

HB22-1360

Retaining Percentage Of Federal Child Support Payments

WHY THIS BILL IS NEEDED

- Efficiencies that enable caseworkers to spend more time serving and supporting their clients, and less time filling out forms and searching databases, mean that more children in Colorado will receive full and timely child support payments.
- Less administrative work means caseworkers can spend more time working with parents to support their children.
- The better Colorado is at administering child support the more likely Colorado will continue to receive, and potentially receive, additional incentives from the Federal Government.

THE PROBLEMS

DHS has already identified technology enhancements that will help child support caseworkers better serve and support their clients. Some of these enhancements include:

- Real Property Project: currently real property liens are a manual process, this project will automate real property searches and property owner verification through the child support lien network to help increase child support collections.
- 2Generation Screens Enhancement: this will give case workers the ability to record results from the family resource assessment and provide comprehensive case management to families in the program.
- Child support chatbot: this would allow for customers to get quick answers reducing the number of county phone calls and prioritizing calls that need a caseworker to answer.
- Colorado is not earning federal incentive payments to the degree to which it is eligible due to underreporting of certain child support cases.

THE SOLUTION

Current law requires DHS to pass through 100% of the federal child support incentive payments received by the state to county departments of human or social services. The state will be receiving a new federal funding source beginning in 2024 that *could be used* to help fund needed IT efficiencies and upgrades.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES

Beginning in federal fiscal year 2024, the bill will allow the DHS to retain a percentage of the new federal incentives the state receives to be invested directly in the maintenance, operation and improvements of the Automated Child Support Enforcement System (ACSES) used by the state and all counties.

The bill will require DHS to create a process to jointly approve the retention and use of any incentive money retained by the state. The process will be developed by a statewide association of county human service directors and the DHS.

Beginning in 2025, DHS will report on each project funded by the federal incentive money to the Joint Technology Committee on an annual basis.

The bill does NOT take away money from Child Support payments that the counties use.