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Statewide Child Support Collection Rate Reaches Milestone

COLUMBUS, OHIO – With the close of federal fiscal year 2019 on Sept. 30, Ohio has joined a select group of states that collect at least 70% of current child support owed, well above the national average of 65.8%, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced today.

The ODJFS Office of Child Support collects and distributes nearly \$2 billion annually to more than 1 million Ohio children. The program is administered locally by 88 county child support enforcement agencies, which also locate noncustodial parents, establish legal paternity, establish child and medical support orders, and enforce support orders.

The Office of Child Support led a “Project I-70” initiative to help county agencies strive to achieve the 70% rate, which also could lead to additional federal funding. The office established collection goals for each county and began providing them with regular performance reports highlighting their progress. It also encouraged county agencies to develop innovative processes and share best practices. To make that easier, the office conducts bimonthly videoconferences on-site at individual agencies to highlight the significant efforts to reach the target.

“A higher collection rate means more child support is reaching the children who need it,” said ODJFS Director Kimberly Hall. “This achievement is just another example of how state/county partnerships benefit Ohioans.”

Most child support is collected through income-withholding orders issued to noncustodial parents’ employers. However, Ohio recently gave noncustodial parents the option of paying child support online at oh.smartchildsupport.com. Parents also can make payments at their local agency.

Custodial parents can opt to have their child support directly deposited to a bank account or to a debit card. Because of a change in vendors, families received new debit cards in June. They also gained the ability to order companion cards for family members and to make free withdrawals from in-network ATMs. The new cards have enhanced fraud protection features, as well.

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The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services manages vital programs that strengthen Ohio families. These include job training and employment services, unemployment insurance, cash and food assistance, child care, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support services.

