



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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IV-D MEMORANDUM 2015-023

TO: All Friend of the Court (FOC) Staff
All Prosecuting Attorney (PA) Staff

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

DATE: September 25, 2015

UPDATE(S):

Manual

Form(s)

SUBJECT: Introducing the MiChildSupport Calculator and Necessary Preparation in Support Determination Processes

RESPONSE DUE: None

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon receipt

PURPOSE:

This IV-D Memorandum provides advance notice of upcoming changes that will affect the support determination processes (order establishment, court-referred support investigations, and review and modification) in PA and FOC offices. It also informs IV-D workers how to prepare for those changes. Additional policy materials will be published in November 2015.

On November 13, 2015, the Michigan Child Support Enforcement System (MiCSES) 8.13 Release will implement the MiChildSupport Calculator, which will allow IV-D workers to prepare more accurate child support calculations per the Michigan Child Support Formula (MCSF).¹ The MiChildSupport Calculator will replace functionality currently available to IV-D workers through the MiCSES screens *Guidelines Recommendation* (GREC), *Guideline Participants* (GPIF), and *Guideline Details* (GGDL).

The implementation of the MiChildSupport Calculator will improve the efficiency of the support calculation process and provide a more user-friendly interface for IV-D workers. It will also assist the Michigan Child Support Program in fulfilling its Strategic Plan goals in Business Process, Customer Service, and Technology.

¹ In the past, support calculations in the Michigan IV-D program have sometimes been referred to as "guideline calculations."

DISCUSSION:

Federal law² requires the use of a statewide formula or guideline for the calculation of child support amounts. State law³ mandates the use of the MCSF⁴ to calculate child support amounts.

Today, IV-D workers use the GREC, GPIF, and GGDL screens in MiCSES to calculate child support. However, IV-D workers have reported numerous inefficiencies in working with these screens, and occasionally, the results provided by MiCSES are not accurate per the MCSF.

To address this issue, the Michigan Child Support Program has developed the MiChildSupport Calculator.⁵ This web-based Calculator is part of MiCSES; it will allow IV-D workers to prepare support calculations and then import them to the *Order Preparation and Entry* (OPRE) screen. IV-D workers will access the Calculator through MiCSES, and it will provide an intuitive interface not available through a standard MiCSES screen. The Calculator will not require an additional sign-on, and it will use MiCSES roles and security standards.

The new Calculator has been named the “MiChildSupport Calculator”; however, it is not located on the MiChildSupport website, nor is it accessible from there. Also, while the MiCSES 8.13 Release will give access to the MiChildSupport Calculator only to IV-D workers, the IV-D program plans to make a non-MiCSES version of the Calculator available to private attorneys and to the public sometime after June 2016.

A. Transition to the MiChildSupport Calculator

The transition to the MiChildSupport Calculator will affect **all** IV-D workers involved in order establishment, court-referred support investigations, and review and modification activities. There will be no overlap period between the use of the GREC/GPIF/GGDL screens and the implementation of the MiChildSupport Calculator. Therefore, IV-D offices should be prepared for some changes to their usual business processes in the weeks prior to and following the release.

IV-D workers who prepare and complete support calculations will begin using the MiChildSupport Calculator immediately after the MiCSES 8.13 Release (November 13, 2015). The GREC and GGDL screens will still exist in MiCSES after the release; however, completed calculations prepared on these screens will be read-only and will only provide historical information. IV-D workers will no longer use the GREC and GGDL screens to prepare support calculations, and the GPIF screen will no longer be available. After the release, the IV-D worker may still complete certain

² Ref: 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 302.56(a).

³ Ref: Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 552.519(3)(a)(vi).

⁴ Ref: [MCSF web page](#).

⁵ Throughout this memorandum, the MiChildSupport Calculator will also be referred to as the “Calculator.”

fields in an incomplete calculation,⁶ however, no calculations, whether completed prior to or after the release, may be imported to the OPRE screen.

There are three strategies a IV-D office may use to handle calculations that are prepared but not imported before the implementation of the Calculator. An office may choose to use any combination of these strategies, depending on office business practices. These strategies will help smooth the transition to the MiChildSupport Calculator.

1. Immediately Import GREC/GPIF/GGDL Calculations to the OPRE Screen Before the Release

Today, some offices wait for the completion of the 21-day objection period or hand the calculation off to another IV-D worker before importing GREC/GPIF/GGDL calculations to the OPRE screen.

To prepare for the transition, IV-D workers in these offices may **immediately** import GREC/GPIF/GGDL support calculations to the OPRE screen upon their completion rather than wait for the objection period to elapse. This may require that the IV-D worker later edit the OPRE record if there are changes to the recommendation or if a new calculation is necessary. However, this option will eliminate the need for IV-D workers to manually enter the provisions of the support calculation from the GREC/GPIF/GGDL screens as a recommendation on the OPRE screen after the release.

Offices that immediately import the calculation to the OPRE screen and do not wait for the objection period to elapse would not need to make any changes to their business process.

Refer to [Section 4.20, "Support Recommendations and Order Entry," of the Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual](#), and to the [MiCSES Quick Reference Guide: OPRE – Prepare a Support Order](#) for more information on importing support calculations to the OPRE screen.

2. Manual Entry After the Release

The IV-D worker may wait and manually enter GREC/GPIF/GGDL support calculations on the OPRE screen after the release. Workers could manually enter the provisions of each GREC/GPIF/GGDL support calculation (e.g., parenting time overnights, support amounts for each tier, medical provisions, etc.) on the OPRE screen and then manually associate the calculation's Guideline ID to the OPRE record so the link between the calculation and the recommendation and order is preserved. This option may involve substantial manual work, especially for more complex support calculations involving multiple IV-D cases.

⁶ Details about the specific fields will be available in the Release Notes published about a week prior to the release.

3. Temporarily Stop Work on Support Calculations

The IV-D worker may **temporarily** stop running GREC/GPIF/GGDL support calculations, unless the IV-D worker knows that the calculation will be imported to the OPRE screen prior to the release. This option would likely cause a delay in an office's review and modification, court-referred support investigation, and order establishment work. Offices choosing this option must still meet federal requirements for the completion of work.⁷

B. Other Preparations for the MiChildSupport Calculator

OCS and MiCSES staff are working to prepare IV-D staff for the transition to the MiChildSupport Calculator.

1. Communication

Information on the Calculator will be presented in two sessions at the Michigan Family Support Council Fall Conference October 7-9, 2015. After those dates, materials from the presentation are expected to be available online at mifsc.org.

MiCSES staff also plan to host a drop-in MiCSES Learning Lab at the conference on Thursday, October 8. Conference attendees are encouraged to stop by the MiCSES Learning Lab for an opportunity to "test drive" the MiChildSupport Calculator.

Additionally, the OCS Training team shared information on the MiChildSupport Calculator in a Child Support Update call on September 15, 2015.

2. Training Opportunities

MiChildSupport Calculator training webinars are scheduled for the week of October 19, 2015, and more may be scheduled. OCS encourages IV-D workers involved in the preparation of support calculations to attend one or more of these sessions. Further information regarding the webinars and the training Calculator will be provided via a Help Desk notification.

3. Policy, Release Notes, and Training Materials

OCS is scheduled to publish updates to policy related to the MiChildSupport Calculator on November 9, 2015. At that time, the MiCSES Technical Communications Team is expected to publish release notes and other materials associated with the MiChildSupport Calculator. The OCS Training team will

⁷ 45 CFR 303.8(e) requires that a review be completed within 180 days of receiving the review request or locating the non-requesting parent, whichever occurs later. 45 CFR 303.4(d) requires that an order be established, or service of process be completed, within 90 days of locating the non-custodial parent.

publish training materials prior to the release as well. OCS highly recommends that all PA and FOC offices plan now to allocate time in that week for staff to **thoroughly review** the materials and learn about the Calculator prior to the 8.13 release (November 13, 2015). This will allow staff who perform support calculations to prepare for changes in their individual business practices, and will enhance their understanding of the new Calculator before this significant system change occurs on Monday morning, November 16.

4. Post-Release Activities

A dedicated team of MiCSES and OCS staff has been assembled to address any issues that arise immediately after the release. The group will meet daily to discuss and address Help Desk tickets entered by users of MiCSES and the MiChildSupport Calculator. As always, when users notify the Help Desk of potential problems or issues, it assists the MiCSES Project Team in addressing issues more quickly and correcting the functionality, if necessary.

NECESSARY ACTION:

Retain this IV-D Memorandum until further notice.

REVIEW PARTICIPANTS:

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SUPPORTING REFERENCES:

Federal
45 CFR 302.56(a)
45 CFR 303.4(d)
45 CFR 303.8(e)

State
MCL 552.519(3)(a)(vi)

ATTACHMENT(S):

None

EPF/JJV