



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH HERTEL
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IV-D MEMORANDUM 2021-007

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: March 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Update on the OCS Community Advisory Council and the New
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Page on mi-support

UPDATE(S):

Manual

Form(s)

ACTION DUE: None

POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon receipt

PURPOSE:

In February 2020, OCS published IV-D Memorandum 2020-003,¹ which provided information on OCS’s future use of an Equity Impact Assessment Tool and discussed plans for an OCS Community Advisory Council. Since that publication, OCS has created the Community Advisory Council and begun meetings with council participants.

This IV-D Memorandum provides an update on the Council’s membership and charter, and its participation in the IV-D policy review process. It also announces the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) page that will be created on mi-support.²

OCS continues its important work toward becoming an anti-racist organization and bringing equity to child support programs and practices. This memorandum reminds IV-D staff of available web-based training regarding the identification of systemic racism.

¹ Ref: [IV-D Memorandum 2020-003, Office of Child Support \(OCS\) Equity Impact Assessment Tool and Community Advisory Council.](#)

² OCS will issue an email notification when the DEI page is available on mi-support.

DISCUSSION:

A. OCS Community Advisory Council

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions on public meetings, the Council did not begin meeting in June 2020 as anticipated. OCS conducted informational sessions about the Council as discussed in IV-D Memorandum 2020-003 but did so virtually in the fall of 2020. Twelve Council members were identified from among the 44 interested participants at those sessions, and they accepted positions on the Council.

1. Council Meetings and Membership

The Council began meeting in February 2021. Meetings will occur monthly, on the last Wednesday of each month. Initially, the council will meet virtually, with members determining when and if a move to in-person meetings will be appropriate.

Originally, OCS had anticipated that Council membership would largely consist of participants in the Lansing metropolitan area; however, the move to virtual meetings has allowed the Council to encompass a much broader membership.

2. Council Charter

The OCS Community Advisory Council Charter was published as Exhibit 2020-003E2 with IV-D Memorandum 2020-003. Since that publication, OCS has made several changes to the charter. Rather than update and replace the exhibit, OCS plans to post the charter to the DEI page on mi-support.³ The changes since the last publication will be indicated by a change bar in the right margin. In the revised charter, the most significant change is the removal of language about Council meetings being open for public observation. This language was removed due to concerns about allowing observation and/or public comment in a virtual format. The charter does not limit the Council from gathering public input in other ways.

If OCS makes any future changes to the charter, it will be done in consultation with the Council, and OCS will post the revised version to mi-support with the appropriate date on the title page.

Exhibit 2020-003E2 is obsolete.

³ Ref: Section B of this memorandum for information on the mi-support DEI page.

3. Participation in OCS's Policy Review Process

Community engagement is a critical component of the Equity Impact Assessment Tool discussed in IV-D Memorandum 2020-003. The creation of the Council provides the IV-D program with the opportunity to engage the community in policy decisions.

The policy and procedural changes OCS proposes and drafts have traditionally had an inclusive review process. This process includes the valuable and knowledgeable input and recommendations of child support professionals, including staff from OCS Operations, the FOC, and the PA. However, OCS has never had a process to routinely include the voices and ideas of the diverse populations the program serves.

The Council creates an opportunity to hear from historically marginalized populations and to include the community in program discussions. The IV-D program will work collaboratively with the Council to address unintended consequences of its policies and strive for more equitable outcomes for all.

The OCS Policy Section has incorporated the Council into its review process and has identified guidelines regarding the types and scope of policy topics that will best use the valuable and limited time of the Council. OCS will discuss these guidelines with the Council for its feedback.

Including Council input will create a longer policy review process for topics the Council addresses. While the review process may take longer, OCS expects the Council's contributions will create positive and critical changes within Michigan's IV-D child support program. OCS will continue to communicate with its partners about the impact of Council deliberations on policy or procedures.

4. Data and Reports

As the Council begins its work, the OCS Planning, Evaluation and Analysis team will provide data relevant to the topic areas the Council is discussing. Partners and others will begin seeing more discussion around data and reports that will help the IV-D program identify inequitable outcomes. OCS also plans to provide and analyze statistics relevant to systemic inequities in the program.

B. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Page on mi-support

Practices that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion play a critical role in providing IV-D services. OCS is committed to making the IV-D program work better for those we serve, especially communities of color who have often been left out of decision-making processes and are over-represented in the IV-D program. People of color experience more inequitable outcomes when receiving government services. Focusing first on racial equity means that OCS is first addressing those experiencing

the most inequities. This is also an opportunity to introduce tools and resources that will be used in other areas as well.

To increase visibility and awareness of these important efforts, OCS plans to create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion page on mi-support. On this page, OCS will share information about its DEI activities with IV-D partners. The page will include a calendar of events, a list of resources, information on the OCS-DEI group and its subcommittees, and a means to provide feedback to these groups. In addition, the page will include information about the Equity Impact Assessment Tool and the OCS Community Advisory Council.

OCS encourages all IV-D staff to use this page to share best practices to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion and learn about related issues.

The DEI page will be located under the Partner Activities menu on mi-support. OCS expects that the DEI page will be ready sometime in April 2021. OCS will issue an email notification when the page is available.

C. Web-Based Training on the Identification of Systemic Racism

As mentioned in IV-D Memorandum 2020-003, IV-D staff may take a web-based training on the identification of systemic racism. This training, called “Systemic Racism,” establishes a common language around systemic racism and presents statistics that are relevant to systemic inequities in Michigan. The training will satisfy the Contract Performance Standards (CPS) requirement for customer service training.⁴

This training, which was created by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, is available for:

- FOC and PA staff in the [Learning Management System](#);⁵ and
- State of Michigan employees in the [MDHHS Learning Center](#).⁶

OCS has provided instructions for IV-D staff to access the training and ensure they receive CPS credit.⁷ OCS encourages all IV-D staff to take this training.

NECESSARY ACTION:

Retain this IV-D Memorandum until further notice. With the publication of this memorandum, Exhibit 2020-003E2 is obsolete. Discard any hard copies of Exhibit 2020-003E2.

⁴ Ref: [Section 1.25, “Contract Performance Standards,” of the Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual](#).

⁵ Users may need to use the Search function to find the training.

⁶ Users may need to search for the training under the Course Catalog tab.

⁷ Ref: the [June 25, 2020 email notification Systemic Racism Web-Based Training Available](#).

REVIEW PARTICIPANTS:

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ATTACHMENTS:

None

EPF/JJV