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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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IV-D MEMORANDUM 2013-011

TO: All Friend of the Court (FOC) Staff
All Prosecuting Attorney (PA) Staff
All Office of Child Support (OCS) Staff

FROM: Erin P. Frisch, Director
Office of Child Support

DATE: September 12, 2013

SUBJECT: Status of the Michigan Child Support Enforcement System (MiCSES) / Michigan Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (MiSACWIS) Interface

RESPONSE DUE: None

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon receipt

PURPOSE:

This IV-D Memorandum discusses issues with the anticipated two-way interface between MiCSES and the new MiSACWIS.

Testing of the MiCSES/MiSACWIS interface is delayed, and automated processing could have undesired impacts on the IV-D case record. The quality and reliability of MiSACWIS data is unknown and untested. Automated processing of MiSACWIS referrals could result in MiCSES creating duplicate members and cases, generating inappropriate alerts, and incorrectly assigning child support payments. Therefore, OCS has decided not to automate the processing of MiSACWIS referrals and updates. When responding to child welfare referrals, IV-D staff will manually perform duties that would otherwise have been automated.

This memorandum identifies opportunities for IV-D staff to learn more about the MiCSES/MiSACWIS interface, and the necessary manual work, before the implementation date for MiSACWIS.

UPDATE(S):

Manual

Form(s)

DISCUSSION:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) began working on a replacement for the Services Worker Support System Foster Care, Adoption, and Juvenile Justice (SWSS FAJ) in 2011 to improve service delivery for children. In October 2013, DHS will implement its new system, MiSACWIS, in accordance with the [Dwayne B. v Snyder](#) modified settlement agreement and consent order.

During the development of MiSACWIS, OCS conferred with DHS child welfare staff and MiSACWIS technical staff to design an interface between Michigan's child support and child welfare programs. Michigan's child support program provides the following critical benefits to taxpayers and children receiving child welfare services:

- **Recoupment of state expenditures** – Assignment of child support as required by law repays public expenditures and prevents inappropriate child support payments to custodial parties (CPs) who no longer have custody of children;
- **Information sharing** – Information collected in the course of child support action assists child welfare workers in case planning, case management, and permanency planning; and
- **Long-term stability** – IV-D workers locate parents or relatives, establish paternity for children, and establish child support orders that endure even after child welfare services end.

Additionally, prompt action on child welfare referrals increases Michigan's IV-D program incentives, improving the resources available to all IV-D staff to serve Michigan children.

Planned Two-Way Interface

OCS staff, MiCSES staff, and IV-D partners in PA and FOC offices jointly worked on MiCSES designs for a two-way interface that would:

- **Match MiSACWIS persons** – The member-matching method in place for matching Bridges members, which has a 98 percent success rate, would match referred children and parents to MiCSES members;
- **Match MiSACWIS cases** – MiCSES would find agency placement IV-D cases (cases in which the CP represents DHS)¹ corresponding to the referred family;
- **Automatically start IV-D cases** – MiCSES would create new IV-D cases as needed and initiate workflow activities for support specialists;
- **Apply assistance to relevant IV-D cases** – MiCSES would automatically record assistance applicable to relevant IV-D cases – both the agency placement IV-D case and the pre-placement IV-D case that existed prior to removal of the child from his/her living arrangement;

¹ Ref: [Section 3.03, "Case Updates and Member Demographics" of the Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual.](#)

- **Alert IV-D staff** – MiCSES would automatically alert IV-D staff in all offices when children enter agency placement, when their placement changes, and when they leave agency placement; and
- **Clarify child support assignment** – An array of living arrangements, legal statuses, and funding sources would be replaced by a single “pay-to” indicator that directs IV-D staff to assign support to the state or county or redirect support to an unlicensed provider.

The planned two-way interface, including both the IV-D policy and the MiCSES design supporting it, focuses on agency placement cases (when a court removes a child from his/her living arrangement and places that child in the care and custody of DHS) and does not address other aspects of foster care service or out-of-home placement.

MiSACWIS/MiCSES Data Processing Issues

OCS and the child welfare agency have not completed the testing process for the joint interface between MiCSES and MiSACWIS. Therefore, the quality and reliability of MiSACWIS data is unproven at this time.

As a result, OCS staff and MiCSES analysts met to discuss possible solutions for processing MiSACWIS/MiCSES data. The group identified system, policy and operational actions to mitigate the effect on IV-D staff and families served by the IV-D program.

The planned future interface is designed to automatically respond to MiSACWIS referrals and referral updates with actions ranging from case and member creation to financial reactions and federal reporting. However, the contingency planning group found that during the time MiSACWIS referrals are untested, it would be more efficient to manually take these steps than to rely on automatic processing.

Consequently, MiCSES will store MiSACWIS referral information on the *SACWIS Case Information* (SCWS) screen² and take no further action. MiCSES will not alert IV-D staff when new and updated MiSACWIS referral information arrives. Referral information and referral update information will remain on the SCWS screen for reference by IV-D workers.

Until the MiCSES/MiSACWIS interface is fully tested and functional, IV-D staff should prepare to manually perform all the actions that have been planned for the two-way interface. (Ref: the “Planned Two-Way Interface” section above.)

MiCSES will prepare a report identifying new and updated child welfare referrals as a working list for IV-D staff. OCS expects that a Business Objects report, derived from MiSACWIS data, will be ready at the same time MiSACWIS launches to assist IV-D staff

² MiCSES introduced this screen with the MiCSES 8.3 Release (February 2013).

in validating the referral information. In addition, a limited number of IV-D staff at OCS will receive direct access to MiSACWIS to help IV-D staff confirm critical data.

IV-D staff must use the MiCSES report in conjunction with the Business Objects report to perform case initiation, case management, order establishment and financial reactions in response to child welfare referrals.

Forthcoming Policy

On or around October 7, 2013, OCS will release a comprehensive IV-D Memorandum directing IV-D staff how to manage child welfare referrals. That IV-D Memorandum will supplement the existing *Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual* sections related to foster care and will provide policy during the completion of the MiCSES/MiSACWIS joint interface testing.

When joint interface testing is completed and when MiCSES is able to perform automated processing of MiSACWIS referrals and referral updates, OCS will publish revisions to the manual sections related to foster care. These sections will describe the interface and provide direction to IV-D staff on addressing child welfare cases.

Communication Plan

OCS plans many efforts to inform IV-D staff of the status of MiSACWIS development, the ongoing efforts to complete joint interface testing, and the necessary work IV-D staff must perform in the interim period. These efforts may include the following, which are subject to change:

- BERG call (September 24);
- FOC User Group (October 3);
- Webinars;
- Policy (October 7);
- Michigan Family Support Council Fall Conference Training (October 9-11);
- Web-based Training (anticipated publication on October 14); and
- Statewide Regional Instructor-led Training (November).

NECESSARY ACTION:

Retain this IV-D Memorandum until further notice. Participate in communication efforts mentioned above to learn more.

REVIEW PARTICIPANTS:

Case Management Work Improvement Team
Establishment Work Improvement Team
Financial Work Improvement Team
Program Leadership Group

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None

SUPPORTING REFERENCES:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

None

EPF/MBG