# State of Colorado, Department of Human Services (CDHS)
# E-Commerce Business Area Analysis
# Needs Assessment Report

June 10, 2002


Policy Studies Inc.

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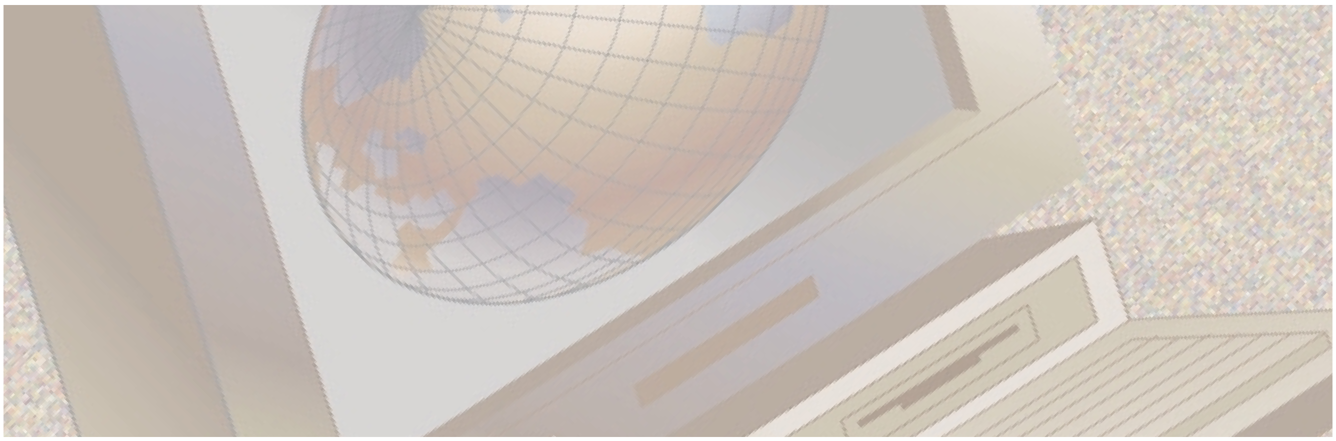

**Submitted to:**
Curtis Rose
Colorado Project Coordinator
Department of Human Services, Division of Child Support Enforcement
303 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80203-1241

**Submitted by:**
Policy Studies Inc.
999 18th Street, Suite 1000
Denver, CO  80202
(303) 863-0900

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Policy Studies Inc.

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Introduction

## Project Description

The Colorado Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) seeks to improve its Web site. The current DCSE Web site consists mostly of static information about the child support enforcement process, local office addresses, frequently asked questions and answers, and other information that typically does not change from month to month. DCSE is particularly interested in developing interactive functions that allow customers and stakeholders to interact with DCSE online via the Internet (e.g., parents could access recent payment information). DCSE's overall goal is to develop a long-range plan for using the Internet as part of its larger goal to improve customer service, strengthen partnerships, and prepare for future needs.

### DCSE's Customers and Partners

DCSE has a wide range of customers and partners, including:

- ✓ Custodial parties,
- ✓ Non-custodial parties,
- ✓ Employers (due to federal and/or State-mandated immediate wage withholding, centralized payments, and new hiring reporting),
- ✓ CSE professionals (the child support program is county administered in Colorado),
- ✓ Out-of-state CSE professionals (23 percent of DCSE caseloads are interstate),
- ✓ Courts that establish and enforce child support orders, and
- ✓ Other Department of Human Services agencies that partner with DCSE to better serve children and families.

### Project Objectives

DCSE contracted with Policy Studies Inc. (PSI) to:

- ✓ Assess what types of features and information DCSE customers and partners would find the most useful on its Web site and
- ✓ Determine the functional requirements for the most desired Web site features and information.

Special attention was given to an online financial statement feature. Several DCSE customers had recently made DCSE aware of the demand for an online financial statement, yet it was not entirely clear what specific financial information they were seeking (e.g., current payment information or arrears balances or both). Further, DCSE did not know exactly what would be required technically to develop a financial statement that met customers' needs. To develop a plan for improving the DCSE Web site, DCSE sought an assessment of customers' needs and the functionality requirements of the most desired needs.

### *Needs Assessment*

PSI employed three different methodologies to identify and assess customers' needs:

- ✓ Individual interviews,
- ✓ Online surveys, and
- ✓ Focus groups.

The interviews, surveys, and focus groups were aimed at getting input from a broad cross section of DCSE's customers and partners. The methodologies used to accomplish this are discussed more in the next section.

### *Functional Requirements*

To set the stage for the design phase of this project, PSI developed functional requirements for the features that the online survey and focus groups identified and ranked as most important. In addition, we briefly discuss the functional underpinnings of the infrastructure that will be necessary to support these online features.

## DCSE's Current Web Site and Other State CSE Web Sites

As discussed earlier, the DCSE current Web site contains mostly static information—i.e., information that does not typically change from month to month and is not case specific. The goal, of course, is to make the DCSE site an effective tool for stakeholders in managing their respective roles and responsibilities with respect to Colorado child support matters.

### *CSE Web Sites in Other States*

Exhibit I-1 summarizes the variation in Web site information and features in other states. As the exhibit shows, about one half of the states had some interactive functions, such as online financial statements, at the time of our review.

Below are brief summaries of information learned from selected States that offer some form of interactive content on their child support Web site. Screen shots and supporting information from all of the states we inventoried appear in Appendix A.

Exhibit I-1

CSE Web Site Features

| | Payment Information | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Last Payment | Arrears | History | Payment Amount | Case Status | Case Inquiry | Update Profile (address, SSN, etc.) | Employer Change | Application | Guidelines Calculator | Locate Tip | Request Documents | Direct Deposit | Request Review | Employer Forms | Other |
| **Alaska** | x | x | | x | | | | | | x | | | | | | |
| **California*** | | | | | | | x | x | | | | x | | | | |
| **Colorado**** | | | | | | x | x | x | | | | x | | | | |
| **Iowa** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | |
| **Kansas** | x | | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Maine** | | | | | | | | | x | | | | | | | |
| **Maryland** | | | | | | | | | | x | | | | | | |
| **Massachusetts***** | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? | | | | x | | | | x | | x | |
| **Nebraska** | | | x | | | | x | | | | | | | | | |
| **New Jersey** | x | x | | x | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **New Mexico** | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | x | | | | | x | | |
| **North Carolina** | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **North Dakota** | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Oklahoma** | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pennsylvania***** | ? | ? | ? | ? | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Rhode Island** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x |
| **South Carolina** | | | | | | | | | | x | | | | | | |
| **South Dakota** | | | | | | | x | | | | | | | | | |
| **Tennessee** | x | | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Texas** | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | x | | | | | |
| **Vermont** | x | x | | x | | | x | x | | | x | x | | | | |
| **Virginia** | x | x | x | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **West Virginia** | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Wisconson***** | ? | ? | ? | ? | | | | | | | | | | | | |

* These features are part of the Los Angelos and San Diego county sites.

** These features are part of the Web sites created by PSI to support its privitized operations in El Paso and Teller Counties.

*** No details were available about the actual case/payment information offered.

**State:** Alaska
**Address:** http://www.csed.state.ak.us/
**Contact:** Byron Walther
(907) 269-6875

The KIDS Online portion of the Alaska child support Web site provides payment information based on the programming done for the voice response system. The interactive elements have been live for more than two years. The system provides last payment and distribution, arrears total, and obligation amount. A middleware application (iXpress from SAGA Software) allows the Web application to pull the payment data from the mainframe (which is input by batch each night). Apparently the middleware used by Alaska is no longer supported and they are looking to do some additional development.

Payment information is accessed by use of a Member ID, which all CPs and NCPs have (no prior registration is required). Alaska has centralized customer service. Response to the KIDS Online information has been positive.

**State:** Kansas
**Address:** http://www.srskansas.org/ees/CSE.htm
**Contact:** Don Atwell (Head of Kansas Payment Center)
(785) 267-7574, ext. 3023

The Kansas Payment Center has offered online child support payment information since September 2000. The site allows anyone who has a valid child support case number to view the history of payments received by the payment center. The site is hosted and run by Tier Technologies, the contract vendor for the Kansas SDU. The payment data is stored in an Oracle database and accessed directly using SilverStream Web application. According to Don Atwell, the site works well with IE browsers, but the SilverStream application is not friendly to non-IE browsers.

Courts can enter the site with a secure login and update data with new court orders/cases (both IV-D and Non-IV-D cases).

**State:** Nebraska
**Address:** http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/cse/cseindex.htm
**Contact:** Nathan Gilmore
(402) 471-8450

The Nebraska Payment Center also offers interactive content. The site allows an NCP to set up an EFT for paying child support. It also allows users to view a payment history. The site offers employers the ability to set up a schedule of income withholding for affected employees. The list can be edited each pay period. The site uses a SQL database, stored procedures, and Microsoft Active Server Pages. The SQL database is uploaded to the child support mainframe, but the Web site accesses the SQL database and not the child support system. We were not able to obtain a view of the payment information.

**State:** New Mexico
**Address:** http://childsupport.hsd.state.nm.us/ecse/
**Contact:** Joanne Brown
(505) 827-7728

The New Mexico site, developed by Accenture (then Anderson Consulting), is a benchmark for child support e-commerce. The site offers a number of features and has been praised by members of our focus group as attractive and easy to understand. The site makes use of a SQL database to deliver payment and case information and accept form input (such as address change information). Batch programs are used to move data between this database and the child support system nightly.

**State:** North Dakota
**Address:** http://lnotes.state.nd.us/dhs/dhsweb.nsf/ServicePages/ChildSupportEnforcement
**Contact:** Terry Folke
(701) 328-5449

Although the North Dakota site currently only provides last payment information, it has exciting plans for the future North Dakota is embarking on a development effort to replicate many of the features in the New Mexico site. An outline of the plan is provided in Appendix A. The effort is worth following since the North Dakota child support mainframe is an ADABAS system programmed in Natural, just like ACSES.

**State:** North Carolina
**Address:** http://www.ncchildsupport.com/
**Contact:** Beth Amos
(919) 255-3896

The North Carolina eChild Support site was launched in March 2002. Users register with the site, supplying an SSN or Master Participant number and date of birth. Registered users can get payment information (last 12 payments), arrears balance, and the order amount. They can also get some basic case status information such as locate, paternity, establishment information, and past and future scheduled hearings and hearing outcomes. A database of CSE offices and court clerk offices is also available without logging in. In one month the site had 11,000 registered users and 40,000 visits. The North Carolina voice response system was used as the model for how and what information is presented. There is an interface with the mainframe, but we have been unable to speak with a technical representative to get details.

**State:** New Jersey
**Address:** http://www.njchildsupport.org/
**Contact:** Joe Travera
(609) 588-7867
jtravera@dhs.state.nj.us

New Jersey makes dual use of its VRU system by having a Web application read the flat file used to populate voice response messages. The flat file is created each night in a batch process, so there is no direct interface with the child support mainframe. New Jersey provides information about the last payment, including when it was disbursed; the obligation balance (arrears); and the current support amount. The State's VRU vendor developed the system at very little cost to the State. New Jersey has plans to increase the e-commerce functionality of their Web site. Sample screens from the current system as well as an outline of enhancements can be found in Appendix A.

**State:** Oklahoma
**Address:** http://www.okdhs.org/childsupport/
**Contact:** Jim Hutchinson
(405) 522-1338
Jim.Hutchinson@okdhs.org

Oklahoma offers a payment inquiry feature through its child support Web site. Using a customer ID and PIN, users log in and get a history of payments made, amounts due, and arrears balance. Oklahoma has made this information available for approximately two years. The system uses screen scraping from a custom-created screen to deliver the information to the Web site. The site was developed in-house and is supported by a central customer service staff.

**State:** Texas
**Address:** http://www.oag.state.tx.us/child/mainchil.htm
**Contact:** Robb McKensie
Robb.mckensie@cs.oag.state.tx.us

Texas launched their Child Support Interactive system in September 1999. It was one of the first IV-D sites with interactive content. A complete list of features is contained in Appendix A. The system uses screen scraping to deliver payment information. It leverages technology used by the Texas IVR system. Data in forms such as the online application are captured using cgi programming, but currently captured information is manually entered into the child support system. Plans include moving to an NT/edify system to increase the number of simultaneous sessions. It is also anticipated that entireX broker will be used.

According to McKensie, the Texas site offers an extensive Web-based interface for State staff manning one of five regional call centers. Texas has provided some usage statistics for their Web site. This can be found in Appendix A.

**State:** Virginia
**Address:** http://www.dss.state.va.us/family/dcse.html
**Contact:** Connie White
(804) 692-1513

The Virginia child support site began offering case-specific child support information in April/May 2001. The site provides the last six payments, the arrears balance, and selected case activities. A case number and PIN (the last four digits of the SSN) are used to authenticate system users. The system uses IBM Websphere to interact with the child support system. The Web site leverages technology already used for the State's voice response system.

## REPORT ORGANIZATION

The remainder of this report has been organized into the following sections:

- ✓ Section II discusses the findings from the needs assessment. This includes an overview of the methodology and response rates, findings about the rankings of e-commerce applications, and findings related to financial statements.

- ✓ Section III discusses functional requirements. We include infrastructure requirements and the ratings of functional requirements by stakeholder groups.

- ✓ Section IV provides conclusions and next steps. We stress that it is important not only to develop features that match the needs of potential users, but also to design and build a system that provides flexibility for future changes in user needs and DCSE strategic plans.

# Section II
# Findings from the Needs Assessment

## Introduction

DCSE wants to know from its customers and partners what would be the most useful e-commerce features for its Web site. DCSE also wants customer input to help design an online financial statement. DCSE will use this information to develop short- and long-range plans for improving its Web site.

Three different methodologies were used to identify and assess customer's needs:

- ✓ Individual interviews,
- ✓ Online surveys, and
- ✓ Focus groups.

This section summarizes these methodologies, describes the participants, and discusses our findings.

## Overview of the Methodology and Response Rates

This section provides an overview of the interviews, online surveys, and focus groups, including the response rates.

### Purpose and Number of Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 20 individuals to obtain help with:

- ✓ Developing a preliminary list of potentially useful e-commerce functions,
- ✓ Identifying the content of the online survey and focus groups,
- ✓ Identifying all of the possible different types of DCSE customers and stakeholders, and
- ✓ Identifying means to announce the survey and focus groups and reach other DCSE customers who otherwise would not be solicited for input.

Interviews were conducted with State DCSE administrators, policy analysts, and programmers; Regional OCSE administrators; County CSE administrators; CSE administrators and staff in other states; State Court Administrators; CSE County workers; and Family Support Registry (FSR) staff.[1]

### Online Surveys and Number of Respondents

Online surveys were posted on the Internet for a month. The survey asked DCSE customers to rate the usefulness of about 75 possible e-commerce functions and other information that could be made available on the DCSE Web site. The rating was based on a 1–5 scale, with 1 being "very useful" and 5 being "not at all useful."

The possible e-commerce functions mentioned on the survey were identified from the interviews and through examining the Web sites of other state child support enforcement programs. Respondents were also asked whether there were any e-commerce functions that were not mentioned on the survey that they would like DCSE to provide.

Because some e-commerce functions are useful or appropriate to some customers but not others (e.g., sending employers notices via the Internet would be directly useful to employers but not parents), different surveys were developed for custodial parties, non-custodial parties, employers, Colorado CSE professionals, and out-of-state CSE professionals. Nonetheless, there were several possible e-commerce functions that appeared on all of the surveys. In addition, there was an "other" survey that was intended to capture input from the courts, other Department of Human Services agencies, other prime DCSE partners, and the general public.

In all, 519 surveys were completed. Exhibit II-1 displays the numbers of surveys completed by customer group. It also displays the number of possible e-commerce functions each customer group was asked to rate. The surveys also asked basic information concerning the respondents' use of the Internet, the frequency with which they contacted a Colorado CSE caseworker or used the FSR, and other information. The survey designs are provided in Appendix B.

[1] A list of those individuals is provided in Appendix C. The authors of this study are deeply appreciative of the time and ideas these individuals contributed to this study.

Exhibit II-1
Online Survey Response Rates

| Survey Respondents | Number of Surveys Completed | Number of Possible E-Commerce Functions Listed on Survey |
|---|---|---|
| Custodial parties | 273 | 36 |
| Non-custodial parties | 44 | 34 |
| Employers | 45 | 26 |
| Colorado CSE Professionals | 72 | 32 |
| Out-of-State Professionals | 54 | 31 |
| Other[a] | 31 | 20 |
| TOTAL | 519 | 75[b] |

[a]The "other" survey was completed by 12 members of the general public, six professionals with State or County Human Service agencies, six child support professionals who were not with the State or a county; five Clerks of the Courts, and two vendors. The general public responding to the survey varied. The respondents included two grandmothers, a stepparent, a second wife, a former child support enforcement manager, a family law paralegal, and others.
[b]The total represents the number of different possible e-commerce functions.

### *Description of Survey Respondents*

The online survey asked parents, employers, and out-of-state CSE professionals how often they contacted Colorado CSE professionals and whether they contacted them via telephone or e-mail. The parents were also asked whether their cases were enforced by a county and whether payments went through the FSR. The CSE professionals were asked how much contact they had with each customer group.

***Custodial Parties.*** On average, the custodial parties who responded reported that they used the Internet one or more times per week. More than half (57 percent) accessed it from home, but a considerable proportion (41 percent) accessed it from work or from both home and work. Those that did not access the Internet from home or their work (2 percent), accessed it through a variety of sources (e.g., the library, school, or a friend's house). A large majority (94 percent) of the custodial parties had a current child support order. Most (73 percent) reported that payments were made through the FSR, but another 10 percent did not know whether the payments were made through the FSR. About one-fifth (17 percent) reported their payments were not made through the FSR. Somewhat more than half (56 percent) reported that their case was enforced by a county child support agency, but another 19 percent did not know whether a county agency was involved, and 26 percent reported that a county agency did not enforce their order.

The custodial parties responding to the survey generally did not contact DCSE or the county CSE offices frequently. On average, the respondents reported that they accessed the DCSE Web site or the local county CSE Web site, or telephoned or e-mailed a CSE worker and the FSR less than once every month.

***Non-Custodial Parties.*** On average, non-custodial parties also reported using the Internet one or more times per week. About two-thirds of non-custodial parties reported accessing the Internet primarily from home, while the remaining one-third accessed the Internet from work or from both home and work. The vast majority (98 percent) reported they had a current child support order and most (79 percent) reported paying through the FSR, although 12 percent were unsure. Almost two-thirds of the respondents reported that their child support case was enforced by a county child support office, but about 12 percent did not know for sure. About a quarter (26 percent) reported that the county child support agency did not enforce their order.

The non-custodial parties responding to the survey contacted DCSE or the county CSE offices even less frequently than the custodial parties who responded to the online survey. On average, the respondents reported that they accessed the DCSE Web site and telephoned or e-mailed a CSE worker less than once per month. On average, they reported never calling the FSR or accessing the local county child support enforcement Web site. This was reiterated in the focus group with non-custodial parties. Several of the participants stated that it never occurred to them to look up child support information on the Internet even though they use the Internet for many other purposes.

***Out-of-State CSE Professionals***. About two-thirds (64 percent) of the respondents were IV-D professionals who worked interstate cases. The remaining out-of-state respondents included CSE administrators, attorneys, and others. On average, out-of-state CSE professionals responding to the survey reported accessing the Internet once or more times per week; accessing the DCSE Web site less than once every month; telephoning a Colorado CSE professional about once every month or two; almost never e-mailing a Colorado CSE professional; sending and receiving information to and from Colorado once every month or two; including or receiving certified copies of court documents to or from Colorado less than once per month; sending or receiving Colorado interstate requests through CSEnet less than once per month; and accessing the FSR less than once per month.

***Colorado CSE Professionals.*** Most (82 percent) of the respondents worked for a county child support agency. The remainder of the respondents worked for the State or the State Court Administrative Office or were private contractors or private attorneys. The vast majority (96 percent) of respondents had Internet access at work, which should be of no surprise since the survey was conducted online. On average, the respondents reported having direct contact with parents from a few hours per day to a few hours per week. They had less contact with employers, CSE professionals in other states, and professionals from other agencies. On average, their contact with these groups was a few hours per week.

In general, Colorado CSE professionals thought it most important to improve the DCSE Web site for parents, then employers, then out-of-state CSE professionals, and finally the general public.

### Number and Purpose of Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted with custodial parties, non-custodial parties, and employers. The purpose of the focus groups was to obtain more detailed information on consumer needs, particularly detailed information that would assist in the design, format, and content of an online financial statement. In addition, project staff held a focus group-like meeting with the ACSES Users Group (ACSES is Colorado's automated child support enforcement system). This focus group pretested the online survey and provided other invaluable input to the design of the rest of the needs assessment.

There were four focus groups: two were conducted in Colorado Springs (one with custodial parties and the other with non-custodial parties), and two were conducted in Denver (one with custodial parties and the other with employers). Participation was generally low. Participants were first recruited from the online survey, which asked respondents whether they would be willing to participate in a focus group. The number of positive responses was 130 custodial parties, 15 non-custodial parties, and 12 employers. Yet many of these respondents were not in the Denver or Colorado Springs area or could not attend the focus groups on the scheduled dates. Further, typically only half of the focus group participants that confirmed actually attended. To boost the number of focus group participants, project staff tried other angles. The employers group was supplemented with a list of 18 employers who participated in focus groups pertaining to the FSR last year. Several parents' advocacy groups and fatherhood programs were contacted. One advocacy group was able to round up ten focus group participants. One fatherhood program was able to recruit eight parents, but only three parents actually showed despite repeated reconfirmation.

In all, there were 19 focus group participants: 13 custodial parties, three non-custodial parties, and three employers.

## General Findings

The general findings from the needs assessment can be summarized by the following four points:

1. Almost all of the potential 75 e-commerce applications listed on the online surveys were ranked "useful" to "very useful," although there was some variation by customer group.

2. DCSE customers differed in what *general* categories of possible e-commerce functions they rated as the most useful.
   - ✓ *Custodial parties* rated as "very useful" many of the financial and case status functions and functions that facilitate communication with their enforcement technicians and the child support agencies.
   - ✓ *Non-custodial parties* rated as "very useful" many of the financial (payment) functions and improved static information (e.g., DCSE procedures and other information that does not change month to month).
   - ✓ *Employers* did not rate any of the functions as "very useful," but rated most of them as "useful."
   - ✓ *Colorado CSE professional*s rated as "very useful" many of the financial functions and online applications, forms, and notices.
   - ✓ *Out-of-state CSE professionals* rated as "very useful" many of the financial and case status functions; applications, forms, and notices; and, functions that facilitate communication.
   - ✓ *Others* rated as "very useful" many of the financial functions and functions that facilitate communication.

3. DCSE customers differed in what *specific* possible e-commerce functions they rated as the most useful.
   - ✓ *Custodial parties* rated as the most useful having a direct e-mail link to the child support office enforcing their case.
   - ✓ *Non-custodial parties* rated as the most useful having the dollar amount and date of the last payment made on the child support case available online the most useful.
   - ✓ *Employers* rated as most useful having an online form to report terminations of employees with income assignments for child support.
   - ✓ *Colorado CSE Professionals* reported that it would be most useful for either parent to be able to access the most recent payment information online.
   - ✓ *Out-of-state CSE professionals* rated as most useful having the arrears balance on interstate child support cases.
   - ✓ *Others* also rated as most useful having the ability for either parent to access the most recent payment information online.

4. Several customers suggested possible e-commerce functions in addition to the 75 provided on the online surveys. Many were reiterated in the focus groups.

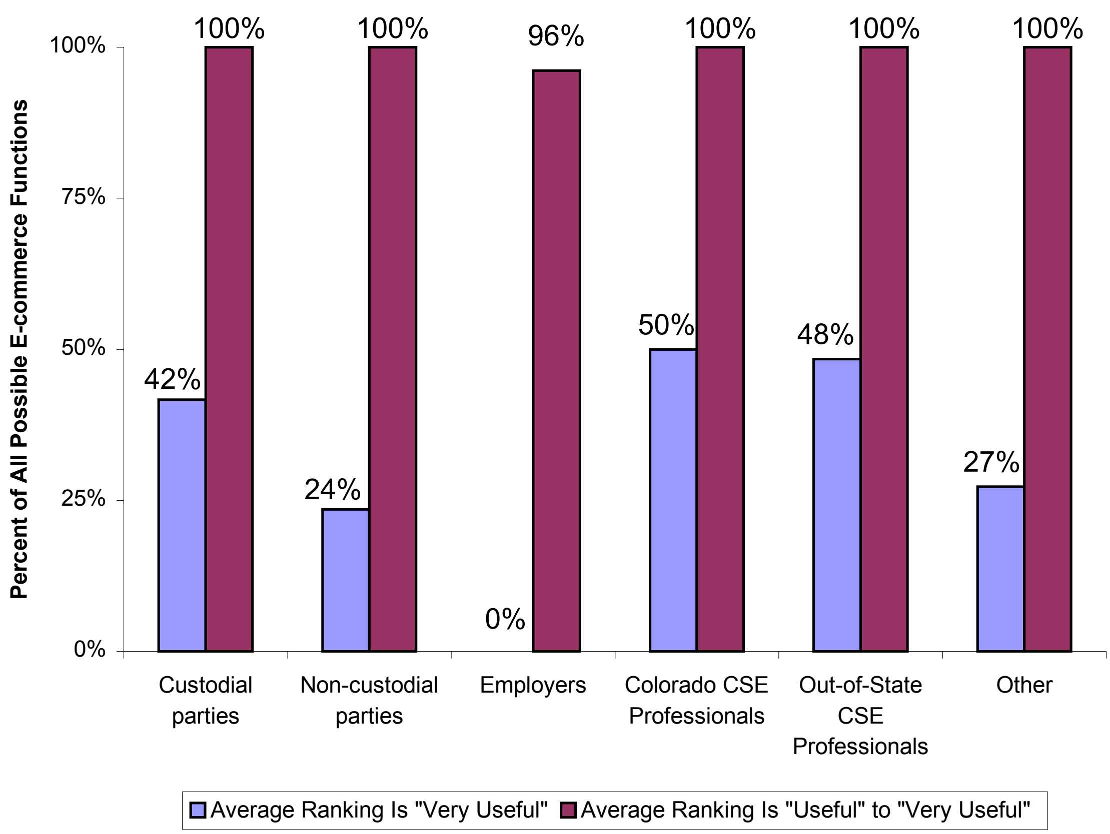
Detailed findings from the online survey are provided in Appendix D

## Most Potential E-Commerce Applications Were Ranked "Useful" to "Very Useful"

As mentioned earlier, about 75 possible e-commerce functions were rated on a 1–5 scale, with 1 being "very useful" and 5 being "not at all useful." The midpoint of the scale (3) was titled "useful."

As shown in Exhibit II-2, almost all of the 75 possible e-commerce functions received an average rating of "useful" to "very useful." The only exception was one of the e-commerce functions rated by employers. Employers did not think posting statistics on how much child support is collected in Colorado and other child support statistics would be useful to them.

Exhibit II-2
Percentage of All Possible E-Commerce Functions
Rated As "Useful" to "Very Useful"




*Variations in Ratings among Customer Groups*

Exhibit II-2 also shows that the average ratings varied among customer groups. Custodial parties, Colorado CSE professionals, and out-of-state CSE professionals rated the utility of all possible e-commerce functions higher than non-custodial parties, employers, and others. In general, employers rated all possible e-commerce functions lower in utility than any other group. More specifically:

- ✓ *Custodial parties, Colorado CSE professionals,* and *out-of-state CSE professionals* on average rated nearly half (42 percent, 50 percent, and 48 percent, respectively) of all functions as "very useful."
- ✓ *Non-custodial parties* and *others* on average only ranked about a quarter of all functions as "very useful."
- ✓ *Employers* ranked none of the functions as "very useful" but most functions as "useful."

### DCSE Customers Differ in What E-Commerce Functions Would Be the Most Useful

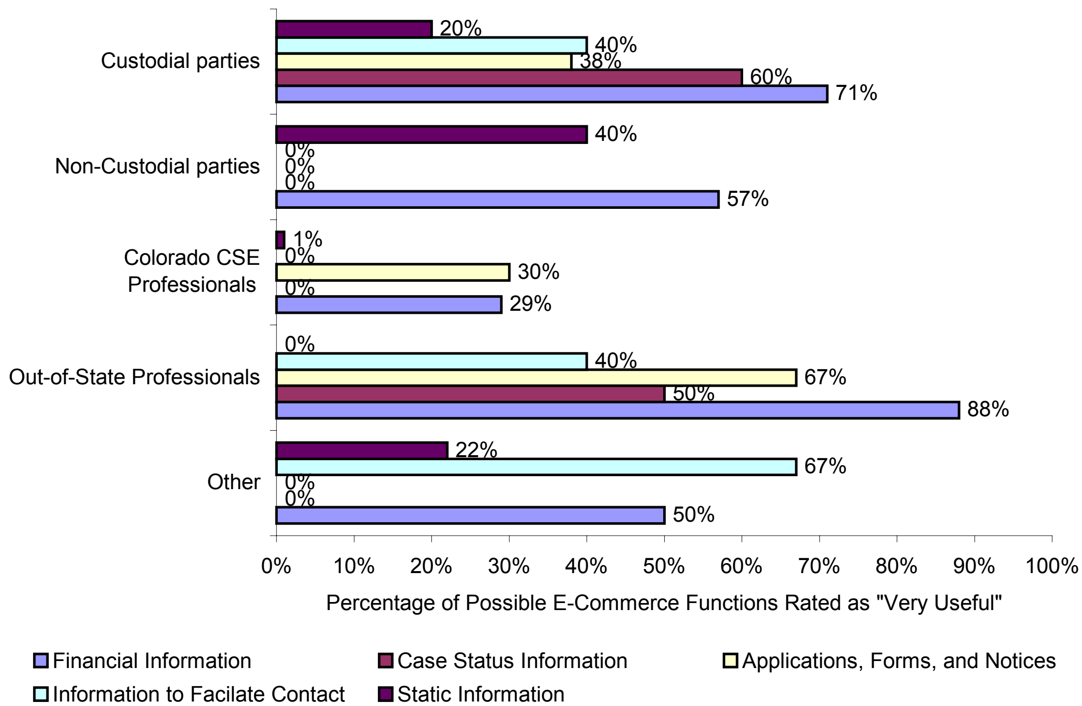
All of the possible e-commerce functions listed on the online surveys were grouped into five broad categories:

1. Case-specific financial (payment) information,
2. Case status information (e.g., pending court dates),
3. Sending and receiving DCSE forms and notices via the Internet,
4. Facilitating communication to the CSE technician or County (e.g., providing direct e-mail links and local office addresses), and
5. Static information (e.g., detailed descriptions of CSE processes and other information that typically does not change from month to month)[2].

Exhibit II-3 displays the percentage of the possible e-commerce functions rated as "very useful" for each of these five categories by customer group. It shows there was considerable variation in what categories of possible e-commerce functions customers rated as most useful. Employers are not included in the exhibit because they did not rate any of the possible e-commerce functions as "very useful."

[2] Appendix B lists which specific e-commerce functions were included in each category.

Exhibit II-3
Percentage of Possible E-Commerce Functions Rated "Very Useful" by Function Category and Customer Group




### *E-Commerce Categories Custodial Parties Rated As "Very Useful"*

As shown in Exhibit II-3, custodial parties rated most (71 percent) of the possible financial functions listed in the survey as "very useful." They also rated almost two-thirds (60 percent) of the possible case status functions listed in the survey as "very useful"; less than half (40 percent) of the possible functions that facilitated contact with their CSE technicians as "very useful"; about one-third (38 percent) of the possible online applications, forms, and notices as "very useful"; and less than one-quarter (20 percent) of the possible static information features as "very useful."

The findings of the focus groups with custodial parties were also similar. They thought it most important to add to the DCSE Web site financial and case status functions and functions that facilitated contact with their CSE technicians.

### *E-Commerce Categories Non-Custodial Parties Rated As "Very Useful"*

As shown in Exhibit II-3, non-custodial parties only rated possible financial functions and static information features as "very useful." They rated over half (57 percent) of the possible financial e-commerce functions as "very useful." They rated over one-third (40 percent) of the possible static information e-commerce functions as "very useful."

The findings of the focus group with non-custodial parties were similar, but also somewhat different. They thought it most important to add financial functions and more information about how child support enforcement works (i.e., what will happen when payments are late and when would the punitive action be taken). The focus groups also thought some case status information was important. For example, they thought it would be important to be able to go online and see that their tax refund had been intercepted or their driver's license had been suspended.

### *E-Commerce Categories Colorado CSE Professionals Rated As "Very Useful"*

As shown in Exhibit II-3, Colorado CSE professionals only rated as "very useful" possible financial functions and functions that facilitated contact. They rated almost one-third (30 percent) of the possible online applications, forms, and notices as "very useful" and almost one-third (29 percent) of the possible financial e-commerce functions as "very useful."

### *E-Commerce Categories Out-of-State CSE Professionals Rated As "Very Useful"*

As shown in Exhibit II-3, out-of-state CSE professionals rated as "very useful" all but one of the five general categories of possible e-commerce functions. They rated over three-quarters (88 percent) of the possible financial functions as "very useful," about two-thirds (67 percent) of possible online applications, forms, and notices as "very useful"; half (50 percent) of the possible case status functions as "very useful"; and, less than half (40 percent) of the possible functions that facilitated contact with child support technicians as "very useful."

## Specific E-Commerce Functions (Top 10 Ratings)

Exhibits II-4, II-5, and II-6 display the top ten e-commerce functions ranked by average ratings for each customer group. Exhibit II-4 displays the top ten for both custodial and non-custodial parties. Exhibits II-5 and II-6 display the top ten for employers and out-of-state CSE professionals, respectively.

In each of these exhibits, the Colorado CSE professionals' comparable ranking of the top ten features is provided. This adds another dimension to the rating. DCSE customers base their rating on what would be the most useful to them personally or in fulfilling their role as an employer or CSE professional in another state. Colorado CSE professionals based their rating on what they thought would best serve all customers. Exhibits II-4, II-5, and II-6 also contain all of the Colorado CSE professional's top ten except an online form for custodial parties to set up direct deposits from the FSR to their bank accounts and an online form for non-custodial parties to set up electronic transfers from their bank accounts to the FSR, which were ranked 4th and 8th, respectively.

### Exhibit II-4
### Top 10 Most Useful E-Commerce Functions: Custodial and Non-Custodial Parties

| Most Useful E-Commerce Functions | Custodial Parties | Non-Custodial Parties | Colorado CSE Professionals[a] |
|---|---|---|---|
| The ability to send e-mail to your local child support office from the Web site | 1st | 17th | 29th |
| Date of the last payment on child support case | 2nd | 5th | 1st |
| Online form to change your address, name, or other basic information | 3rd | 9th | 13th |
| The last payment made on the child support case, specifically the dollar amount and the date it was received by the FSR (State) | 4th | 1st | 1st |
| Recent order establishment actions on a case | 5th | 12th | 34th |
| Arrears balance on your child support case | 6th | 15th | 8th |
| History of payments made more than one month but less than 12 months ago | 7th | 2nd | 5th |
| Pending and recent court actions and dates concerning the case | 8th | 16th | 30th |
| Internet links to the courts and programs that assist parents and children | 9th | 4th | 22nd |
| Total amount paid, portion paid to custodial party, and portion paid to the State, if applicable | 10th | 6th | 33rd |
| A list of services and programs to assist parents | 16th | 3rd | 6th |
| State of Colorado child support laws | 22nd | 8th | 20th |
| "What's New" in Colorado child support laws and policies | 20th | 9th | NA |
| Payment history older than one year | 24th | 10th | 25th |

[a]Date of the last payment on child support case and dollar amount were asked as one question in the Colorado CSE Professional Survey.

#### *Additional Detail on the Top Functions*

Additional detail about some of these features was provided in the focus group and the write-in section of the surveys.

***E-mailing Local Child Support Office.*** Most parents also wanted the name of the caseworker. Several parents also suggested that an automatic response verifying that their e-mail had been received and would be answered within so many days would be "very useful." Some parents took it a step further and requested that the supervisor's name be provided so they could contact them if no action had been taken.

***Case Status Information.*** Some of the possible case status features (e.g., court dates and recent establishment actions) were rated among the top ten most useful, but the focus groups indicated that all case status information would be "useful." Custodial parties, in particular, wanted to know what action was being taken on their case so they could tell whether it was being worked. Non-custodial parties wanted to know if enforcement actions (e.g., tax refund intercept) had been taken against them in the event they missed the notification via mail.

***Financial Information***. There were many additional comments concerning financial functions, but that is discussed in greater detail in the last subsection of this report.

Exhibit II-5
Top 10 Most Useful E-Commerce Functions:
Employers

| Most Useful E-Commerce Functions | Employers | Colorado CSE Professionals |
|---|---|---|
| Online form to report termination of an employee with an income assignment for child support | 1st | 2nd |
| Online form to verify employment per a request from a Colorado child support agency | 2nd | 3rd |
| Verification of last payment sent to the FSR on behalf of employees with income assignments for child support | 3rd | NA |
| Payment history of what was sent to the FSR more than one month but less than 12 months ago | 4th | 5th |
| Combining the information about new hire reporting and income assignments to create one centralized "What employers need to know" Web page | 5th | NA |
| Online form to send e-mail to county child support offices handling the cases of the employees with income assignments | 6th | NA |
| The option of receiving notices from the child support agency online (e.g., requests for employment verification, redirect notices) | 7th | 38th |
| Online examples of how to calculate percentage of employee's disposable income to withhold in complicated cases (e.g., employees with more than one income assignment, check against CCPA limits) | 8th | NA |
| Ability to download, review, and receive income assignments online | 9th | NA |
| More detailed information about new hire reporting requirements, such as how to handle contractors and rehires | 10th | NA |

Exhibit II-6
Top 10 Most Useful E-commerce Functions:
Out-of-State CSE Professionals

| Most Useful E-Commerce Functions | Out-of-State CSE Professionals | Colorado CSE Professionals |
|---|---|---|
| Arrears balance on an interstate child support case | 1st | NA |
| Contact information for local child support office handling interstate cases | 2nd | NA |
| The last payment made on an interstate child support case, specifically the dollar amount and the date it was received by Colorado | 3rd | NA |
| Monthly amount of child support due on an interstate case | 4th | NA |
| History of payments made on an interstate child support case more than one month but less than 12 months ago | 5th | NA |
| Online form to request assistance in finding/obtaining copies of support orders or paternity affidavits in Colorado | 6th | NA |
| The ability to transmit and receive forms online that are typically sent via US mail from your State to Colorado or vice versa | 7th | NA |
| Most recent child support actions and status information on interstate cases where Colorado is the responding state and your state is the initiating state | 8th | 10th |
| Scheduled hearing dates on an interstate child support case and whether the hearings were held | 9th | NA |
| Addresses and telephone numbers of all local Colorado child support offices | 10th | 9th |

## Additional Desired Functions

There were about one hundred additional comments and suggestions. Some were specific suggestions; others were related to specific case issues, were general comments about child support enforcement, or encouraged improving the DCSE Web site and making it more interactive.

Custodial parties also suggested the following:

- ✓ An e-mail link directly to their child support technician and the name of the child support technician
- ✓ Automatic response to their e-mail acknowledging receipt and a time frame for anticipated response
- ✓ A chat room with an online child support technician available
- ✓ Federal time frames for specific child support actions
- ✓ Hours of office operations and hours that the office accepts walk-ins, in addition to office address and telephone number
- ✓ Virtual hearings via the Internet for out-of-state parents

- ✓ Ability to submit tips about the location or assets of non-custodial parties Ability to set up and change direct deposit
- ✓ Ability to request a review of the current support order amount online
- ✓ Online forms for child support actions and an online checklist of any required supporting documentation
- ✓ More information about Colorado child support processes and laws
- ✓ Information about the child support laws in other states
- ✓ Links and functions that ease the information flow between child support enforcement agencies in other states
- ✓ Information about how to collect arrears
- ✓ Location of the non-custodial party
- ✓ What steps to take if the non-custodial party stops paying
- ✓ Do not use e-mail lists to send newsletters or other general information

Non-custodial parties also mentioned additional e-commerce functions. Their suggestions included:

- ✓ Ability to get payment coupons via the Internet.
- ✓ Ability to make a direct deposit via the Internet on the date the non-custodial party chose. In contrast with direct deposit, the respondent disliked automatic withdrawal (i.e., the former is done automatically on a specific date every month, whereas direct deposit is not automatic and requires initiation by the depositor).
- ✓ More information about the interstate process, fees, interest, late payment charges, and discrepancies in arrears balances between states.
- ✓ Information to assist with child access issues.
- ✓ "A Web site for those who pay or want to pay and straighten things out." The NCPs want to have access to resources when they really are trying to make the right choices.

Employers provided the following additional suggestions on the online survey or at the focus group. At the employer focus group, participants were given a demonstration of Iowa's Employers Partnering in Child Support (EPICS) Web site. The Iowa Web site was developed to provide online information to employers and to allow employers to send and receive child support-related forms online. Employers' suggestions included:

- ✓ E-mail addresses and telephone numbers of CSE technicians
- ✓ An easy-to-read employer-specific site
- ✓ Contact information for New Hire so they can be quickly contacted when there have been errors in reports
- ✓ Information describing the rights and responsibilities of employers regarding child support enforcement and income withholding

- ✓ A quick and easy way to notify CSE that an employee has been terminated (e.g., a large volume of orders are received by employers after employees have terminated—the paperwork is very time consuming)
- ✓ The ability to notify multiple parties when an employee is terminated (i.e., if the order states that the court, CSE, and the custodial party must be notified)
- ✓ Online confirmation that a termination notice or other communication was sent by the employer and received by CSE
- ✓ An online history/accounting of all employees with income withholding orders for child support (by employer).

The employers' reaction to Iowa's EPICS Web site was similar to how the parents reacted to New Mexico's Web site. They thought it was user friendly and not intimidating.

Colorado CSE professionals had the following additional suggestions:

- ✓ Time frames for child support processes
- ✓ The consequences of when information requested from a party is not returned in order establishment or modification cases
- ✓ What CSE professionals can and cannot do in child support enforcement
- ✓ Links to find out if the non-custodial party or children have existing or pending social security benefits
- ✓ Direct links to the IRS and other states' quarterly wage data
- ✓ Resources for parents to resolve child access issues

One respondent was also concerned that if the Web site announced enforcement actions, the non-custodial party would use it to exploit the system. Another respondent was concerned that if non-custodial parties submitted address changes online they would deliberately mislead the agency. There was also another respondent who was concerned that the quantity and type of information provided online could backfire and cause more work for technicians and not result in the better child support outcomes it was trying to achieve.

Out-of-state CSE professionals had the following additional suggestions:

- ✓ Direct e-mail link to Colorado interstate technician and technician's telephone number. (Several survey respondents made this comment.)
- ✓ A list of FIPs codes of offices along with their addresses and telephone numbers.
- ✓ Ability to submit status inquiry online.
- ✓ One respondent expressed some concern because the respondent's state require certified forms, which limits what they can receive via the Internet. Also another out-of-state CSE professional was concerned about how data would be secured by both states and how often the information would be updated.

## FINDINGS RELATED TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Detailed information useful to the design of the financial statement was obtained through several methods:

- ✓ Many of the possible e-commerce functions whose usefulness survey respondents were asked to rate were actually potential components of an online financial statement. (The rating of these features was discussed in the previous section.)

- ✓ Online survey respondents and parent focus group participants were asked to review three sample financial statements and select which one they liked the best. The samples were adopted from actual financial statements from other states and modified with helpful comments from the ACSES users group. There were two different sets of financial statements, one for custodial parties and another for non-custodial parties. Different sets were provided because some of the states had different financial statements for custodial and non-custodial parties.

- ✓ The parent focus groups were shown all of several states' online screens from the home page to the financial statement. They were asked which state site they liked the best and to select something they liked and did not like from each site.

### Response to Sample Financial Statements

As stated above, there were two sets of sample financial statements: one for the custodial party and another for the non-custodial party. Each set contained three samples. Online survey respondents and focus group participants were asked which they liked the best or whether a combination of the samples would be better and, if so, what combination. Overall, the comment was any of the financial statements would be good, particularly since no such statement exists.

#### *Sample Financial Statements for Custodial Parties*

Exhibits II-7, II-8, and II-9 display the sample custodial party financial statements that appeared in the online survey and were shown to the focus groups among custodial parties.

The response to these sample financial statements is shown in the text box below.

Example 1

Exhibit II-7
Sample Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet user ID**: 012345
**Court case ID number**: 019 DR 01
**Current support due**: $450
**Arrears payment due**: $50
**Total monthly due**: $500

| Date Mailed | Payment Amount | Check Number | Status | Arrears Owed to Custodial Parent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12/01/01 | $500 | 8123456 | Mailed | $2,000 |
| 11/01/01 | $500 | 8113450 | Cashed | $2,050 |
| 10/01/01 | $500 | 8011234 | Cashed | $2,100 |
| 09/01/01 | $500 | 8000001 | Cashed | $2,150 |

Example 2

Exhibit II-8

Sample Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet user ID**: 012345

| Court Case ID Number | Date Payment Received | Payment Amount | Date Money Sent | Amount Sent | Amount Kept by State | Outstanding Arrears Balance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 019 DR 01 | 11/30/01 | $500 | 12/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,000 |
| 019 DR 01 | 10/30/01 | $500 | 11/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,050 |
| 019 DR 01 | 09/30/01 | $500 | 10/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,100 |
| 019 DR 01 | 08/30/01 | $500 | 09/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,150 |

Example 3

# Exhibit II-9
## Sample Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet user ID**: 012345
**Court case ID number**: 019 DR 01
**Current support due**: $450
**Arrears payment due**: $50
**Total monthly due**: $500

| Date Mailed | Payment Amount | Payment Toward Current Support | Payment Toward Arrears | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12/01/01 | $500 | $450 | $50 | Mailed |
| 11/01/01 | $500 | $450 | $50 | Cashed |
| 10/01/01 | $500 | $450 | $50 | Cashed |
| 09/01/01 | $500 | $450 | $50 | Cashed |

## Ranking of Sample Financial Statements for Custodial Parties

- ✓ Sample 2 was favored by 37 percent of the custodial parties responding to the online survey. One of the focus groups with custodial parties also favored Sample 2. The other focus group with custodial parties did not like Sample 2 because it did not contain current support information and the other information provided on the top of Sample 1.
- ✓ Sample 1 was favored by 35 percent of the custodial parties responding to the online survey.
- ✓ Sample 3 was favored by 22 percent of the custodial parties responding to the online survey.

A few of the online survey respondents had suggestions for combining samples. Many of those suggestions were reiterated in the focus groups. The suggestions included:

- ✓ Generally the more payment information the better.
- ✓ Including arrears balances is very important.
- ✓ Payments toward current support and payments toward arrears should definitely be presented separately.
- ✓ Having the entire payment history is important.
- ✓ The descriptive case information (e.g., current amount due) included in Samples 1 and 3 is useful.
- ✓ It is important to include check numbers (some participants did not agree with this suggestion).
- ✓ It is important to see what amount of payments were distributed to the state (some participants did not agree with this suggestion). One suggested compromise was to put that information on another screen.
- ✓ It is important to see the dates the money was received by FSR and sent (some participants thought this was unnecessary).

### *Sample Financial Statements for Non-Custodial Parties*

Exhibits II-10, II-11, and II-12 display the sample non-custodial party financial statements that appeared in the online survey and were shown to the focus groups among non-custodial parties.

## Ranking of Sample Financial Statements for Non-Custodial Parties

- ✓ Sample 2 was favored by 66 percent of the non-custodial parties responding to the online survey). The focus group favored a combination of Sample 1 and 3 because it explicitly explained the amount paid on arrears
- ✓ Sample 3 was favored by 21 percent of the non-custodial parties responding to the online survey.
- ✓ Sample 1 was favored by 11 percent of the non-custodial parties responding to the online survey.

The non-custodial parties focus group suggested several items that should be included on the online financial statement:

- ✓ Their names, because case numbers are meaningless. In a similar vein, they wanted to be able to access their online financial statement by using a name and password they selected and not have to memorize case numbers.
- ✓ Arrears balances and whether any interest or fees are accruing.
- ✓ Explanation of fees, interest, and late payments, particularly in interstate cases.
- ✓ Separately displayed payments and amount due on arrears and current support.
- ✓ Clarification as to whether the amount due is due for child support in the previous, current, or following month.
- ✓ When the amount will be considered past due and the consequences of past due payments.
- ✓ Minimum amount due.
- ✓ A schedule of arrears repayment and what would happen if arrears are paid early.
- ✓ The date of the last child support payment owed.
- ✓ Source of payment, since it might be useful to other non-custodial parties who do not pay directly to the FSR.

Nonetheless, in general, non-custodial parties were less interested in the financial statement than the custodial parties. The sentiment of the focus group among non-custodial parties was they knew whether or not they paid, so they probably would not check it online unless there was a problem, or if they wanted to know about a total arrears balance due.

### *CSE Professionals*

Colorado and out-of-state CSE professionals were also shown the sample financial statements for non-custodial parties. Their ratings were similar, but the gap was narrower.

- ✓ Sample 2 was favored by 36 percent of the Colorado CSE professionals and 50 percent of out-of-state CSE professionals responding to the online survey.
- ✓ Sample 3 was favored by 30 percent of the Colorado CSE professionals and 10 percent of out-of-state CSE professionals responding to the online survey.
- ✓ Sample 1 was favored by 20 percent of the Colorado CSE professionals and 17 percent of out-of-state CSE professionals responding to the online survey.

Respondents to the out-of-state CSE professional survey also stated they wanted to know the parties' names, the current support order due date, where payments were disbursed, and fees and costs.

Example 1

Exhibit II-10

Sample Non-Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet user ID**: 012345
**Court case ID number**: 019 DR 01
**Current support due**: $450
**Arrears payment due**: $50
**Total monthly due**: $500

| Date Payment Received | Source | Amount | Outstanding Arrears Balance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11/30/01 | over-the-counter | $500 | $2,000 |
| 10/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $2,050 |
| 09/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $2,100 |
| 08/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $2,150 |

Example 2

Exhibit II-11

Sample Non-Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet user ID**: 012345

| Court Case ID Number | Date Payment Received | Payment Amount | Date Money Sent | Amount Sent | Amount Kept by State | Outstanding Arrears Balance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 019 DR 01 | 11/30/01 | $500 | 12/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,000 |
| 019 DR 01 | 10/30/01 | $500 | 11/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,050 |
| 019 DR 01 | 09/30/01 | $500 | 10/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,100 |
| 019 DR 01 | 08/30/01 | $500 | 09/01/01 | $500 | $0 | $2,150 |

Example 3

Exhibit II-12

Sample Non-Custodial Party Financial Statement

**Internet uer ID**: 012345
**Court case ID number**: 019 DR 01
**Current support due**: $450
**Arrears payment due**: $50
**Total monthly due**: $500

| Date Payment Received | Source | Total Amount Paid | Amount Paid Toward Current Support | Amount Paid Toward Arrears |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11/30/01 | over-the-counter | $500 | $450 | $50 |
| 10/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $450 | $50 |
| 09/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $450 | $50 |
| 08/30/01 | employer withholding | $500 | $450 | $50 |

## Response to Other States' Financial Statements

The parent focus groups were shown all of several states' online screens from the home page to the financial statement. For example, the screens of the New Mexico Web site, which has one of the most extensive sites for parents, were shown. Focus group participants were asked which Web site they liked the best and what they liked the best and the least of each state's Web site.

### *New Mexico's Web Site for Parents*

Focus group participants overwhelmingly liked the New Mexico Web Site the best for the following reasons:

- ✓ It had the most comprehensive information (e.g., payment history, current payment, and whether a check had been cashed).
- ✓ It was easy to view and written in a layperson's language.
- ✓ Several focus group participants stated that they loved the main menu page, which provided options to such links as "case payment information," "recent news on my case," "help manage my case," and "apply for child support services."
- ✓ The financial statement could be accessed quickly without going through several screens.
- ✓ The links to other pages were sensible and practical.

The things the focus group participants did not like or thought could be better on the New Mexico Web site were:

- ✓ More financial information should be provided to the non-custodial party.
- ✓ Some of the financial information to the custodial party could be merged onto one screen and be more detailed.
- ✓ A sidebar could be added with more links to other pages, including a "My Account" page.
- ✓ A few of the focus group participants did not like some of the wording of the options.

### *Web Sites from Other States*

Other lessons learned from examining the Web sites and financial statements of other states included:

- ✓ ***Statements Implying That the Information from the Web Site May Not Be Accurate and Should Be Checked Were Bothersome.*** One of the Web sites suggested that the parent contact his or her bank when a deposit was made. Several focus group participants thought this was “lame.”

- ✓ ***Graphics and Colors Matter Somewhat.*** Non-custodial parties participating in a focus group were particularly offended by a shade of yellow that appeared on another state’s Web site.

- ✓ ***Keep It Simple and Easy to Read.*** All of the focus groups brought up this point. Straightforward language and terminology is a must.

- ✓ ***Put “Child Support” Somewhere on the Web Site.*** One of the states did not specify that the information was for child support and this bothered one of the focus group participants.

# Section III
# Functional Requirements

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of this Business Area Analysis is to provide a design for a new Web site for DCSE that provides (1) specific interactive functionality identified as desirable by the likely user community and (2) a plan for implementing that design that accommodates DCSE strategic goals and budget constraints.

Before DCSE can consider designing and building such a Web site, it must examine the functional requirements for the features to be included and the infrastructure to support them. This section outlines the elements of each feature, what business rules apply to delivering the required functionality, the respective roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders and DCSE with respect to the feature, and any policy issues that must be addressed. These requirements are offered as a starting point for the design phase and are not put forth as definitive.

We start by outlining basic functional requirements for the infrastructure to be able to support the site as a whole and the specific features being requested. Next, we provide separate documents for each of the top features to be included in the design of the e-commerce site. Exhibit III-1 outlines the features for which functional requirements are provided. These come from the rankings for each stakeholder group identified in the online survey and fleshed out in interviews and focus groups.

Exhibit III-1

| User Features | | CP | NCP | Employers | Out-of-State | Public |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Display Case Status | X | X | | X | |
| 2 | Display Last Payment Amount and Date | X | X | | X | |
| 3 | Display Payment History on Case | X | X | | X | |
| 4 | Financial Statement | X | X | | X | |
| 5 | Display Current Support Obligation Amount on Case | X | X | | X | |
| 6 | Form to Change Address or Other Profile Information | X | X | | | |
| 7 | Display Last Payment Distribution on a Case | X | X | | | |

| User Features | | CP | NCP | Employers | Out-of-State | Public |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Form to Establish Direct Deposit | X | | | | |
| 9 | Form to Establish Automated Withdrawal | | X | | | |
| 10 | Online Form to Contact Caseworker | X | X | | X | |
| 11 | Online Form for Application for Services | X | | | | |
| 12 | Form to Report Employee Termination | | | X | | |
| 13 | Form to Verify Employment | | | X | | |
| 14 | Online Income Assignments | | | X | | |
| 15 | Employer Pay-by-Web | | | X | | |
| 16 | Last Payment Made by Employer to FSR | | | X | | |
| 17 | Payment History of Employer | | | X | | |
| 18 | Online Interstate Forms Submission | | | | X | |
| 19 | Form to Assist with Locate | X | | | | X |
| 20 | Search for Local Child Support Agency Address and Phone | | | | | X |

For this project, we did not document functional requirements for what is likely to be static information. Although several categories of expanded information were identified as desirable, this project's emphasis is on the more interactive features requested by DCSE constituents.

## INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

### Functional Requirements for Common Functions

This section presents a number of common functions that should be offered by the site infrastructure and offered for code reuse in implementing the specific functional requirements described later. While this may border on technical design (which we would like to avoid), we chose to present these features as candidates for common functionality for the following reasons:

✓ Each function was used in two or more CSE-specific functions, and therefore clearly represented an opportunity for code reuse.

- ✓ Some functions presented here have their own policy implications. To be able to discuss those implications in the context of the function they are associated with, it is cleaner to discuss the functions separately.

It is certainly possible that during technical design we will arrive at more or fewer "common" functions, as that is really the correct place to determine such technical issues.

## Function: Login/Authentication Mechanism

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer functionality to authenticate the user against a database of known users, and to associate specific attributes and authorization levels with each user.

### *Business Rules*

A number of specific functions require that the user be logged in. This function provides the mechanism to allow that login to occur.

Over a secure connection, the user's login ID and password must be collected. User IDs must be unique for an individual. Once the user's credentials have been verified, a token should be returned to the requestor. The requestor can subsequently use this token to get access to specific attributes associated with the user ID, including:

- ✓ A list of security groups the user ID is associated with. The actual list of groups will be determined during design, but categories such as "Party on a Case," "Other State Professional," and "Employer" are likely. Security groups are not mutually exclusive—each user can be associated with any and all available groups.

- ✓ A list of case IDs the user ID is associated with, and an associated role (CP, NCP) on the case. When accessing case-specific content, the user's role on the case may be used to determine the specific functions and/or content the user is allowed to access.

- ✓ A list of named attributes for the user ID. These items will represent general profile information for the user ID, such as e-mail address, name, and phone number. A set of standard profile item names will be developed and used by all functions seeking to query items from the user's profile. New profile items must be easy to add. All functions that query for user profile information should provide a reasonable default value if the item is not present in the user's profile. An "update your profile" page must allow the user to input/view/modify their profile information.

*Policy Issues*

It must be decided how user IDs will be created. A common approach is to either let users create and verify their IDs or have the site issue IDs.

The way in which the user is authenticated on first use of the site is a technical issue with policy implications. The first concern is whether users can create their own accounts directly on the site or if they have to request a user ID (through the site, or by e-mail, US mail, or other traditional means) and wait to get access to the site's protected content until their user ID and password ID have been issued, perhaps hours or days later.

The primary issue to consider is how thorough the validation of the user's credentials must be. Validation may range from the user displaying in person two forms of ID to a worker to asking the user questions on the Web site that only they can answer.

Requiring that the user show ID requires far more administrative effort for the State and is much less convenient for the user. While validating identity through online questioning will maximize user convenience and use fewer State resources, this method may offer somewhat less security against fraud and misuse.

For CPs and NCPs, the ideal would be to formulate a set of questions that only that person could answer. With CPs and NCPs, this can be problematic, since most have had access to the other's private information in the past. This means most typical information (e.g., what is your date of birth, what city were you born in) is unavailable for purposes of validation.

The issues will be similar to the issues that surround the issuance of user IDs and PINs for the VRU, which is presumably a solved problem. One approach might be to use or adapt that process in the Web site's authorization process.

### Function: E-mail Services

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer functionality to allow other site functions to send and receive e-mail messages to and from users.

*Business Rules*

The sending function is the CSE-specific function that sends an e-mail to some other party. The sending function must know the e-mail address or login of the recipients. The sending function sends an e-mail by accessing the e-mail services interface and specifying items such as the recipient addresses, CC addresses, subject, and message body.

### *Policy Issues*

It is likely that some of the information exchanged between a user and the CSE employee will be confidential in nature (e.g., SSNs, addresses, phone numbers, and financial information). This has both technical and policy implications.

One policy decision that should be made is whether sensitive information should be exchanged using traditional e-mail. The site itself and the network traffic between the site and the users will be encrypted to protect the confidentiality of the data being exchanged. This same protection cannot be easily extended to standard e-mail protocols. It should be assumed that any information exchanged between a CSE employee and an outside recipient will be transmitted without encryption, making it susceptible to electronic eavesdropping.

This could be addressed by adopting a policy that says CSE employees should not use e-mail to transmit sensitive information to outside parties. (Unfortunately, this does not prevent outside parties from *sending* sensitive information to a CSE employee via e-mail.)

It could also be addressed by foregoing the convenience of standard e-mail protocols and building an e-mail subsystem into the site's architecture. This subsystem would likely route all e-mails to outside parties to a "my mailbox" icon available to logged-in users. Users would be forced to use that icon to receive and send e-mails to CSE personnel, allowing the site to protect the information through standard encryption.

How CSE employees access e-mail messages sent to them by outside parties is also at issue. Whether all CSE employees have access to Internet-accessible e-mail is one part of the issue. It has been reported that this is being addressed by creating an Internet e-mail gateway to allow all ACSES users to send and receive Internet e-mail. If this is true, then it will be possible to route messages from site users to CSE employees' mailboxes. The other part of the issue is how CSE employees are expected to (or allowed to) respond to e-mails. If CSE workers are allowed to respond directly to a client's e-mail address, then the issues about sensitivity of data apply. Alternatives include allowing CSE employees to respond to e-mails using the site only (requiring that all CSE staff access the site) or allowing CSE staff to respond via e-mail, but somehow routing that through the site, thereby avoiding sending out unencrypted e-mails.

## Function: ACSES Data Interface

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the ability to retrieve ACSES case data and offer these data to CSE-specific functions for use in presenting information to site users. The site must also offer an interface that allows CSE-specific functions to send updates to ACSES.

### *Business Rules*

***Retrieving Data from ACSES.*** Given an ACSES case ID, a category (payment information, arrears balance, etc.), and zero or more secondary keys (SSN, begin date, end date), the ACSES Data Interface will query ACSES and return a predefined set of data. Each "category" is basically a predefined query that will return a standard set of information in a standard format. The returned data set is returned to the requesting function for its use in completing its work.

***Sending Data to ACSES.*** As with queries, there will be predefined "update sets" that serve to allow specific data items in specific data sets in ACSES to be updated. To send an update to ACSES, the CSE-specific function calls the update function, passing the requisite information in the call. Error codes will be returned to the caller if ACSES could not be updated for any reason.

### *Policy Issues*

For data retrieval, does the interface need to have up-to-the-minute accuracy, or can an overnight process work? By overnight process, we mean that a batch job of some sort would query ACSES and bring down, to intermediate storage, the subset of ACSES data that is needed to satisfy any query the site can generate. Web site queries then go against the intermediate storage. This can improve performance, security, and give the site an ability to weather ACSES downtime without interrupting service to users. Other states have used an overnight process with satisfactory results.

During updates, is message queuing or some other "guaranteed delivery" technology called for? This would be necessary to allow all Web site functions to be accessible even during ACSES downtime.

## FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STAKEHOLDER FEATURES

Below we list, in the order outlined in Exhibit III-1, functional requirements for the features identified by stakeholders and DCSE as important. These features will form the basis on which the design phase of this project will proceed.

## Feature 1: Online Inquiry Function to Display Case Status (CP, NCP, and Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to view the current status of a case. Status can include information such as where the case is relative to obtaining an order (e.g., intake, paternity establishment, order establishment, enforcement); the case class (e.g., public assistance, nonpublic assistance, non-IV-D, foster care, etc.); the NCP's locate status (e.g., address located, employer located, not located); whether the case is open or closed; and whether the order is for arrears or current support. This function may also need to allow the user to view related case history information, such as recent actions (case chronology) related to order establishment, recent court actions, or other functions. It may also need to allow the user to view pending court actions related to the case.

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID, so that the case information can be retrieved.

On the back end, a mechanism for retrieving and decoding the case status must be available to implement the feature. The mechanism may also need to retrieve a large, variable number of recent case events and a variable number of pending court actions.

### *State/County Processes*

A process must use a case number to retrieve from ACSES the case information.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know the child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must use a case number to identify the case status information to display.

### *Policy Issues*

What types of status information to display (case function, NCP locate status, obligation status, case notes/logs/chronology, pending court actions, etc.) must be determined. Whether different information is displayed to different stakeholders must be determined.

## Feature 2: Online Inquiry Function to Display Last Payment Amount and Date (CP, NCP, and Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to view the date and amount of the last payment received on the case. For CPs, the feature will display the date and amount of the last payment sent by the FSR to the CP. For NCPs, the feature will display the date and amount of the last payment received by the FSR from the NCP. This function should be functionally equivalent to the Last Payment function for obligees and obligors in the existing voice response system. For other states, the feature will display both the date and amount received by the FSR as well as the date and amount of the payment sent to the CP (or other state).

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID, so that the payment information can be retrieved.

On the back end, a mechanism for identifying the most recent payment received on a case must be available to implement the feature. This mechanism could retrieve information using the same logic used to retrieve the information for the Last Payment function for Obligees in the existing voice response system.

### *State/County Processes*

A process must use a case number to retrieve from ACSES the date and amount of the last payment.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know their child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must identify a payment to display using case number.

### *Policy Issues*

To maintain consistency across external user interfaces, the payment presented by this function should be the same payment presented by the existing voice response system.

## Feature 3: Online Inquiry Function to Display Payment History on Case (CP, NCP, and Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to view the payment history for the case. This function should be functionally similar to the Last Two Payments function in the existing voice response system, but extending for at least the previous 12 months. The user must have the ability to select the range of payments to be displayed.

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID, so that the payment history can be retrieved.

On the back end, a mechanism for identifying the payments received for at least the last 12 months on a case must be available to implement the feature. This mechanism needs to be capable of retrieving a potentially large, variable number of payments.

### *State/County Processes*

A process must use a case number to retrieve from ACSES at least the last 12 months of payments received on a case.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know their child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must use a case number to identify the payments to display.

### *Policy Issues*

What payment information to display (payment dates, amount, method, source, check number, status, distribution, disbursement, etc.) must be determined. It could be as simple as the date and amount, such as is currently presented by the voice response system. To maintain consistency across external user interfaces, the last two payments presented by this function should be the same as presented by the existing voice response system. In addition, selection range criteria (by month, year or free from) must be determined.

## Feature 4: Financial Statement (CP, NCP, and Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a consolidated statement of financial activity on a case. The goal is to demonstrate the transactions resulting in the arrears balance for a particular case. Elements may include date and amount of all payments, credits, and adjustments and the arrears balance. The statement must be logically organized and easy to understand. The user must be able to print a statement that is essentially uniform across browsers and printers.

The ability to submit a question or comment on the financial statement is desirable, although not required.

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID to enable the case-related financial statement to be created and displayed.

Appropriate caveats as to timeliness and accuracy of information must be produced and displayed.

### *State/County Processes*

The State (FSR) and counties must allocate responsibility for responding to customer service questions concerning the financial statement.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know their child support case number (or case details).

**CSE:**
None noted.

### *Policy Issues*

It must be determined what elements of the financial history of the case should be displayed, whether and when to collapse or hide transactions resulting in no change to the arrears balance, and how interest on arrears is to be dealt with where different counties have different policies for imposing/collecting interest.

## Feature 5: Online Inquiry Function to Display the Current Support Obligation Amount on Case (CP, NCP, and Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to view the current support obligation amount on a case and the date the next payment is due. This function should be functionally similar to the Monthly Obligation function in the existing voice response system.

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID so that the current support obligation amount can be retrieved.

On the back end, a mechanism for identifying the current support obligation amount on a case must be available to implement the feature.

### *State/County Processes*

A process must use a case number to retrieve from ACSES the current support obligation amount on a case.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know the child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must use a case number to identify the current support obligation amount to display.

### *Policy Issues*

It must be determined whether to display a breakdown of the current support obligation (child support, spousal support, medical support, arrears payment plan, cost payment plan, etc.) or some combination of amounts. The feature could be implemented to present the same monthly support obligation and monthly arrears due currently presented by the voice response system.

To maintain consistency across external user interfaces, the amounts presented by this function should be consistent with the amounts presented by the existing voice response system.

### Feature 6: Form to Change Address or Other Profile Information (CP and NCP)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to change their address and other profile information.

In designing this function, a distinction must be made between information that might update ACSES and information that is strictly operational information for the site itself. For example, a change of address for an individual who is a party on a child support case would naturally need to get routed to ACSES. In contrast, site preferences such as "allow javascript" (fictional feature) will not be significant to ACSES and are useful only in controlling the user's experience when using the site.

Updating of site preferences (information that is not also ACSES-specific) is handled by the "update profile" feature described under the "Site Infrastructure" section. The remainder of this functional requirement deals only with the updating of address information.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged in to use this function. He or she provides updated information for address and phone number and chooses "submit." The information is immediately written to the user's "local" profile without verification. The information is also sent to ACSES via a mechanism to be determined. The following table presents possible options for this mechanism:

| Mechanism | Notes |
|---|---|
| (1) Middleware connection | The data are written directly to ACSES using middleware. While this offers the highest amount of automation, several respondents to the survey expressed concern about immediately updating the child support system using self-reported information as offering some parties a way to "game" the system. |
| (2) E-mail to worker | The address is e-mailed to the caseworker of record. He or she validates the address then updates ACSES through normal means. |

| Mechanism | Notes |
|---|---|
| (3) Site queue | This is basically a hybrid of the middleware and e-mail options. In this option, address updates are queued in the site, and an e-mail is sent to the caseworker of record. He or she must validate the address and then access an administrative function on the site that sends the address to ACSES through a middleware interface. |

It is also possible to use a combination of approaches depending on the source of the information. For example, it may be reasonable to accept CP-reported information as accurate and send it directly to ACSES (via Option 1), while subjecting NCP information to stricter validation and sending it through either Option 2 or Option 3.

### *State/County Processes*

The county child support worker must validate the address in two of the scenarios discussed above. An alternative process might involve creating a special unit to handle these verifications and route the e-mails to that unit. It is likely that this unit would be extremely small, and would need other duties to stay busy.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must log into the system.
- Must provide updated address information.
- Assert the information is true and correct.

**CSE:**

None noted.

### *Policy Issues*

The advisability of directly updating ACSES from client-reported data must be determined.

Options 2 and 3 involve some possible added burden on county child support workers.

## Feature 7: Online Inquiry Function to Display the Last Payment Distribution on Case (CP and NCP)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to view the distribution of the last payment on a case. This function would display the date of the payment, the amount received from the NCP, the amount distributed to the CP, and the amount retained by the State or sent to another state.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID, so that the payment information can be retrieved.

On the back end, a mechanism for identifying the last payment on a case must be available to implement the feature.

*State/County Processes*

A process must use a case number to retrieve from ACSES the last payment information on a case.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know the child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must use a case number to identify the last payment information to display.

*Policy Issues*

It must be determined whether to display a further breakdown of the amounts distributed (type of recovery, type of current support and arrears paid, etc.) or some combination of amounts.

To maintain consistency across external user interfaces, the amounts presented by this function should be consistent with the amounts presented by the existing voice response system.

## Feature 8: Form to Establish Direct Deposit (CP)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer CPs the ability to establish direct deposit of payments into their checking or savings accounts.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged in to perform this function.

The user identifies the case for which direct deposit must be set up. He or she provides financial institution information (transit, routing, and account numbers) and submits the information. The direct deposit election information is routed to the FSR so it can complete the initiation of the direct deposit.

*State/County Processes*

The FSR currently offers direct deposit, which should continue to be used.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must provide sufficient banking information to allow direct deposit to be initiated.

**CSE:**

- Through the FSR, provides a mechanism to perform direct deposits of child support payments to clients.

*Policy Issues*

Direct deposit is generally initiated by a signed hard-copy form. Can clients be allowed to sign up for direct deposit entirely online and never provide a legal signature, or must a signature be obtained?

## Feature 9: Form to Establish Automated Withdrawal (NCP)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the NCP the ability to establish and initiate an automated withdrawal from their checking account. (Note: During the focus groups the NCP group clearly expressed the opinion that this should not be an automated recurring withdrawal, but rather one done only at their direction. While this is perhaps at odds with the traditional definition of *"automated withdrawal,"* we are respecting that opinion in this functional requirement—withdrawals are done only upon initiation by the client.)

### *Business Rules*

There are two steps to fulfilling this function:
1) The withdrawal authorization information is set up and
2) The user initiates a withdrawal (payment) as needed.

***Set Up Withdrawal Authorization Information.*** The user must be logged in to use this function. After logging in, the user enters their banking information (routing number, transit number, account number, etc.) and agrees to the terms and conditions for automated withdrawals. Once he or she accepts the terms, the withdrawal authorization information is stored with the user's profile.

***Initiate a Withdrawal.*** The user must be logged in to use this function. The function is only available to users who have previously set up their withdrawal authorization information. The user chooses a case upon which he or she intends to make a payment. He or she enters an amount and submits the transaction. The EFT transaction is transmitted to the FSR for processing.

### *State/County Processes*

None noted.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**
- Must provide withdrawal authorization information.
- Must agree to the terms and conditions.
- Initiates withdrawals as needed.

**CSE:**

- Provides a mechanism, via the FSR, to accept EFT payments.

### *Policy Issues*

Automated withdrawal is generally initiated by a signed hard-copy form. A standard form for use with NCP financial institutions may need to be created. Can clients be allowed to sign up for automated withdrawal entirely online and never provide a legal signature, or must a signature be obtained?

## Feature 10: Online Form to Contact Caseworker to Request Information or Make Comment (CP, NCP, and Other States)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user the ability to send their caseworker a message requesting and/or providing case-specific information. This facility must be available on the site itself—it should not assume the presence of an e-mail client separate from the browser and should work as long as the minimum browser configuration is used.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility. He or she must also provide a case ID, so that the lookup of the caseworker can be performed.

Certain "frequently used" topics will be available for the user to select as their subject line. The body of the e-mail will allow any arbitrary text to be typed in (up to a reasonable maximum limit to be determined later). Attachments are not supported.

On the back end, a mechanism for identifying the primary caseworker for each case must be available to implement the feature. This mechanism may also need to support lookups by "communication category" if it is deemed necessary to route certain categories of communications to workers other than the primary caseworker. A second (or combined) mechanism for identifying the e-mail address for each caseworker must also be available.

*State/County Processes*

Depending on the category of the query, the message may need to be routed to appropriate county or State staff (or contractor staff such as those with FSR). Staff will need to be able to respond to users either directly or through a proxy (e.g., dedicated customer service staff).

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must know their child support case number.

**CSE:**

- Must identify an individual to whom communication must be routed. This may be done by case number (e.g., the primary caseworker) or by category of question, or by a mixture of both.
- Must provide all workers who are identified as recipients or respondents to client communications with an Internet-accessible e-mail mailbox.

### *Policy Issues*

Whether all caseworkers have access to Internet-accessible e-mail is not known. Some sort of universal access to e-mail is implied by the feature, and because Internet e-mail is likely to be the common denominator among the users with whom caseworkers are communicating, Internet-accessible e-mail is required. If this is not available, it will complicate the design and development of this feature.

Is it possible to route all messages on a case to the primary caseworker, or is it necessary to implement a more complicated scheme, where both the category of question and the case ID must be considered?

## Feature 11: Online Form for Application for Services (CP and Public)

### *Functional Requirement*

The user must be presented a form to complete that captures the data elements required in the hard copy application for services. The form must be accessible without logging on. Although not necessary, it would be desirable if the user could save partial responses and complete the application at a later time. The interface should instruct the user on the information and format needed to complete the form. Where practical, the form should confirm data entered and allow the user to correct any errors. Submission of the form should be confirmed and the user should be advised of the next steps and anticipated time frame for response. If a signature is deemed necessary, the user must be able to print the form.

### *Business Rules*

The application information must be routed to the appropriate caseworker (based on county?) for further processing. The system should generate a unique identifier to the user for retrieving a partially completed form. Where appropriate, form information should be capable of being moved into ACSES without rekeying. An ACSES intake function may have to be programmed to accomplish this. Creation of a new case should invoke a process to provide user credentials to the Web site.

### *State/County Processes*

County staff will need to take the online application and invoke traditional processes to evaluate the information and, where appropriate, create a new case on the system.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Complete all required fields in the application form.
- Sign the printed form if necessary.

**CSE:**

- Act on the application in the same manner as a hard copy request for services.

### *Policy Issues*

The application may need to be printed and physically signed to initiate a case in ACSES.

### Feature 12: Form to Report Employee Termination (Employers)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a form to report the termination of an employee who has a connection to a State child support case. Employer information must be prepopulated based on the login. The form must require the employer to enter the employee name, SSN, and case number(s). The form will require the date of termination. The form will ask for but not require information about new employment for the employee.

Optionally, the user could access a list of employees for whom current income assignments (for the employer) are active and select the employee whose termination is being reported. This would populate the form with existing employee/case information and make reporting easier for the user.

On submission of the form a confirmation page will be displayed repeating the entries made by the user. The confirmation will allow any incorrect or incomplete information to be corrected. The confirmation can be printed for the user's records if desired.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

A mechanism may need to be established to verify termination. This may consist of an alert to the appropriate caseworker (through ACSES), who can then do a manual verification. Verification results in cessation of income assignments and other established consequences of termination notice.

*State/County Processes*

A county caseworker must view the notice of termination and verify termination.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.

**CSE:**

- Must take action to verify termination.
- Must invoke existing processes that flow from termination.

- Must invoke processes that flow from notice of new CP information (such as new employer).

### Policy Issues

State may consider automating business rules flowing from termination without requiring manual verification.

## Feature 13: Form to Verify Employment (Employers)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a form to verify employment for a person who has a connection to a State child support case. The employer must receive notification (by e-mail) of a request to verify employment. The user must then log on and be able to access the form for the requested verification. Employer information must be prepopulated based on the login. The form must display the name and SSN for the person whose employment is to be verified and require the employer to affirm (or deny) the fact of employment and, if applicable, provide the date of employment and other required information.

The application must provide notice when a request for verification is ignored.

On submission of the form, a confirmation page must be displayed repeating the entries made by the user. The site must allow any inaccurate or incomplete information to be corrected. The confirmation can be printed for the user's records if desired.

The application must provide a mechanism to allow the user to stop receiving online requests for employment verification.

*Business Rules*

The employer must agree (through a registration process) to accept employment verifications online. A mechanism must be in place to send requests for verification and route verification forms to the online system instead of by mail.

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

Online verification of employment automatically invokes existing processes (such as wage assignment). A mechanism needs to be established to alert the appropriate caseworker (through ACSES) of the verification.

*State/County Processes*

A county caseworker must view online employment verification.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must have affirmatively agreed to accept verifications online.

**CSE:**

- Must invoke existing processes that flow from verification.
- Must invoke processes that flow from notice that employment was not verified.

### *Policy Issues*

State may consider automating business rules flowing from verification without requiring caseworker intervention.

## Feature 14: Online Income Assignments (Employers)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a way to elect to receive income assignments online. The employer must receive notification (by e-mail) of one or more new income assignments. The user must then log on and be able to access the income assignment forms. The employer must acknowledge receipt of the income assignment. The form must display the same information as the current paper form.

The application may provide an alert or notice when an income assignment is ignored (not acknowledged).

The application may provide the ability for an employer to add new income assignment information to a list of employees with child support matters for use in other situations (such as reporting termination).

The application must provide a mechanism to allow the user to stop receiving online income assignments.

*Business Rules*

The employer must agree (through a registration process) to accept income assignments online. A mechanism must be in place to send notices of new assignments and route forms to the online system instead of by mail.

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

A mechanism must be in place to notify a registered employer by e-mail that an income assignment has been posted.

*State/County Processes*

A county caseworker/(system) must initiate online income assignment.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.
- Must have affirmatively agreed to accept verifications online.

- Must acknowledge receipt of online income assignment.

**CSE:**

- Must invoke existing processes that flow from income assignment.
- Must invoke processes that flow from notice that income assignment not acknowledge/acted upon.

### *Policy Issues*

None noted.

## Feature 15: Employer Pay-by-Web (Employers)

*Functional Requirement*

The site should allow registered employers to create and submit a list of employees and amounts for whom income assignments have been sent. Submission of the list authorizes the State to withdraw the total for that pay period from the employer's bank account. The submission and withdrawal does not occur automatically. The employer must submit the list each pay period to invoke the withdrawal. Once established, the employer must be able to edit the list each pay period and adjust amounts and add/delete participants. Registration and submission of payment authorizations must be secure. The user must be able to cancel participation in this form of payment.

*Business Rules*

The employer must be registered with the site.

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

Upon submission of a payment authorization, the system must create and transmit a file that can interface with current mechanisms for updating ACSES with similar payment information from employers who submit manually or through existing ACH transactions.

*State/County Processes*

None noted.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- User must authorize this payment method.
- User must register with the site and create initial employee list.

**CSE:**

- CSE or FSR may have to maintain hard copy authorization form.
- CSE or FSR will have to make necessary arrangements to accept employer file and invoke withdrawal from employer's account.
- CSE or FSR will have to process request to cancel online payment method.

*Policy Issues*

A signed authorization form may be required to permit withdrawal of authorized amounts from the user's bank account.

## Feature 16: Last Payment Made by Employer to FSR (Employers)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a view of the last payment made to the FSR pursuant to wage assignments. The site must display the date the FSR received the payment and the amount received. Where an employer is paying for multiple employees, it would be desirable to be able to drill down to a list breaking down the payment by each employee name/case number and amount.

*Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

Appropriate caveats as to timeliness and accuracy of information must be produced and displayed.

*State/County Processes*

The State and FSR must allocate responsibility for responding to customer service questions concerning the employer payment information.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.

**CSE:**
None noted.

*Policy Issues*

The data requested may not be readily available from current ACSES tables. It may be necessary to create an extract from payment information batched into ACSES from the FSR. This may be subject to negotiation with the current FSR vendor.

For this feature to function, employers must correctly identify themselves when they make a payment.

## Feature 17: Payment History of Employer to FSR (Employers)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the user a view of the payment made to the FSR during the last 12 months pursuant to wage assignment(s). The site must display the date the FSR received each payment and the amount received. Where an employer is paying for multiple employees, it would be desirable to be able to drill down from each payment to a list breaking down the payment by each employee name/case number and amount.

### *Business Rules*

The user must be logged into the site to use this facility.

The login must be associated with an employer identifier.

Appropriate caveats as to timeliness and accuracy of information must be produced and displayed.

### *State/County Processes*

State and FSR must allocate responsibility for responding to customer service questions concerning the employer payment information.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must have obtained login credentials to access the Web site.

**CSE:**
None noted.

### *Policy Issues*

The data requested may not be readily available from current ACSES tables. It may be necessary to create an extract from payment information batched into ACSES from the FSR. This may be subject to negotiation with the current FSR vendor.

For this feature to function, employers must correctly identify themselves when they make a payment.

## Feature 18: Online Interstate Forms Submission (Other States)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer other state professionals the ability to submit interstate transmittals online.

### *Business Rules*

User must be logged into the site to use this function.

The user identifies the ACSES case (if available) for which the form is to be filled out. The user selects the interstate form that they would like to submit electronically. He or she receives a data entry form that allows the entry of all the fields on the interstate form. Upon submitting the information, the document is rendered to PDF and shipped via e-mail or other electronic means to the appropriate child support unit. The initiating user can also choose to download or print a copy for their own records.

### *State/County Processes*

None noted.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must log into the system.
- For follow-up transactions, must identify the ACSES case for which documents are required.
- Must enter the appropriate data to complete the document.

**CSE:**

- Caseworker invokes the normal procedures for processing incoming interstate transmittals.

### *Policy Issues*

Does offering this functionality online conflict with State or federal policies surrounding the use of CSENet?

## Feature 19: Form to Assist with Locate (CP and Public)

### *Functional Requirement*

The site must offer individuals the ability to submit locate information on NCPs.

### *Business Rules*

The user fills out an online form allowing them to input locate information on an individual known to be a party to a child support case. He or she identifies the individual by name and supplies details regarding where the individual is living, is working, or can be found. A "notes" area allows the user to add free-form comments to the locate tip.

A mechanism must be in place to determine which case the tip involves and route the tip to the appropriate caseworker.

### *State/County Processes*

The tip is formulated as an e-mail and sent to the child support worker of record.

### *Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must enter the appropriate data to complete the transaction.

**CSE:**

- Caseworker invokes normal procedures to process incoming locate information, including any called-for verification steps.

### *Policy Issues*

Should the submitter be allowed to submit anonymously? If not, how does the site authenticate members of the general public?

To positively identify the NCP, sufficient specific information would need to be provided along with the locate information. Would we require things such as SSN or names of the children on the case, etc.?

### Feature 20: Search for Local Child Support Agency's Address and Phone (Public)

*Functional Requirement*

The site must offer the ability for users to search for the local child support office's address and phone number.

*Business Rules*

The user does not have to be logged in to use this function. The user identifies their county or a nearby population center. Based upon the county the user chooses, the associated county child support office's contact information is returned. The information returned will include the office's main phone number, walk-in office address, and mailing address (if different).

*State/County Processes*

None noted.

*Rules for Stakeholders/CSE Responsibilities*

**Stakeholders:**

- Must be able to identify their county or a nearby population center.

**CSE:**

- Must supply and maintain accurate contact information for all child support county offices.

*Policy Issues*

None noted.

# Section IV
# Conclusion and Next Steps

## CONCLUSION

This needs assessment has identified a broad range of e-commerce features that DCSE stakeholders would find useful. Given the limited selection of interactive components in the current Web offering, it is not surprising that stakeholders desired a large percentage of the possible choices offered in the online survey. As would be expected, users focused on the financial information as most important. Somewhat unexpectedly, however, a significant number of stakeholders expressed a need for electronic communication with the appropriate caseworker as a priority. In fact, this was the top request for custodial parties. It is also important to note that many of the stakeholder groups thought that more complete and clear information about the rights and responsibilities of all parties in the child support process was very important in any new Web offering.

Many of the interactive features identified as important in this needs assessment mirror what other states have begun to provide to their child support communities. Initial approaches in several of these states leveraged systems and data from existing voice response technologies to provide both financial information and selected case status updates. These were and are important first steps in enhancing overall service and improving delivery efficiency for those involved in child support matters. Most of these sites/functions are relatively new. There is little empirical data to ascertain how much of an impact such online features are having on customer satisfaction or on program operations.

Colorado has an opportunity to make significant progress by taking a wider view of the challenges and opportunities of e-commerce systems. While it is important to match the features to be developed with the expressed desires of potential users, it is equally important to design and build the system in a way that offers flexibility to add or modify functionality as the needs of stakeholders and the strategic vision of DCSE change. Considerable thought and analysis should be devoted to the infrastructure of the system so that components of functionality are designed that can be adapted to future needs.

It is equally important to consider the process issues that accompany technical innovations. Implementation of new technologies can only be effective if done with knowledge of, planning for, and acceptance by the people and processes that are impacted. These process issues are particularly challenging in states where program responsibilities are widely distributed (such as in Colorado, where counties administer the child support program).

## NEXT STEPS

### Assembling Work Groups

This needs assessment was only possible with the assistance and cooperation of our State sponsors and the help of many county and FSR managers and staff. The next phase of the project will require even more interaction with these individuals and others. Creating an effective design for the e-commerce system will require ongoing consultation and input from both technical and program staff. Each component of functionality has associated process issues and many have policy implications, in addition to the obvious technical challenges and options. To produce a design that can be used as the road map for a real system, we must work through these issues and reach consensus on the approach that most closely matches the State's vision.

We propose that the design phase include a number of informal working sessions with State and county personnel with appropriate expertise. Sessions should be focused around common functionality and business issues. A breakdown of such sessions might include:

- ✓ Platform/Infrastructure
- ✓ Look and Feel/Web Standards
- ✓ Authentication
- ✓ Financial Information
- ✓ Case Status Information
- ✓ Employer Features
- ✓ Caseworker Communication
- ✓ Interstate Issues

By working in partnership with the State to resolve and document process and policy issues and reach consensus on design options, we can produce a design document that will provide a blueprint for the construction of the system, whether in-house or by outside vendors.

### Needs Assessment as a Continuing Process

The needs assessment is, by necessity, limited to a fixed point in time. In a project that may span a significant period from design to construction, it is important to make user input an ongoing part of the project life cycle. We believe it would be of immense assistance, where practical, to continue to get at least informal feedback from stakeholders on the design and impact of e-commerce features. This input will provide further validation that the system, once built, will meet the needs of its intended audience. As we prepare the design, including refined functional requirements and screen mock-ups, we would propose to seek the input of stakeholders to assist in ensuring the site is designed in a way to maximize effective use. We will also continue to monitor sites in other states to identify innovative approaches that may inform our design efforts. We encourage the State to do the same.