

# **Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual**

**Published by the Office of Child Support**



**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**

## Introduction

The Office of Child Support (OCS) publishes the *Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual* as a reference for child support professionals. The purpose of this manual is to convey policies and procedures for operation of the IV-D program.

This manual is located on mi-support (the internal website for Michigan’s child support program) and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) public website. Individuals who would like a printed copy of the manual may print sections of the manual from mi-support or the MDHHS website, or they may request a printed copy of the entire manual by calling OCS at 517-241-7800.

### Manual Review Process

All drafts of new or revised manual sections undergo a thorough review process before they are published in the manual. OCS staff first send the manual section draft to select frontline and management staff for review to ensure its clarity, accuracy, practicality, and applicability. In addition, OCS subject matter experts and members of program leadership review the draft manual section. OCS staff make the finalized manual section available to Michigan IV-D professionals and/or the public only after it has been completely checked by multiple stakeholders.

### Manual Maintenance

New and updated manual sections are introduced by a IV-D Memorandum. OCS announces the publication of IV-D Memorandums via an email notification, and memorandums can be found on mi-support via the IV-D Memorandums link under the Program Library tab. IV-D Memorandums explain any policy changes to the manual section since its last publication, the effective dates of the changes, and any legal bases for the changes.

IV-D Memorandums also provide directions for manual maintenance. When a manual section is revised, individuals who maintain a hard copy of the manual must print the revised manual section from mi-support or the MDHHS website and replace their current copy of the manual section with the revised copy. Previous copies of manual sections must be discarded.

### Manual Organization

The manual is organized into nine chapters, and each chapter consists of sections. For example, Chapter 6.0, “Enforcement,” consists of 20 sections, one of which is Section 6.03, “Income Withholding.” Sections contain the actual policy content and are generally organized in an outline format. Outline levels or headings within the section content are called subsections.

### Content Revisions

When a manual section is revised, content changes since the last publication of the manual section are indicated by a vertical line (a “change bar”) in the right margin.

## **Supporting References and Revision History**

At the end of each manual section is a list of Supporting References. These are the source materials used to write the manual section. Below the Supporting References is the Revision History, which lists all the past IV-D Memorandums that introduced changes to the manual section. The number of the most recent IV-D Memorandum is hyperlinked so individuals with access to mi-support may view the memorandum. IV-D Memorandums that are not hyperlinked are available on mi-support (or upon request) if readers wish to review the highlights of the revisions announced in a particular memorandum.

## **Resources (Exhibits, Forms, and Publications)**

The manual sections may contain references to resources such as exhibits (e.g., worksheets, charts, supplemental information, checklists, material authored by others), forms (e.g., letters, documents used to communicate information between the child support program and the people it serves), and publications (e.g., pamphlets, booklets).

### ***Resource Numbering***

Exhibits are numbered according to their “parent” manual section (e.g., the first exhibit of Section 6.03 is identified as Exhibit 6.03E1). Forms and publications are identified with a unique number (e.g., FEN058, DHS-Pub-748). Forms and publications are numbered independently from manual sections.

### ***Accessing Resources***

The first reference to an exhibit in a manual section is hyperlinked so individuals with access to mi-support may view it. References to forms are generally not hyperlinked. Resources may also be found on mi-support by conducting a search from the Resource Directory page, which can be accessed by clicking the Resource Directory link under the Program Library tab.

## **Use of Acronyms**

Within a manual section, acronyms are spelled out on the first reference, and subsequent references use only the acronym. For example, the first reference to “Michigan Department of Health and Human Services” in a manual section is spelled out, followed by the acronym “MDHHS” in parentheses, and subsequent references in the section refer to only the acronym “MDHHS.”

## **Page Numbering**

Page numbering starts with Page 1 in each manual section. Page numbers do not continue into adjacent manual sections.

## Terms Used to Refer to IV-D Staff<sup>1</sup> in This Manual

### ***IV-D Staff, IV-D Worker, IV-D Professional***

These terms refer to any individual or contractor whose position is funded wholly or in part by IV-D funds, and/or any individual or contractor who has access to IV-D electronic or paper files (i.e., files compiled by IV-D staff in the course of performing IV-D functions).<sup>2</sup>

An “individual or contractor whose position is funded wholly or in part by IV-D funds” is someone who performs and/or administers IV-D functions on a full-time or part-time basis and whose IV-D responsibilities are governed by Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 300-310, and the *Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual*. IV-D functions include all of the policies, procedures, processes, and instructions provided in this manual (unless otherwise indicated) and include:

- Locate (of parents);
- Paternity Establishment;
- Support Order Establishment;
- IV-D Case Management;
- Enforcement;
- Payment Processing; and
- Review and Modification.

IV-D staff include, but are not limited to, staff who work for/in the:

- OCS Operations Division;
- Friend of the Court (FOC) offices;
- Prosecuting Attorneys’ (PAs’) offices;
- Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU);
- Michigan Child Support Enforcement System (MiCSES) Project, including but not limited to DTMB<sup>3</sup> staff and contracted system staff;
- OCS Administration, which includes staff in the:
  - IV-D director’s office;
  - Policy Section;
  - Training and Application Support Services Section, including Child Support Help Desk staff;
  - Planning, Evaluation & Analysis Section; and
  - OCS Financial Management Section.

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<sup>1</sup> Ref: [IV-D Memorandum 2022-014, Recipient Groups of IV-D Memorandums, Changes to the Delivery of IV-D Email Notifications, and Maintenance of Email Distribution Lists](#) for further discussion.

<sup>2</sup> Having access to IV-D electronic or paper files includes having access to IV-D systems and unrestricted access to IV-D offices.

<sup>3</sup> DTMB is the Department of Technology, Management & Budget.

- State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) Friend of the Court Bureau;
- Attorney General (AG) Financial Crimes Division – Child Support Unit; and
- Other contractors hired by the state or the counties (e.g., New Hire, print vendor, genetic testing vendor).<sup>4</sup>

***Friend of the Court (FOC) or FOC staff***

These terms refer to IV-D staff housed within the FOC offices and include the Friend of the Court, managers, referees, case workers, and other workers. These staff perform primarily enforcement, financial, and case management activities.

***Prosecuting Attorney (PA) or PA staff***

These terms refer to IV-D staff housed within the elected county Prosecuting Attorney’s offices and include managers, attorneys, paralegals and other workers. These staff perform primarily establishment and case management activities, including receiving and processing court action referrals, filing complaints, establishing orders, and establishing paternity.

In some county offices, FOC staff perform PA functions in addition to enforcement and financial activities. In these offices, FOC staff must comply with policies and procedures directed to PA staff.

***Support Specialist (SS) or SS staff***

These terms refer to IV-D staff housed within the OCS Operations Case Management team. They perform IV-D case initiation activities, interview parents and custodians, initiate court action referrals, and answer case member questions.

Where possible, the manual will specifically identify the group of professionals most likely to apply a specific policy or take a specific action. However, the instruction may apply to specifically named IV-D staff other than the FOC, PA, or SS (e.g., “OCS Contract Manager,” “MiSDU staff,” “OCS Central Operations”). If the professional taking the action may change depending on the situation or office location, the manual will use the more general term “IV-D staff” or “IV-D worker.”

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<sup>4</sup> IV-D policy and training requirements and expectations that apply to contractors will depend on the scope of the IV-D work they perform and the provisions within their respective contracts. For example, while IV-D security and confidentiality requirements apply universally to all IV-D staff, IRS background investigations may or may not apply to contractors. Ref: [Section 1.13, “Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\) Background Investigation Requirements,” of the Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual](#) for a discussion of the application of background investigation requirements to contractors.

## **Glossary**

A glossary of terms used in the manual may be accessed on mi-support by clicking a link to the Child Support Glossary under the Program Library tab.

## **The Transition to the *Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual***

This manual remains under development; OCS has been transitioning from maintaining its policy in Action Transmittals (ATs) and four previous child support manuals<sup>5</sup> to this new manual. The ATs<sup>6</sup> and previous manuals will still be available on mi-support and the MDHHS website until they are superseded by new manual sections.

Available sections of the *Michigan IV-D Child Support Manual* are indicated by asterisks (\*\*\*) in the manual's table of contents. Sections without asterisks have not yet been published; for these topics, readers must rely on previously published directives in IV-D Memorandums, ATs and the previous manuals, which are located on mi-support.

Note: Effective April 10, 2015, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) merged into one agency – the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

Changes from DHS to MDHHS throughout the manual will be made as sections of the manual are revised. There will not be a one-time effort to change the agency name throughout all sections of the manual.

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<sup>5</sup> The four previous child support manuals are Child Support (CSM), Combined IV-D Policy (4DM), Friend of the Court (FOC), and Prosecuting Attorney (PAH).

<sup>6</sup> ATs are found under "IV-D Memorandums" on mi-support.

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\*\*\*Section is available.