



Family Code Section 17206 requires that the State “ensure that there is an adequate organizational structure and sufficient staff” to administer the child support program in each local child support agency (LCSA). Despite that requirement, basic administrative funding in California’s child support program has been held flat since State Fiscal Year (FY) 2002-2003.

To partially address flat program funding, in FY 2009/2010 the State began providing annual augmentations of \$18.7 million (\$6.37 million State General Fund) to be used by LCSAs to maintain “revenue generating caseworker staffing levels”. These funds have not been included in the LCSAs’ basic administrative funding, making them more vulnerable to deletion in future budgets. With the exception of annual Revenue Stabilization augmentations, no additional funding has been provided to LCSAs for the past 16 years. During that time, LCSAs have absorbed ongoing increases in operating costs, forcing staffing reductions and negatively impacting the program’s ability to expand service delivery.

To ensure that LCSAs have sufficient resources to provide vital child support services to California’s families and children, the Child Support Directors Association (CSDA) supports the provision of funding which matches the cost of providing program services. CSDA recommends that child support program funding be increased, and that the increase be carried out in a manner which is consistent with the following:

- The California Department of Child Support Services (CDCSS), in collaboration with CSDA, must establish a new methodology for allocating program funds which takes into account variations in the cost of doing business throughout the state, and provides sufficient resources to each LCSA as they work to maximize their collections and performance. This methodology must ensure that each LCSA has funding which allows them to: maximize collections, continue to improve performance; and effectively serve the needs of the families and children in their caseload. To meet this goal, the allocation methodology should ensure the greatest possible degree of funding equity between LCSAs and support the provision of quality child support services throughout the state.
- Revenue Stabilization funding should be included in the basic administrative allocation. Ensuring the ongoing availability of these funds will provide a greater level of funding certainty to LCSAs.
- CDCSS, in collaboration with CSDA, should identify opportunities for the redirection of State Operations funding to Local Assistance purposes in order to maximize the amount of funding available for program services at the local level.
- LCSAs must receive funding which matches the costs of providing program services. This includes an amount sufficient to ensure LCSAs are able to maintain staffing and service levels in order to maximize collections, improve performance, and provide effective program services.
- A mechanism must be established to cover increases in operating costs in future years to ensure resource levels remain commensurate with the cost of doing business in each LCSA.
- With the exception of the mid-year reallocation process, program funding should never be redirected from one LCSA to another as a way of promoting funding equity.
- LCSAs should have the ability to carry over unspent monies from one fiscal year to the next. Doing so would enable LCSAs to more effectively manage their budgets and fully utilize their available funds.