

# 17th Circuit Court - FOC

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## Mission

*To serve the Court and the families of Kent County to ensure children are supported, both financially and emotionally.*

## Overview

The Friend of the Court (FOC) was created by statute (MCL 552.501) to serve as the enforcement and investigative arm of the Circuit Court Family Division. FOC employees are court employees. With over 39,000 cases, the FOC is tasked with the following duties:

- Enforcement of child support orders
- Enforcement of custody and parenting time orders
- Review the amount of child support consistent with the Michigan Child Support Formula Manual
- Investigate custody and parenting time issues and make written reports outlining recommendations to the Court
- Provide mediation services for custody, parenting time and child support issues

The FOC is required by law to open a case whenever a domestic relations case is filed that involves a minor child (this includes divorce cases, paternity cases, family support cases and certain interstate cases), unless the parties appropriately “opt out” by court order as provided by statute.

It is the FOC’s vision to improve the lives of children and strengthen families.

## Significant Accomplishments

- In 2016, we launched the Responsible Parent Program (RPP) which is staffed by a full-time case manager to assist payers who are having difficulty complying with their support order. Through this program, payers may obtain a job, have their support order “right-sized,” establish or modify parenting time orders, and have their driver license reinstated if it was suspended for non-support. RPP has partnered with a number of agencies and employers, and holds special outreaches and regular office hours in the community.
- The Friend of the Court has partnered with the Kent County Sheriff Department to resolve child support bench warrants. Two full-time deputies were assigned to the Friend of the Court. They are specially trained in child support matters, and their goal is to resolve warrants whenever possible without arrest. The majority of payers who come into contact with the deputies report a positive experience and become re-engaged with the Friend of the Court.
- We continue to engage in regular outreach events with CLEAR, Strong Fathers, Salvation Army, MiWorks, Guiding Light Mission and the Kent County Correctional Facility. In addition, staff participate in other events such as the

## Strategic Goals

- Maximize grant funding and revenue opportunities (Stable Revenues).
- Assist the Court in entering timely and appropriate child support orders (Efficient Use of Resources).
- Provide stability for children through custody and parenting time investigations referred by the Court and through alternative dispute resolution (Safe Community).
- Active engagement with the community (Citizen Participation).
- Assist the Court by readily identifying and commencing action on those cases in need of child support enforcement, and utilize innovative solutions to address non-compliance (Proactive and Innovative Government).
- Deliver exceptional customer service by answering inquiries promptly and accurately (High Quality of Life).



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## Significant Accomplishments Cont'd

eBus and with probation/parole. Community agencies are invited to our case management meetings in order to build connections between our staff and the community.

- A more efficient method of identifying cases that need enforcement for non-payment of support was made possible by Friend of the Court IT staff through the development of a system known as Casetracker. This system also automated our record keeping and enabled the case management team to monitor their progress by caseload. The scheduling of show cause contempt hearings has also improved, so that cases are now scheduled at the first available court date. Casetracker also enables staff to access information more quickly by providing a summary of case information, which is helpful in reducing the time required to handle inquiries by telephone and at the lobby window.
- Child support reviews are completed within 90 days, the majority within 60. These reviews are initiated by client requests (eligible every three years), court referrals, or self-initiated by the office. We are able to complete these reviews within the self-imposed deadline of 90 days despite the statutory deadline of 120 days after necessary information is received by the parties.
- Facilitated parenting time sessions are available to assist those parents who desire to enter into an agreed upon order for parenting time in new paternity and family support cases. In situations where a parent and child have a relationship, this process allows for entry of an order that continues it. When a parent and child do not have a relationship, facilitators will often meet with parents multiple times in order to gradually develop the parent/child relationship.
- We are also becoming more efficient by utilizing the capabilities of OnBase (our imaging system) workflow, which saves time in routing documents to staff and enables them to respond more quickly to client inquiries. Workflow also allows for automated statistical tracking via custom queries to avoid manual tracking and reporting of information.

**DEPARTMENT: 17TH CIRCUIT COURT FOC**

**Department Mission Statement:**

*To serve the Court and the families of Kent County to ensure children are supported, both financially and emotionally.*

**Service Area: Administration and Finance**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To maximize grant funding and revenue opportunities to ensure the Friend of the Court can fulfill its statutory duties.*

**Goal**

- The Friend of the Court will have stable and predictable revenues to cover operations.

**Objectives**

- Maintain contract with Michigan Department of Health and Human Services for IV-D funding.
- Maximize eligibility for funding from federal incentive revenues as required by the federal Office of Child Support.
- Maximize medical incentive funding from the State by ensuring medical support is provided as ordered

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of IV-D CRP grant funding	100.00%	100.00%/ 100.00%	100.00%/ 100.00%	100.00%
% minimum collection on current charges	NA	NA	NA	80.00%
% minimum collection on arrears cases	NA	NA	NA	80.00%
% of cases with medical provided as ordered	NA	NA	NA	85.00%

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outputs</b>				
Title IV-D CRP grant funding	NA	NA	NA	\$5,000,769
Federal incentive	NA	NA	NA	\$1,054,842
Medical incentive	NA	NA	NA	\$150,000

**Service Area: Support Review, Order Processing**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To ensure reliable and consistent child support payments.*

**Goal**

- Calculate child support obligations according to the Michigan Child Support Formula Manual, and process them timely once entered into an order so that payment is not delayed.

**Objectives**

- 90% of all support reviews will be completed within 90 days after information is received.
- 100% of all support reviews will be completed within 120 days after information is received.
- 100% of all child support orders will be entered in the state computer (MiCSES) within 3 business days.

	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Indicators</b>				
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of all support reviews completed within 90 days after information is received	NA	NA	90.00%/ 91.00%	90.00%
% of all support reviews completed within 120 days after information is received	NA	NA	100.00%/ 100.00%	100.00%
% of all child support orders entered into the state computer (MiCSES) within 3 business days	NA	NA	100.00%/ 97.00%	100.00%

	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Indicators</b>				
<b>Outputs</b>				
# of support reviews completed annually	NA	NA	3,161/ 3,148	3,100
# of child support orders entered into the state computer (MiCSES) annually	NA	NA	15,600/ 13,522	15,000

**Service Area: Alternative Dispute Resolution**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To ensure children's best interests are protected through timely custody and parenting time investigations and recommendations to the Court, and through effective mediation or enforcement when parents have custody and parenting time disputes.*

**Goal**

- The Friend of the Court will promote safe and stable environments for children.

**Objectives**

- 90% of all court referrals for custody and parenting time investigations/recommendations will be completed within 90 days.
- 90% of all parenting time complaints will be resolved without a contempt hearing.
- 60% of mediations and conciliations will be scheduled within 60 days.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of all court referrals for custody and parenting time investigations/recommendations completed within 90 days	84.00%	90.00%/74.00%	90.00%/77.00%	90.00%
% of all parenting time complaints resolved without a contempt hearing	87.00%	90.00%/86.00%	90.00%/88.00%	90.00%
% of mediations and conciliations scheduled within 60 days	NA	NA	60.00%/94.00%	85.00%

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outputs</b>				
# of court evaluations completed	NA	NA	750/736	750
# of court evaluations completed within 90 days	NA	NA	600/570	600
# of parenting time complaints received	2,209	2,326/2,287	2,290/2,493	2,350

**Service Area: Administration, Compliance/Enforcement Unit, Responsible Parent Program (RPP)**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To be responsive to community concerns about Friend of the Court personnel and operations, and to educate and engage those who have a Friend of the Court case through effective community outreach.*

**Goal**

- The Friend of the Court will encourage citizen awareness, participation, and compliance with court orders through community outreach.

**Objectives**

- 100% of grievances will be answered within 30 days.
- 100% monthly outreach to at least three community groups, agencies and facilities that reach payers who are homeless, incarcerated, or in need of special services.

	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Indicators</b>				
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of grievances answered within 30 days.	NA	NA	100.00%/ 100.00%	100.00%
# of payers reached through community groups, agencies and facilities.	NA	NA	NA	600

	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Indicators</b>				
<b>Outputs</b>				
# of grievances answered within 30 days.	NA	NA	20/ 20	18
# of community meetings.	NA	NA	NA	36

**Service Area: Child Support Compliance/Enforcement Unit and Responsible Parent Program**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To ensure compliance with the Court's child support orders and to assist those facing barriers leading to non-compliance.*

**Goal**

- Systematically identify and follow-up on cases in need of enforcement, and seek innovative solutions to address non-compliance with child support orders.

**Objectives**

- 80% of current support charges will be collected
- 60% of cases that had a show cause contempt hearing will remit a payment within 60 days of the hearing date
- 70% of payers sent to jail at show cause hearings will make the required payment and be released within two weeks
- 75% of the ordered amount will be collected on conditional license suspension orders
- Schedule initial appointment within 14 days when a payer is referred to the Responsible Parent Program
- 85% of the bench warrants handled by FOC deputies will be resolved without arrest
- 75% of payers will appear at the bond-out hearing.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of the current support charge collected	NA	NA	80.00%/ 77.00%	80.00%
% of cases remitting a payment within 60 days after a show cause hearing	NA	NA	60.00%/ 56.00%	60.00%
% of payers who are released within 2 weeks, by making the required payment, after being jailed at a show cause hearing	NA	NA	70.00%/ 75.00%	75.00%
% of the ordered amount collected on conditional license suspension orders	NA	NA	75.00%/ 89.00%	75.00%
% of those referred to the Responsible Parent Program will be scheduled for an appointment with a FOC worker within 14 days	NA	NA	NA	65.00%

% of the bench warrants handled by FOC deputies that were resolved without arrest	NA	NA	NA	85.00%
% of payers who appeared at the bond-out hearing	NA	NA	NA	75.00%

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outputs</b>				
Amount of total current support distributed	NA	NA	73,600,000/ 76,339,969	76,800,000
# of cases that remitted a payment within 60 days after a show cause hearing	NA	NA	5,163/ 6,464	6,000
# of payers who made the required payment and were released within two weeks after being jailed at a show cause hearing	NA	NA	80/ 82	82
Total amount of payments made pursuant to conditional license suspension orders	NA	NA	12,500,000/ 20,175,210	20,000,000
# of payers who were scheduled for an appointment with a FOC worker within 14 days after being referred to the Responsible Parent Program	NA	NA	NA	175
# of bench warrants resolved without arrest by FOC deputies	NA	NA	NA	400
# of payers who appeared at the bond-out hearing	NA	NA	NA	800



**Service Area: Client Information Services Department**

**Service Area Mission Statement:**

*To deliver exceptional customer service by answering inquiries promptly and professionally.*

**Goal**

- The Friend of the Court will contribute towards a high quality of life for county residents through excellent customer service.

**Objectives**

- 80% of incoming calls to CISD will be answered within 5 minutes
- 85% of incoming calls to CISD will be resolved without transfer

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outcomes</b>				
% of incoming calls to CISD answered within 5 minutes	NA	NA	80.00%/ 77.00%	80.00%
% of incoming calls to CISD will be resolved without transfer	NA	NA	85.00%/ 93.00%	85.00%

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2014 Actual</b>	<b>2015 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2016 Expected/ Actual</b>	<b>2017 Expected/ Actual</b>
<b>Outputs</b>				
# of incoming calls to CISD annually	NA	NA	112,000/ 112,436	115,000
# of incoming calls to CISD will be resolved without transfer	NA	NA	100,000/ 104,550	100,000