



# County of Santa Cruz 0051

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES  
LYNN C. MILLER, DIRECTOR

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**Agenda:** January 9, 2001

December 28, 2000

The Honorable Tony Campos, Chairperson  
and Members of the Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Cruz  
701 Ocean Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

## **Ee: LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN**

Dear Chairperson Campos and Members of the Board:

On December 12, 2000, your Board authorized the County Administrative Officer to submit the Local Customer Service Plan for the child support program to the State Department of Child Support Services by December 29, 2000. In addition, your Board directed that a report back concerning the Customer Service Plan be made on January 9, 2001.

The County Department of Child Support Services submitted the Local Customer Service Plan (Attachment 1) to the State Department of Child Support Services on December 21, 2000 and has received approval from the State to implement the initiatives outlined therein. These initiatives are designed to increase program visibility, accessibility of services and to promote the delivery of consistently excellent service to all customers.

A brief description of each Customer Service Initiative follows:

### **Omsbudsperson Proaram**

The Omsbudsperson function is a required component of the Local Customer Service Initiative. The Omsbudsperson shall be responsible for positive resolutions to customer complaints concerning all phases of child support case management and will act as a liaison with elected officials and agency partners. The Omsbudsperson will also provide personal and expeditious service to employers with questions regarding wage withholdings and health insurance assignments, present workshops on child support processes for custodial and non-custodial parents and assist in providing customer service training for staff.

### **CalWORKS Intensive Caseload**

A pilot project for a specialized caseload of new CalWORKs and Medi-Cal referrals with a special focus on young fathers under 25 years of age. The case manager will develop a cooperative working

relationship with both parents and focus on early intervention with education on the child support program, engaging the obligor and custodial parent in the process, promoting positive parental involvement and referral to community agencies and ancillary services.

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### Extended Hours and Accessibility

A pilot project designed to increase accessibility and responsiveness to the needs of customers by extending hours of operation to include selected evening and Saturday hours. Additionally, a second Child Support Officer will be assigned to the Watsonville Human Resources Agency co-location site to better serve custodial and non-custodial parents living in South County. Data will be collected to evaluate service needs for the South County area as a step toward the agency's near term goal of establishing a satellite office in Watsonville.

### customer Service Training

This initiative mandates training on effective and courteous customer service for all child support staff. Regular and consistent training is a key component in maintaining an organizational culture which promotes respectful and equitable service to all customers .

### Public Outreach

The Department plans to implement two Public Outreach initiatives to enhance public awareness of child support services and the importance of child support and parental involvement with internet access to services, informational brochures in both English and Spanish and a media campaign.

The Department looks forward to the opportunities afforded by the State's Customer Service allocation and strongly believes the implementation of these local initiatives will result in significant program improvement.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Accept and file the Local Customer Service Plan for the newly established Santa Cruz County Department of Child Support Services

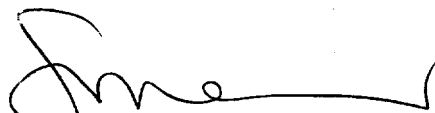
Respectfully,



LYNN C. MILLER, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

LCM/DLO/dlf

RECOMMENDED:



SUSAN A MAURIELLO  
County Administrative Officer

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**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICES PLAN  
ATTACHMENT 1**

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
 LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICES PLAN  
 BUDGET SUMMARY  
 SIX MONTHS AND ANNUAL**

Initiative Description	6 Months Budget	Annual Budget
Ombudsperson (Supv CSO, full time 6 mos)	26,250	52,500
CALWORKS Intensive (CSO, full time 6 mos)	24,000	48,000
Demonstration Project - Extended Hours	35,000	<b>0</b>
Customer Service Training	20,000	10,000
Public Outreach - Website	5,000	<b>0</b>
Public Outreach - Written Materials	3,280	3,030
Total	113,530	113,530

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICES PLAN**

**OMBUDSPERSON**

**Ombudsperson Allocation: \$32,500 FTE: .50 Actual Cost:**  
 \$26,250 (6mos);  
 \$52,500 (Annual).

**Implementation Plan:**

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	11/15/00	11/22/00
Develop Program	11/22/00	11/21/00
Hire Resource	12/15/00	1/1/01
Implement Program	1/1/01	1/1/01
Evaluate Program	1/1/01	on-going
Improve Program	1/1/01	on-going

**Duties:**

Resolves customer service problems in all phases of child support case management including establishment, enforcement, payment distribution, customer service delivery, court dates, etc. Acts as liaison to elected officials, partner agencies and employers in the complaint resolution process. Also serves as a single point of contact to ensure expeditious and personal attention to employers with questions regarding wage withholdings and health insurance assignments. Acts proactively to develop and recommend new processes and procedures; prepares training materials and brochures, present workshops on child support processes for custodial and noncustodial parents and support staff development supervisor by providing ongoing customer service training for staff. The incumbent will be responsible for maintaining documentation of each case and providing program evaluation material to the Director.

## **LOCAL CUSTOMER SERVICE INITIATIVES**

### **I. Customer Service Initiative Activity: CALWORKS Intensive Caseload**

**Component Type:** Services to Encourage Program Participation  
Public Outreach

**Program Description:** A pilot project for a specialized caseload of new CalWORKs and Medi-Cal Only cases. Many of our nonpaying cases are the result of bitterly disputed hearings about support payments. These cases tend to have large arrears balances accrued over years. Traditionally, enforcement efforts have focused on viewing the noncustodial parent as strictly an obligor. This new initiative proposes, through early intervention in the child support process, to develop a cooperative relationship with both parents and educates, assists and supports parental involvement using comprehensive case management and improved customer service delivery as positive collection tools.

This case manager would also work closely with the welfare department's eligibility worker and employment and training specialist as well as community resources to provide a multi-disciplinary, continuum of care approach to promoting family responsibility. This position would also make outreach presentations in schools regarding parental involvement and child support.

**Targeted Audience:** Parents who are participants in assistance cases and new to the child support enforcement system.

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

- ▶ Participants will be better informed and therefore, understand their court orders and to consider them reasonable.
- ▶ The local agency will improve their working relationship with both parents.
- ▶ Participants will be better at co-parenting and more involved with their children.
- ▶ The local agency will improve customer service (modifications, reserved orders, referral to other services) to noncustodial parents who are incarcerated, participants in drug court, limited in English proficiency or unemployed.
- ▶ The local agency will provide focused services for an under-served group, young fathers.
- ▶ The local agency will increase the number of CalWORKS/Medical Only, non-custodial child support clients that provide child support, increase the amount of the CalWORKS/Medical Only child support dollars collected and provide a better financial foundation for CalWORKS participants facing time limits under welfare reform law.

- ▶ The local agency will enhance their relationships with stakeholders.

**Funding Allocated:** \$24,000 (6mos); \$48,000 (Annual).

**Other Resources Required:** Microsoft Project or similar software to track and maintain data base to assist in evaluating outcomes.

**How Will Results be Measured/Evaluated:**

Each case will be tracked for number of contacts, type of contact, type of case, amount of court order established, referrals to other resources, pay history, etc. Pay histories and the activity summary report will help evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify increases in collections over the collection averages.

**Task Schedule:**

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	11/15/00	12/1/00
Develop Program	12/1/00	12/30/00
Implement Program	1/1/01	1/1/01
Evaluate Program	1/1/01	on going
Improve Program	1/1/01	on going

## 2. Customer Service Initiative Activity: Extended Hours

**Component Type:** Access to Child Support Program

**Program Description:** A pilot project designed to increase the accessibility of service and to be more responsive to the needs of customers by extending hours of operation. Currently, the office is open from 8 am through 12 noon and 1 through 5 pm, Monday through Friday. This schedule is inconvenient for many of our customers who work during those hours and experience difficulty reaching their case managers.

Hours of service would be extended to include the lunch hours, Saturdays and one evening each week.

**Targeted Audience:** All customers

### Expected Outcomes:

- ▶ Participants will have increased customer satisfaction because of the greater accessibility to services.
- ▶ Case managers will have increased job satisfaction because they will be better able to provide improved services to participants.
- ▶ The agency will enhance their relationships with stakeholders.

**Funding Allocated:** \$35,000 (6 mos); \$0 (Annual)

**Other Resources Required:** None identified at this time.

**How Will Results be Measured/Evaluated:** Customer service contacts during extended hours will be documented and tracked to determine volume. Data will be included in the quarterly report. Satisfaction surveys will be distributed to all contacts and the results included in reports.

### Task Schedule:

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	11/15/00	12/1/00
Develop Program	12/1/00	12/30/00
Implement Program	1/1/01	1/1/01
Evaluate Program	1/1/01	on going
Improve Program	1/1/01	on going



### 3. Customer Service Initiative Activity: Customer Service Training for LCSA Staff

**Component Type:** Training

**Program Description:** All LCSA staff, especially those with public contact will receive mandatory training on effective and courteous customer service. This training would be an essential element of establishing a new organizational culture which will promote a respectful and an equitable treatment of all customers. This will help eliminate stereotypes such as “deadbeat dad” and educate the staff about the value of cultural diversity.

**Targeted Audience:** All LCSA staff including attorneys, supervisors and managers.

**Expected Outcomes:**

- ▶ The LCSA staff will be better equipped to provide quality customer service which respects its clients and treats all of its clients equitably. They will also be better equipped to deal with difficult situations and feel more supported in that effort.
- ▶ The agency will embrace a new organizational culture.
- ▶ The agency will greatly enhance its relationships with stakeholders.

**Funding Allocated:** \$20,000 (6 mos); \$10,000 (Annual)

**Other Resources Required:** None identified at this time

**How Will Results be Measured/Evaluated:** Staff performance will be tracked and measured. Staff will be surveyed on the usefulness of the training.

**Task Schedule:**

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	11/15/00	12/1/00
Develop Program	12/1/00	12/30/00
Implement Program	January 2001	ongoing
Evaluate Program	Implementation date	on going
Improve Program	Implementation date	on going

**4. Customer Service Initiative Activity: Public Outreach - Website****Component Type:** Public Outreach**Program Description:** Development of an agency interactive website.**Targeted Audience:** Public**Expected Outcomes:**

- ▶ The public will be better informed of available services.
- ▶ The public will have quicker and easier access to child support services.

**Funding Allocated:** \$5,000 (6 mos); \$0 (Annual)**Other Resources Required:** None identified at this time

**How Will Results be Measured/Evaluated:** Data on the number and type of contacts (inquiry, request for application materials, etc) via the **website** will be kept and evaluated to determine increases in accessibility, contacts and new cases.

**Task Schedule:**

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	1 /1 5/00	12/1/00
Develop Program	12/1/00	2/1/01
Implement Program	March 2001	April 2001
Evaluate Program	Implementation date	on going
Improve Program	Implementation date	on going

**5. Customer Service Initiative Activity: Public Outreach -Written Materials****Component Type:** Public Outreach

**Program Description:** The local agency needs to develop materials describing its services and explaining its processes in both English and Spanish to better inform our customers. These materials will be made available at different locations in the community and will also be provided to new applicants for services.

Further, the local agency needs to inform the public of its available services. Large banners and signs can be placed on local buses through the local metropolitan transit district sending a very visible message to the community about the importance of child support and the location of the local child support agency.

**Targeted Audience:** Public

**Expected Outcomes:**

- ▶ The agency will experience an increase in the requests for information from the public for available services.
- ▶ The agency will experience an increase in caseload.
- ▶ The community will have an Increased awareness of the importance of child support.

**Funding Allocated:** \$3,280 (6 mos); \$3,030 (Annual).

**Other Resources Required:** None identified at this time.

**How Will Results be Measured/Evaluated:**

The results will be measured by determining if there is any significant increase in the number of cases opened.

**Task Schedule:**

Activity	Target Start Date	Target End Date
Plan Program	1 /1 5/00	12/1/00
Develop Program	12/1/00	2/1/01
Implement Program	March 2001	April 2001
Evaluate Program	Implementation date	on going
Improve Program	Implementation date	on going