



For Immediate Release

National Child Support Awareness Month Highlights Financial Security

Baltimore MD, August 4, 2015: The Maryland Department of Human Resources' local child support offices will recognize August as National Child Support Awareness month with outreach projects in their offices and participation in various community events.

Child Support Awareness month is nationally recognized each year during the month of August to focus on the importance of providing financial support for children. It also recognizes child support professionals and parents who are committed to making a difference in the lives of children emotionally and financially.

The Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) provides services to both noncustodial and custodial parents, which include the establishment of paternity, securing court issued child support orders, the collection of support payments and the distribution of such funds.

“Child support provides financial stability and removes the uncertainty many custodial parents face” said Department of Human Resources Secretary Sam Malhotra. “When parents regularly pay child support they are making an investment in their children’s future.”

Each year millions of children nationwide are affected financially due to parental separations. To help combat those statistics, the local child support offices aggressively pursue unfulfilled child support obligations.

During the 2015 state fiscal year, the child support offices collected and distributed more than \$562,562,684 on behalf of Maryland children. “Our mission is to collect money owed to families so that children have the security and support they need, but we recognize that some parents face challenges to making their child support payments including under-employment, reentry after incarceration, or other challenges,” said Joseph DiPrimio, Executive Director of CSEA.

Local child support agencies, through partnerships and technology, play an important role for parents trying to be successful in making consistent child support payments.

The department enhanced both the application process and the cash delivery process through the use of technology via an online application and the delivery of child support on EPIC, a bank debit card.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive as future customers lean toward the faster online applications for services rather than mailing in the paper applications. EPiC provides a secure and convenient way to access child support payments, allowing the customer to avoid the expense and inconvenience of cashing a check while ensuring that the funds are readily accessible.

Electronic Income Withholding Orders (EIWO) is another technological advancement benefiting our customers, as over 9000 participating employers now have the option of sending employee wage deductions electronically. Over 70% of DHR's child support collections are garnered through employee payroll deductions.

Maryland continues its efforts to improve and exceed previous accomplishments and to become one of the top 10 states in the nation in child support collections. For additional information about child support, or assistance with child support services, call 1.800.332.6347 or visit the Maryland Department of Human Resources, <http://www.dhr.maryland.gov>.

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The Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) is responsible for operating a statewide child support program and provides services to both noncustodial and custodial parents, which include the establishment of paternity and child support orders, the collection of support payments, and the distribution of such funds. CSEA distributes funds to custodial parents and helps custodial parents enforce the legal child support obligations of noncustodial parents.

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