



**LIFTING FAMILIES OUT OF POVERTY
NCSEA 2019 Policy Forum
FEBRUARY 7-9, 2019**

Thursday, February 7

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. – Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Plenary 1: A View from the Top: OCSE’s State of the IV-D Program Address

Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement Commissioner Scott Lekan will share his views on the state of the child support program. Come hear Commissioner Lekan discuss the program’s successes and challenges from a data and analytic perspective, including how the program can reach more families and be more effective at lifting families out of poverty. He also will reveal the Administration’s priorities in 2019 and changes being considered at OCSE. Finally, Commissioner Lekan will share his vision of the future of the IV-D program. This is one opening plenary that you do not want to miss!

Speaker: Commissioner Scott Lekan, Barbara Lacina | Moderator: Diane Potts

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – Networking Break

10:30 a.m. – Noon

Plenary 2: A View from the Hill: Congressional Perspectives on the State of the IV-D Program

It’s been twenty years since any major change in legislation affecting the child support program has happened. Is it time to make changes? What are some changes that would affect the program? Would these changes impact performance measures or incentive dollars? Is federal child support funding adequate and secure? Is there anything Congress can do to help solve the critical problem of failing legacy systems? And finally, how can we reach more families and be more effective at lifting families out of poverty? Let’s hear what congressional staff, from committees with oversight of the program, have to say about what the state of the program is currently and perhaps what it could look like in the future. Along those same lines, as leaders of the program, how can we effectively work with our legislators to further the IV-D program’s best outcomes for children and families?

Speakers: Ryan Martin, Anne DeCesaro | Moderator: Lisa Skenandore

Noon – 1:30 p.m. – Lunch on Your Own

1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Plenary 3: A View from the Trenches: Different Perspectives on the State of the IV-D Program

Building from the Commissioner’s State of the Program address, a diverse panel of child support leaders will share their thoughts on the state of the child support program. State and County IV-D Directors will discuss what they’re seeing at state and local government levels including the successes and challenges facing the child support program, trends in collections and performance measures, and new innovations. In addition, we will hear from a research perspective what the data is telling us about serving families today and tomorrow. Finally, our experts will share their thoughts on how the program can reach more families and be more effective at lifting families out of poverty.

Speakers: Tanguler Gray, Bryan Hubbard, David Kilgore, Frances Pardus-Abbadessa | Moderator: Robert Doar

3:00 – 3:30 p.m. – Networking Break

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Workshop 101: Taking the Measure of the Program: Are our Performance Measurements Incentivizing Us Correctly?

In this interactive workshop, panelists will discuss and debate the efficacy of the current federal performance measurements, what some states are additionally measuring, and which performance measurements are best suited for the future of the child support program. For instance, should customer service be added as a measurement and perhaps replace a measurement such as paying-arrearage cases? Should certain measurements such as cost-effectiveness be weighted more than other measurements? Do the current performance measures provide an adequate incentive to serve non-assistance families living in poverty? Should paternity establishment be its own measurement or is it a precondition to order establishment? Should the federal incentive pool be a zero-sum, fixed amount or fluctuate independently of other states’ performance results? Join the debate.

Speakers: Margot Bean, Asaph Glosser, David Kilgore | Moderator: Jeff Ball

Workshop 102: What is the Role of Child Support When Medicaid is Involved?

Access to medical coverage is important to the health and well-being of children and parents. For families on Medicaid, financial support is vital as well. What role does the child support program play in establishing orders for families on Medicaid, including cash medical orders? What are the child support program’s cooperation requirements for families receiving Medicaid? How are Medicaid referrals handled across the country? How can the child support program best collaborate with Medicaid to achieve better outcomes for families living in poverty? Come hear our panel discuss these questions in the context of declining child support caseloads and rising Medicaid budgets.

Speakers: Kimberly Curtis, Karen Hebert, Bob Williams | Moderator: Amy Roehrenbeck

Workshop 103: Child Support Assurance: Is it Time to Try Something Different to Move Families Out of Poverty?

Very recent research in Europe looks at European programs that provide child support assurance in the form of advance payments of child support to families, so that the family receives support whether or not the noncustodial parent pays support. Is it time for the United States to give serious thought to child support assurance programs as a way of lifting families out of poverty? Does child support assurance do a better job

of ensuring that poor families and children reach a basic standard of living? Or is child support assurance an expensive program that benefits better off families at great expense to taxpayers and removes the incentive for noncustodial parents to support their families? What role would the child support program play in a child support assurance system? Join us as researchers and policy experts discuss the research and give their views on whether child support assurance might be a way to better help poor families in the United States.

Speakers: Maria Cancian, Dr. Thomas Meysen, Jane Venohr | Moderator: Hannah Roots

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. – President’s Reception

Friday, February 8

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. – Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Plenary 4: Cross-Agency Collaboration to Assist Impoverished Families

Several human service agencies provide much needed assistance to families living in poverty including financial assistance, health care, food benefits, and child care subsidies. Come hear from the top federal Administrators for these programs on how we can collaborate to best serve our neediest families and what barriers exist that result in continued work in human services silos. Let’s start the collaboration to move families out of poverty and into sustaining self-sufficiency.

Speakers: Lynn Johnson, Scott Lekan | Moderator: Charles Smith

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – Networking Break

10:30 a.m. – Noon

Workshop 201: Achieving Equity Through the Use of Guidelines

Child support guidelines are intended to ensure adequacy, equity, and efficiency among child support order amounts. But do they provide enough to lift low-income custodial families out of poverty? On the other hand, how do we ensure that the payment of child support does not drive the paying family into poverty? This session will explore best practices that child support programs can offer to ensure that the needs of low-income families are met. Additionally, the session will highlight practices that child support programs can employ to ensure that obligors are ordered an amount that is both within their ability to pay and provides a meaningful contribution to the family.

Speakers: Kate Cooper Richardson, Larry Desbien, Jane Venohr | Moderator: Karen Hebert

Workshop 202: OCSE Grant Updates: Informing Policy Through Tested Initiatives

The federal Office of Child Support Enforcement has a number of grants to state and county programs to test the effectiveness of important policies and innovations. The new digital marketing grant will test engagement strategies to reach families who would benefit from the child support program. The Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) grant is looking at whether families benefit more from enhanced child support services instead of contempt. The Behavioral Interventions for Child Support Services (BICS) grant is exploring the potential relevance and application of behavioral economics principles to child support services. Finally, the Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration (CSPED) grant’s goal was

to increase the reliable payment of child support by parents who are willing but unable to pay through jobs programs. Come join us as we explore these four grant programs and what the evidence is showing.

Speakers: Michael Hayes, Michelle Jadczak, Gretchen Lehman, Elaine Sorenson | Moderator: Tanya Johnson

Workshop 203: When Parents are Inmates: Understanding the Challenges of Re-entry and the Role of Child Support

Incarceration can have a devastating impact on a family. Not only is a potential source of income lost, but the parent is no longer available to provide emotional support or assist with child-rearing activities. Far too often, the challenges of reintegration are just too much, and the parent returns to a criminal lifestyle and lands back in jail. This session will cover the challenges of reintegration and how child support can be a partner in successful re-entry initiatives. It also will look at how some states are changing their policies to comply with the new federal rules concerning modifications for incarcerated parents and incarcerating parents through civil contempt.

Speakers: Crissa Blankenberg, Lori Lofrano | Moderator: Trish Skophammer

Noon – 1:30 p.m. – Lunch on Your Own

1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Plenary 5: Cooperation Requirements – Do They Help or Hurt Families in Poverty?

The requirement to cooperate with the child support program has been a key part of the federal cash assistance program (AFDC/TANF) for more than three decades. Why hasn't this same concept been developed nationally in other assistance programs such as SNAP, Child Care, and other means-tested programs? For states that have instituted mandatory cooperation requirements, what is the result to the program and to families? Can states effectively implement mandatory cooperation requirements? And more importantly, would they help or hurt families in poverty? Hear from different perspectives on this important issue and learn from experiences in states.

Speakers: Stacy Dean, Robert Doar, Erin Frisch, Rebekah Selekman | Moderator: Robbie Endris

3:00 – 3:30 p.m. – Networking Break

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Workshop 301: Helping Noncustodial Parents by Providing Structured Supports for Co-Parenting and Developing Programs that Incentivize Work

Finding ways to create and sustain higher levels of engagement among noncustodial parents has become a core policy discussion within the child support community. Two recent pilot programs have taken distinct approaches—one oriented toward policy, the other to program design—while arriving at similarly positive outcomes, ranging from higher levels of reported engagement between noncustodial parents and their children to increase in rates of child support collections. In New York City, Paycheck Plus focused on a potential change in policy by simulating the effects of an expanded earned income tax credit for low-income single workers without dependent children. In Hennepin County, Minnesota, the Co-Parent Court created structural supports for co-parenting for child support cases that needed to have paternity established. Hear

from the experts on what they did to make these programs work and how these relate to broader program trends.

Speakers: Jean-Marie Callan, Mary Marczak, Judge Bruce Peterson | Moderator: Michele Ahern

Workshop 302: The “Gig” Economy: Impact on the Workforce and Child Support Programs

What is the “gig” economy? How does it affect the child support program? What steps should the child support community take to address these issues and improve services to families? For years, child support programs have struggled to collect from independent contractors, and with the influx of online employment platforms the issues for child support agencies continue to grow in this area. This session will give a broad overview on the gig economy and the impact it is having on the workforce. You will also hear from states and the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement on proposed solutions such as requiring employers to report independent contractors to new hire directories, better collaboration with employers and parents who owe support, and thinking about intake processes differently. We would also like to hear from YOU! What ideas do you have to address the concerns surrounding this topic?

Speakers: Lauren Antelo, Tom Killmurray, Eileen Stack | Moderator: Alisha Griffin

Workshop 303: Correlation Between Poverty and Single-Parent Households and the Impact on the Child Support Program

A significant portion of children in the United States live in poverty, and a recent study found that growing up in single-parent households had the second largest correlation to poverty, second only to mean household income. What does this mean for the child support program and are there policies that can mitigate the effect of single-parent households? How exactly is poverty measured and what impact does the child support program have on poverty? Are there other causes of poverty that the child support program should consider when developing policies around these fragile families? Come join us for a robust discussion on the causes of poverty and what the child support program can do to help lift families out of poverty.

Speakers: Jamie Gracie, Elaine Sorenson, Brad Wilcox | Moderator: Diane Potts

5:00 p.m. - Dinner on Your Own

Saturday, February 9

7:30 – 8:30 a.m. – Continental Breakfast

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Plenary 6: Technology That Benefits Our Customers – Straight Talk on Systems Modernization

For the past thirty years, systems modernization has been a big line item on our roadmaps and our budgets – but how is it actually serving our core mission of helping families escape poverty? Come hear from an interactive panel of states who are in the process or have succeeded in leveraging technology projects to advance their goals, improve performance, and provide real improvements to service. In particular, these leaders will address how their projects have shaped policy, provide a return on investment, and improve cost

effectiveness and other federal performance metrics. Our panel also will discuss how systems modernization have improved customer service and helped the families served by the child support program.

Speakers: Craig Burshem, Michele Cristello, Kate Cooper-Richardson, Commissioner Scott Lekan | Moderator: Margot Bean

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – Networking Break

10:30 a.m. – Noon

Plenary 7: Working 9 to 5? When Parents Need Help Making a Living to Provide Support for their Children

Work is at the core of the American Dream yet shifts in the nature of work and in the social safety net have created challenges in realizing that dream for more and more families. Nationally, 75% of child support is paid through income withholding and we know the child support program works best when there is income to transfer. What role should the child support program play in a comprehensive jobs program? Are jobs programs successful in getting regular child support payments to families? And what is really working to connect parents with employment that can sustain them and enable them to financially support their children, especially when supporting two separate households? This is one closing plenary that you do not want to miss!

Speakers: Larry Desbien, Patricia Littlejohn, Demetra Nightingale | Moderator: Michael Hayes

Noon – Policy Forum Ends