



STATE OF MICHIGAN

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

ROBERT GORDON
DIRECTOR

IV-D MEMORANDUM 2020-003

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: February 20, 2020

SUBJECT: Office of Child Support (OCS) Equity Impact Assessment Tool
and Community Advisory Council

UPDATE(S):

Manual

Form(s)

ACTION DUE: None

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon receipt

PURPOSE:

This IV-D Memorandum provides information about the OCS Equity Impact Assessment Tool, which OCS will use to help ensure that its statewide IV-D policies and procedures result in equitable outcomes for the diverse families Michigan’s child support program serves. OCS is committed to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion within Michigan’s child support program.

This IV-D Memorandum also explains the role of the OCS Community Advisory Council, which is an important component of the Equity Impact Assessment Tool. This memorandum does not require action and does not introduce changes to any IV-D policy or procedure.

OCS has been conducting and will continue to conduct outreach at conferences and meetings to explain the tool and the council.

DISCUSSION:

A. Background

In May 2018, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) approved a [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan](#) that was developed by the MDHHS

Diversity Committee. The purpose of the plan is to improve outcomes for customers, communities, stakeholders and employees by addressing inequities at a systemic level.

MDHHS created several resources in support of the plan, including:

1. A web-based training on the identification of systemic racism – OCS plans to make this training available to all IV-D staff in March 2020.¹ This training will satisfy the Contract Performance Standards requirement for customer service training.² Because this training was created by MDHHS, it may not be available through the Learning Management System. OCS will provide instructions for accessing the training and ensuring that CPS credit is received.
2. An Equity Impact Assessment Tool – This tool can be used to guide the policy decision-making process and help evaluate the impacts of existing and future policies and programs. OCS introduced the MDHHS Equity Impact Assessment Tool to its Program Development Division (PDD)³ in the fall of 2018. At that time, PDD staff received preliminary training on the use of the tool.

Shortly thereafter, OCS formed the Equity Impact Assessment Workgroup to plan the implementation of the MDHHS Equity Impact Assessment Tool in OCS with regard to its development of IV-D policies, programs and initiatives. The workgroup consists of representatives from the MDHHS Health Disparities and Minority Health Section and representatives from PDD.

B. Equity Impact Assessment Tool

The use of MDHHS's Equity Impact Assessment Tool will support the Michigan Child Support Program's Strategic Plan by using data and families' experiences to help evaluate child support practices.⁴

The Equity Impact Assessment Tool is an evaluation process that follows a series of formalized procedures. At a high level, the Equity Impact Assessment Tool consists of the following steps:

1. Proposal;
2. Data;
3. Community Engagement;
4. Analysis and Strategies;
5. Implementation; and

¹ OCS will announce the training in an email notification when it is available.

² Ref: [Section 1.25, "Contracts," of the Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual.](#)

³ OCS PDD consists of the Policy section, the Training and Application Support Services section, and other program developers.

⁴ Ref: the goal "Improve Child Support Processes" in the [Michigan Child Support Program Strategic Plan 2018-2020](#) on mi-support.

6. Accountability and Communication.

[Exhibit 2020-003E1, the MDHHS Equity Impact Review Process Overview](#),⁵ provides more information on the tool and the steps listed above.

The Equity Impact Assessment Workgroup quickly realized that implementation of the tool could not go forward without community input on and engagement with the IV-D program's decision-making process. Therefore, the workgroup began planning for an OCS Community Advisory Council.

C. OCS Community Advisory Council

The OCS Community Advisory Council will be a group of 8 to 12 individuals tasked with providing input on both new and existing IV-D policies and procedures. OCS is looking for council participants with diverse characteristics (e.g., race, ethnicity, abilities) who represent the different roles of child support customers (e.g., both parents and non-parent caregivers, such as grandparents). OCS intends that some of the council participants will be formally or informally affiliated with community organizations that advocate for and assist and support marginalized populations; therefore, they will be able to represent not only their own personal experience with the child support program, but that of others as well.

The council will not include child support practitioners⁶ as formal members because those individuals are already represented in the policy development process (e.g., in workgroups, Work Improvement Teams, etc.). OCS will provide administrative support and facilitators for the council, but these individuals will not be considered formal members of the council, and they will remain neutral in the council's discussions.

OCS will identify Community Advisory Council participants through a series of informational meetings conducted in the Lansing area.⁷ These informational meetings should begin in April 2020, and the council should begin its monthly meetings in June 2020.

[Exhibit 2020-003E2, the OCS Community Advisory Council Charter](#), documents the expectations for the council's:

- Purpose;
- Goals;
- Objectives;
- Scope;

⁵ This document was created by the MDHHS Office of Equity and Minority Health.

⁶ Child support practitioners include FOC, PA, State Court Administrative Office, or OCS staff.

⁷ OCS intends that eventually, the OCS Community Advisory Council will include representation from beyond the Lansing metropolitan area; however, it was logistically simpler to use the Lansing area as a starting point for this new initiative.

- Approach;
- Membership;
- Communication;
- Budget; and
- Evaluation process.

The creation of the OCS Community Advisory Council will support the Michigan Child Support Program's Strategic Plan to improve the customer experience by giving the program an opportunity to hear from customers as they experience IV-D services. Also, customers will have the opportunity to learn about and better understand child support processes, provide their input, and know that they have been heard.

While child support practitioners will not be formal members of the OCS Community Advisory Council, OCS expects that, from time to time, they may be asked to speak with the council as subject matter experts. Individuals participating in this manner will only provide information and will not be involved in the council's deliberations. Practitioners may be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding recognizing the role they play as collaborators with the council and what kinds of input and participation the council expects.

OCS anticipates that any participating child support practitioners will serve as an informal bridge between the council and the child support program's Work Improvement Teams and other workgroups.

Any child support practitioner interested in learning more about the council or the role of child support practitioners within the council may contact Julie Vandenoorn (vandenboomj@michigan.gov).

D. Impacts to the Policy Development Process

As the implementation of the Equity Impact Assessment Tool results in changes to the IV-D policy development process, OCS will inform all affected partners within the Michigan child support program.

NECESSARY ACTION:

Retain this IV-D Memorandum until further notice.

REVIEW PARTICIPANTS:

OCS Equity Impact Assessment Workgroup
Customer Services Workgroup
Program Leadership Group

CONTACT PERSON:

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ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit 2020-003E1: MDHHS Equity Impact Review Process Overview

Exhibit 2020-003E2: OCS Community Advisory Council Charter

EPF/JJV