Customer Service Survey results
2022 - County Employee Engagement Survey Child Support Services_Manager Report.pdf	2022 – County Employee Engagement Survey Child Support Services Manager Report
All work schedules - Confidential.xlsx	All work schedules
County Hybrid Remote Work Policy -.pdf	County Hybrid Remote Work Policy
DCSS Org Chart Assignments.xlsx	DCSS Org Chart Assignments
FFY 2023 Costumer Survey Ratings - Santa Barbara.xlsx	FFY 2023 Costumer Survey Ratings – Santa Barbara
FTEs work locations - Confidential.xlsx	FTEs work locations
FY2324 DCSS Org Chart Oct 2023.pptx	FY2324 DCSS Org Chart October 2023
Reception Duties.pdf	Reception Duties
Sample Financial OP Audit Stats.xlsx	Sample Financial OP Audit Stats
Sample OP team stats-confidential.xlsx	Sample OP team stats – confidential
Tableau dashboard example.docx	Tableau dashboard example
Turnover Report.xlsx	Turnover Report
Virtual Receptionist and ZOOM interviews.pdf	Virtual Receptionist and ZOOM Interviews

Data Item	Description
CSS_2021 Best of Me Series .pdf	CSS 2021 Best of Me Series
EmergingExec_Brochure_9.1.21.pdf	Emerging Exec brochure
LCP 2022 - brochure (3).pdf	LCP 2022 – brochure
Training course examples.docx	Training course examples
DCSS POC with WDB.pdf	DCSS POC with WDB
Farmworker Resource Center.pdf	Farmworker Resource Center
HHS - Recovery Area Strategies (10).pdf	HHS – Recovery Area Strategies
Mastering Coaching Training Program.pdf	Mastering Coaching Training Program
Mixteco Interpretation Process.pdf	Mixteco Interpretation Process
Parenting Court Plan of Cooperation.pdf	Parenting Court Plan of Cooperation
092023 Alternative payment options report-confidential.xlsx	Alternative payment options report – confidential
Caseload for office and caseload by staff member.pdf	Caseload for office and caseload by staff member
FY2324 DCSS Org Chart Oct 2023.pptx	FY2324 DCSS Org Chart October 2023
Lobby Central report -virtual receptionist communications.xlsx	Lobby Central report – virtual receptionist communications
Staff working locations - Confidential.xlsx	Staff working locations
Tableau Dashboard screenshots.docx	Tableau Dashboard screenshots
TouchPay Kiosk Data - Confidential.docx	TouchPay Kiosk Data
092023 Alternative payment options report-confidential.xlsx	Alternative payment options report – confidential
Instant Zoom Interview Data.docx	Instant Zoom Interview Data
Lobby Central follow up report Aug - Nov.xlsx	Lobby Central follow up report August–November
Lobby Central report -virtual receptionist communications.xlsx	Lobby Central report – virtual receptionist communications
Self Service Tracking Lobby Central - Reasons for Visits.xlsx	Self Service Tracking Lobby Central – Reasons for Visits
Sept 2022 to Aug 2023 Lobby Central report.xlsx	September 2022 to August 2023 Lobby Central report
Simplified Electronic Application (SEP) data.docx	Simplified Electronic Application (SEP) data
TouchPay Kiosk Data - Confidential.docx	TouchPay Kiosk Data

Data Item	Description
Walk-in Log June 2021 - September 2022.xlsx	Walk-in Log June 2021–September 2022
Website Facebook flyer sample screen shot.docx	Website Facebook flyer sample screen shot
2023-Outreach Events and Presenations.xlsx	2023 – Outreach Events and Presentations
FY 21-22 Child Support D-pages.pdf	FY 2021–2022 Child Support D-pages
FY 22-23 Child Support D-pages.pdf	FY 2022–2023 Child Support D-pages
FY 23-24 Child Support D-pages.pdf	FY 2023–2024 Child Support D-pages
Non-statutory target 3 yrs. data.xlsx	Nonstatutory target 3 years data
CA DCSS Strategic Plan.pdf	CA DCSS Strategic Plan
FFY 2021 CSSP Letter_ Performance Improvement Process.pdf	FFY 2021 CSSP Letter Performance Improvement Process
FFY 2021 Santa Barbara County PMP.docx	FFY 2021 Santa Barbara County PMP
FFY 2022 CSSP Letter_ Performance Improvement Process.pdf	FFY 2022 CSSP Letter Performance Improvement Process
FFY 2022 Santa Barbara County PMP.docx	FFY 2022 Santa Barbara County PMP
FFY 2023 CSSP Letter_ Performance Improvement Process.pdf	FFY 2023 CSSP Letter Performance Improvement Process
FFY 2023 Santa Barbara County PMP.docx	FFY 2023 Santa Barbara County PMP
FFY 2024 CSSP Letter_ Performance Improvement Process.pdf	FFY 2024 CSSP Letter Performance Improvement Process
FFY 2024 Santa Barbara County PMP.docx	FFY 2024 Santa Barbara County PMP
FFY 21 22 23 FPM.xlsx	FFY 2021, 2022, 2023 FPM
FFY 21 22 FPM.pdf	FFY 2021–2022 FPM
FFY 22 23 FPM.pdf	FFY 2022–2023 FPM
SB FFY 21 1257.pdf	SB FFY 2021 1257
SB FFY 22 1257.pdf	SB FFY 2022 1257
SB FFY 23 1257.pdf	SB FFY 2023 1257
Statutory Targets 3 yrs. data.xlsx	Statutory Targets 3 years data
Statutory Targets 3 yrs. data_PK.xlsx	Statutory Targets 3 years data PK

Figure 13: Source: KPMG

Operating Model Maturity Scale

The figure below describes a continuum of maturity related to optimal service delivery across the Department. The purple boxes indicate the Department's capabilities at the time of the review, and the gold boxes illustrate the level of maturity that KPMG believes is attainable through the recommendations in this report.

	Current Capability	1	2	3	4	5	Target State
Participant Service Delivery	Limited targeted data-driven marketing and outreach	1	2	3	Currently, there is limited marketing and outreach based on census and demographic data that would provide the Department with the data to develop more targeted marketing initiatives, particularly for underserved populations	In the future state, the Department will undertake census and demographic analysis to support the development of targeted marketing initiatives. This will be supported by the establishment of a lived experience council to provide perspectives on enhancing participant service delivery	Targeted marketing and outreach based on demographic data and lived experience
Collaboration with Key Partners	Limited cross-department collaboration, warm hand-offs, and data-sharing	1	2	In the current state, there is limited streamlined data sharing across County departments as dictated by regulatory frameworks or perceived regulatory prohibitions. This hampers the agency's capacity to deliver efficient and coordinated services.	In the future state, expanding current reviews of relevant regulations governing data sharing in the context of child support services will support the Department in determining how data can be shared safely and securely with a participant's approval or exclusion of tax information.	5	Strengthened whole-person approach to care with increased coordination and data-sharing
Technology Enablement	Lack of streamlined processes for virtual lobby	1	2	3	Lack of streamlined processes that result in an inefficient use of AOPs, prolonged participant wait times, and regular interruptions among CSOs	Streamlined virtual lobby processes with assigned CSOs for participant engagement	Streamlined virtual lobby processes

Figure 14: Source: KPMG

Operating Model Framework

This section describes the operating model framework that was developed to articulate how a function should be designed, structured, and operated to improve operational efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery. It consists of six interacting layers that need to be considered in conjunction with each other to determine how to optimally deliver services to the public.
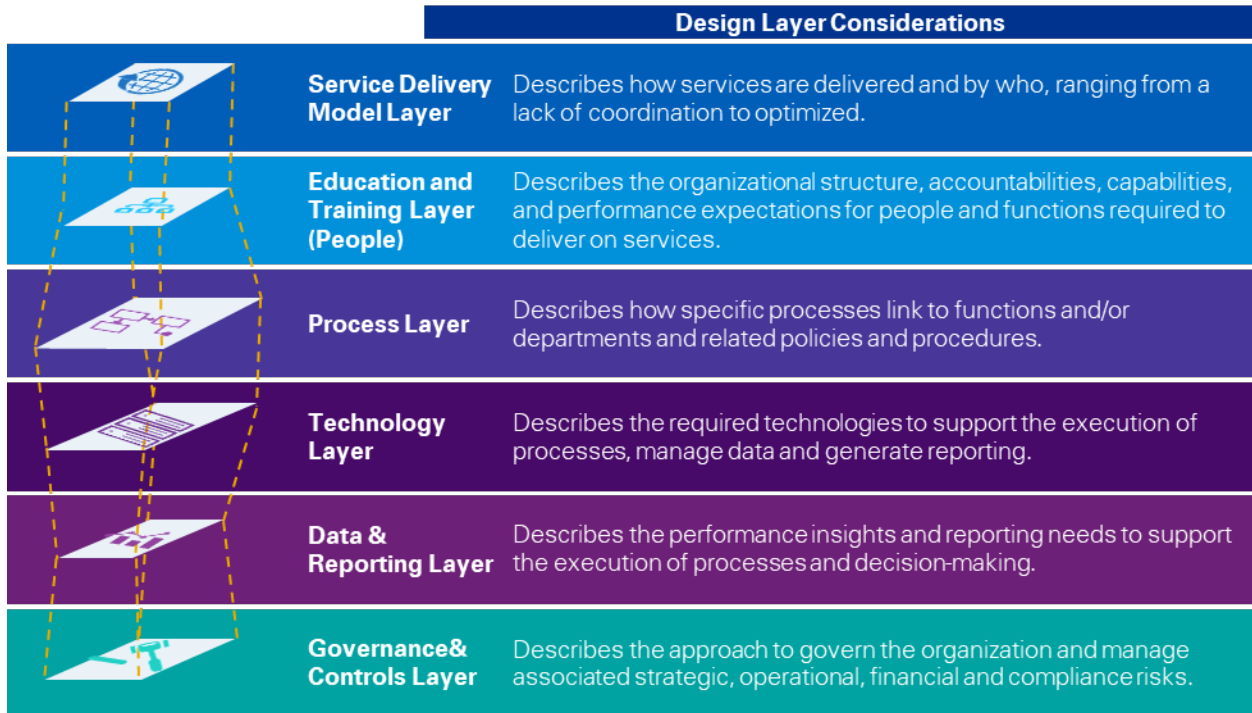
		Design Layer Considerations
	Service Delivery Model Layer	Describes how services are delivered and by who, ranging from a lack of coordination to optimized.
	Education and Training Layer (People)	Describes the organizational structure, accountabilities, capabilities, and performance expectations for people and functions required to deliver on services.
	Process Layer	Describes how specific processes link to functions and/or departments and related policies and procedures.
	Technology Layer	Describes the required technologies to support the execution of processes, manage data and generate reporting.
	Data & Reporting Layer	Describes the performance insights and reporting needs to support the execution of processes and decision-making.
	Governance & Controls Layer	Describes the approach to govern the organization and manage associated strategic, operational, financial and compliance risks.

Figure 15: Source: KPMG

Prioritized Timeline

The following report consists of seven recommendations across the Child Support Services Department. Proposed timing and prioritization for each recommendation is depicted below.

			High-level Timeline											
			Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
Participant Service Delivery	1.1	Perform an analysis of child support orders with arrears to identify opportunities for targeted intervention.			■	■	■	■						
	1.2	Strengthen early intervention strategies to support vulnerable participants in receiving the resources required to meet child support payments.					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
	1.3	Improve workload allocation processes for Locate cases to streamline processes and reduce resolution times.				■	■	■						
	1.4	Enhance current marketing capabilities to increase outreach and combat a decreasing caseload.	■	■	■	■								
Collaboration with Key Stakeholders	2.1	Explore opportunities to increase data sharing capabilities with other County departments to better support participants that experience complex social issues.					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	2.2	Enhance collaboration with the courts and human services agencies to support participants' diverse needs and strengthen the whole-person approach to care for the family.					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Technology Enablement	3.1	Update processes for engaging with participants via the virtual lobby to increase staff efficiency and reduce participant wait times.	■	■										

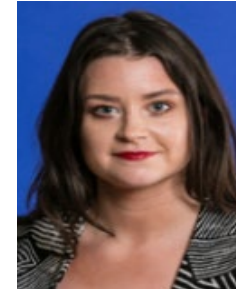*Figure 9: Source: KPMG*

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