



California  
Department of  
Child Support  
Services

***Supporting  
California's  
Children***

FALL 2005

## State Disbursement Unit

### ***Fact Sheet***

Federal law requires states to implement a single statewide automated child support system, including a single location for processing all child support collections and payments. The delay in meeting this requirement has resulted in California paying more than \$750 million in penalties. Those federal penalties will stop when the new statewide system is in place.

To meet federal requirements, the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) is implementing a central site for payment processing called the State Disbursement Unit (SDU). Implementation of the SDU will begin in Fall 2005 and will be operational statewide in Summer 2006.

The SDU will be responsible for collection and disbursement of all child support payments currently processed by the state's local child support agencies, plus all wage assignment payments for private child support orders not currently processed by local child support agencies.

The system will provide enhanced services to families receiving support and to parents making support payments, as well as employers.

Children and families will enjoy several benefits, such as:

- Web and toll-free call center access to information.
- Immediate access to direct deposit services for families receiving support payments if not already available.
- Beginning in Summer 2006, families can get instant access to support dollars through electronic payment cards, similar to ATM or debit cards, which can be used at ATM machines as well as retail outlets.
- Parents who make support payments will be able to access accounts on-line, make payments using credit cards over a secure internet connection and set up electronic payment transfers from a checking or savings account.

Employers will be able to electronically transfer payments for wage withholding directly to the state and will have access to an Electronic Help Desk.

### Implementation

To minimize impacts to service and ensure smooth local transitions, the system will be phased in statewide in a series of waves. Statewide implementation will be complete in Summer 2006. As counties transition, outreach is being provided jointly by DCSS and local child support agencies.

When local child support agencies transition to the SDU, child support payments will be forwarded daily via express mail services to the SDU for processing. This extra step during system transition will add a few days to when families usually receive their child support payments.

- Eleven counties have volunteered to be part of Wave 1 transition to the new system in Fall 2005. Wave 1 counties are: Amador, Alpine, Calaveras, Sierra, Nevada, Siskiyou, Modoc, Kings, Tulare, San Joaquin and Santa Clara.
- Wave 2 counties will transition in early 2006. Wave 2 counties are: Inyo/Mono, Lassen, Tehama, El Dorado, Santa Cruz/San Benito, Merced, Stanislaus, Kern, Fresno and Orange.

In Summer 2006 when SDU implementation is complete, child support payments handled by local child support agencies and all wage withholding payments will be redirected to the SDU.

For more information, log on to [www.childsup.ca.gov](http://www.childsup.ca.gov).