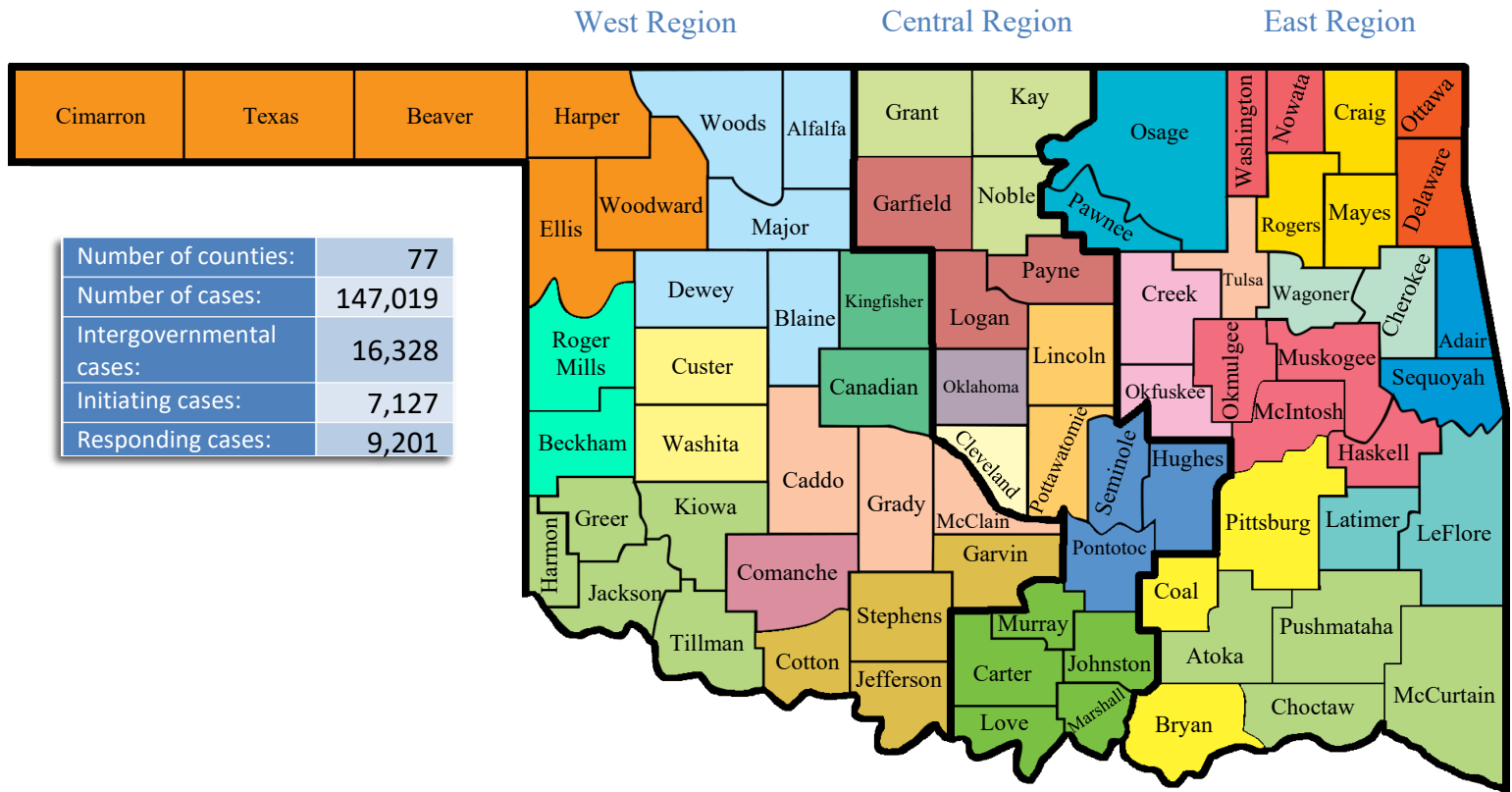


What Child Support Teammates in Other States Should Know About Oklahoma

2025



Structure of State IV-D Program

Oklahoma's Title IV-D Child Support Program is state administered by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS), specifically through its Child Support Services (CSS) division. Authority for Oklahoma's IV-D program is established under 56 OK Stat § 237 (2024). Administrative Rules are proposed by CSS, then must be approved by OKDHS, the Oklahoma Legislature and the Oklahoma Governor.

Within OKDHS CSS, the Center for Professional Development conducts essential internal audit and performance measure reviews.

Oklahoma's Intergovernmental Central Registry (ICR) operates within the Child Support Services' Case Initiation Center (CIC), managing incoming intergovernmental referrals from other states, Tribal agencies, and international partners.

Oklahoma CSS maintains a statewide repository of case information through its Central Case Registry, as mandated by 43 O.S. § 112A. This registry encompasses all Title IV-D cases, and all non-IV-D paternity and/or child support orders established or modified within the state after October 1, 1998.

All IV-D and Non-IV-D payments are received by a vendor as the SDU. All records of payments received and distributed are available internally on the state case management system.

IV-D establishment and enforcement in Oklahoma is the responsibility of OKDHS CSS. The program's objective is to ensure consistent financial support for children through the establishment, modification, and enforcement of child support obligations. Oklahoma utilizes a comprehensive array of enforcement tools that are outlined in the Enforcement section below. Note: Oklahoma CSS is not currently able to administratively suspend driver's licenses.

CSS has a mechanism to pursue felony-level enforcement in specific cases of willful non-support. Under certain statutory criteria, CSS can refer cases to the local District Attorney for consideration of charges under Omission to Provide for a Child (21 O.S. § 852). The decision to prosecute ultimately rests with the respective District Attorney's office.

Interstate Central Registry

The decision to immediately process a petition or to hold it depends directly on the completeness of the received documentation.

If a petition arrives with minor missing information that doesn't prevent forward movement, the case is processed right away. Concurrently, a request for that missing information is sent to the state that initiated the petition. This keeps the case moving without unnecessary delays.

However, if critical information is missing or significant clarification is needed, the referral is held. In these instances, a formal request for the required documents or explanation is promptly sent. Referrals are held for up to 60 days, allowing the initiating state time to provide what's needed.

If the necessary information or clarification isn't received within that 60-day period, the referral is returned to the initiating state.

Between January 2025 and June 2025, Oklahoma's Interstate Central Registry processed an average of 39 new petitions each week.

Judicial and Administrative Processes

Oklahoma uses a combination of both judicial and administrative processes, with most offices primarily using the administrative process for establishing and enforcing support orders. This varies within the state depending on efficiency and local availability of administrative processes.

Paternity & Support Establishment Requirements

Oklahoma uses both district court and administrative processes for paternity and support establishment. Initiating jurisdictions can find a list of needed documentation on the OCSS Intergovernmental Forms Matrix: [INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORMS MATRIX](#)

Modification or Adjustment and Review

Oklahoma IV-D offices require specific documentation to proceed with a child support modification request. The process is primarily in administrative court but could also be pursued in District Court.

For intergovernmental cases, initiating partners must submit several federal forms. These are specified on the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) [Intergovernmental Forms Matrix](#).

For a request to modify and enforce an existing order, the following forms are generally required:

- Child Support Enforcement Transmittal #1 - Initial Request: A cover letter to refer the case to the responding state's central registry.
- Child Support Agency Confidential Information Form: This form safeguards personal, identifying information.
- Uniform Support Petition: The legal pleading needed for the responding state to initiate action.
- General Testimony: A form to provide detailed information and evidence to support the requested action.
- Personal Information Form for UIFSA § 311: Records personal identifiable information separately to avoid repetition.

Oklahoma CSS uses a standard motion to modify child support and a child support computation form. Additional information, such as income verification (pay stubs, tax returns), proof of medical insurance costs, and current and projected childcare costs, is often necessary as evidentiary support.

The Oklahoma Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is the administrative court that handles most child support modification hearings for OKDHS CSS cases. This entity operates separately from a district court. The final modified order is an administrative order.

A CSS Office uses district court for modification requests when:

- The local CSS office does not use the process of administrative hearings.
- A party objects to the administrative order.

If a party receives a motion to modify and disagrees with the proposed change, they can object to the administrative order. This leads to a formal hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) at the OAH.

During the objection process, parties can:

- Present evidence and information that supports their position.
- Contest the findings of the child support computation.

After the administrative hearing, the ALJ issues an administrative order. If a party is still not satisfied with the outcome of the OAH order, they have the right to appeal the administrative order to a district court within 30 days of the order being entered. This moves the case out of the administrative process and into the judicial system.

Medical Support

Per federal and state law, Oklahoma requires health insurance coverage for all children subject to child support orders. In cases in which the child is enrolled in Medicaid (known as SoonerCare), CSS may establish cash medical.

In cases in which private health insurance is being provided, the providing parent is credited for the premiums being expended on the children. This amount is calculated by subtracting the premium costs of parents and any other adults from the total, then dividing the remaining amount by the number of children receiving coverage and multiplying the amount per child by the number receiving coverage.

The health insurance must meet certain standards of coverage. Parents are excused from this requirement when either the health insurance is not reasonably accessible, or the cost of coverage would exceed 5% of that parent's income.

In non-TANF cases, CSS will enforce the medical portion of the order only, as well as provide paternity establishment and a provision for current support and support for a past period.

When a parent fails to voluntarily enroll their child in a health plan as ordered, CSS can use a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) to aid in the enrollment process. The NMSN is sent to the parent's employer. If the employer doesn't respond with the NMSN within 20 business days, or the insurer doesn't respond within 40 business days, CSS sends a non-compliance letter. If there is still no response within 10 business days of the non-compliance letter, CSS may pursue legal action to request the court impose fines of up to \$200 per month per child.

Other potential enforcement actions used by CSS include:

- License Revocation: A medical support order can be enforced through a license revocation action under state law. However, Oklahoma law does not allow CSS to revoke driver's licenses at this time.

- Contempt of Court: An indirect contempt of court action can be used to enforce an order for medical support.
- Modification: CSS may seek to modify an existing order if a review indicates it would result in an enforceable medical support order or if the child support order needs to be adjusted.
- TRICARE: For children eligible for TRICARE, CSS notifies the custodial person to contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office to enroll the child using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) registration process.

In cases where a parent's refusal to provide necessary information for health plan enrollment is due to a claim of family violence, CSS will seek a modification of the medical support order to request a cash medical order instead.

Termination of support – Law and Process

According to Oklahoma law, a current child support order generally ends when a child turns 18 years old. However, there are a few important exceptions:

- High School Attendance: If the child is still regularly enrolled and attending high school full-time at age 18, the support obligation continues until the child's 20th birthday or graduation, whichever comes first.
- Disabled Children: A court may order support to continue for a child with a severe mental or physical disability that prevents them from becoming self-supporting, even after they reach the age of majority.
- Emancipation: The support order can also terminate earlier if the child becomes legally emancipated.

While the child's age or graduation date is the legal trigger for the end of the support obligation, the process is not automatic.

- Administrative Process: Child Support Services (CSS) handles the termination administratively. Once the last child on a case reaches the age of majority and has graduated, or reaches the age of 20, the agency will update their system, the Oklahoma Support Information System (OSIS), to stop charging current support.
- Multi-child Orders: Per [Title 43, Section 118I\(C\)](#) of the Oklahoma Statutes, for orders with multiple children, the total support amount does not automatically decrease when one child ages out. A parent must request a modification of the order to recalculate the support amount for the remaining children. The modification will then be handled administratively by CSS or through the district court.

Oklahoma CSS sends a Notice to any responding or initiating state. This official letter informs the other state that the case may be closing. Additionally, an automated message is sent through CSENet to update the other state.

Case Closure and Non IV-D Cases

Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) Child Support Services (CSS) establishes, maintains, and closes case records per federal and state laws. CSS maintains records for all closed cases for a minimum of three years. However, CSS staff do not destroy closed case records unless the records meet the criteria for destruction in the CSS Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) and a list of records eligible for immediate destruction is posted on the State Services Division Infonet after approval is received from the State Records Administrator.

Oklahoma Child Support Services (CSS) maintains a Central Case Registry (CCR) for all Non-IV-D cases and child support orders established or modified in Oklahoma after October 1, 1998.

In non-IV-D cases, an attorney or a self-represented party must prepare a "Summary of Support Order" and submit it to the CCR. The CCR staff then records the support order amount and other information into the statewide automated system, allowing the Centralized Support Registry to properly issue payments. All records and information concerning both IV-D and non-IV-D recipients of these services are considered confidential.

The Oklahoma Child Support Services (CSS) may continue to enforce a child support order and maintain records even if all parties leave the state. Oklahoma will not close these child support cases unless they meet the closure criteria outlined in 45 CFR 303.11.

Interest, Fees & Costs

Oklahoma Child Support Services (CSS) may charge a 3% service fee, up to \$10 per month, on child support payments distributed to the CP. This fee does not apply to CPs who are receiving TANF or Medicaid.

Interest is collected and enforced on past-due Oklahoma court-ordered child support payments. The current interest rate is 2% simple interest per annum on any unpaid balances.

To allow for employer withholding schedules, interest does not accrue until arrearages exceed one month's current support.

CSS does not determine or collect interest on spousal support, cash medical support, or genetic testing fees.

CSS acknowledges the right of the CP and NCP to mutually agree, with court approval, to waive all or a portion of the interest owed to the CP. CSS may also negotiate the right to collect all or part of the interest owed to Oklahoma. All settlements must be formalized in a court order.

For orders established in other states, the law of the state that entered the order determines the amount and rate of interest due. In the absence of an Oklahoma order, CSS only collects interest on incoming interstate cases when the initiating agency calculates the interest owed and requests that CSS collect it.

Enforcement

In Oklahoma, child support cases are enforced through a variety of administrative and judicial measures to ensure payments are made. The most common methods are administrative, but court actions are used for more severe or willful non-compliance.

These enforcement actions are typically handled by Oklahoma's Child Support Services (CSS) without direct court intervention for each individual step.

- **Income Withholding Orders:** This is the most common and effective method.
- **Tax Refund Intercepts:** CSS can intercept a non-custodial parent's federal and state tax refunds and apply the money toward past-due child support.
- **License Suspension:** Oklahoma law allows for the suspension or denial of various professional and recreational licenses for non-payment. Oklahoma law does not allow CSS to suspend driver's licenses at this time.
- **Bank Levy (Freeze and Seize):** CSS can issue a bank levy to freeze and seize funds directly from their bank accounts to satisfy arrears debt. This is done through the Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM) program.
- **Liens:** CSS can place liens on real property, workers compensation or personal injury claims, and other assets. Oklahoma does not participate in the Child Support Lien Network (CSLN), but does have a mandatory reporting law applicable to insurance companies paying WC or PI claims.
- **Other Intercepts:** State law also allows for the interception of other payments, such as lottery winnings and unemployment benefits. Oklahoma's casinos are Tribal, and there is currently no compact for enforcement with any tribe. Therefore, Casino winnings are not subject to intercept.

When administrative remedies are insufficient, CSS can petition the court for judicial enforcement.

- **Indirect Civil Contempt:** This is the most common court-based remedy for non-payment.
- **Criminal Referral for Non-Support:** This is a more severe action, handled by the District Attorney's office.

Incarcerated Parents

Oklahoma has specific statutory framework that directly addresses child support for incarcerated parents, significantly departing from historical practices that often led to the accrual of uncollectible debt. This framework is codified in 43 O.S. § 118I(E).

Oklahoma's law provides for an automatic abatement of the child support obligation under certain conditions.

- **Rebuttable Presumption:** There is a rebuttable presumption that an obligor incarcerated for 180 or more consecutive days is unable to pay child support.
- **Without Court Action:** The abatement is triggered automatically, without the need for a separate motion or court order. The obligor's monthly support obligation is abated effective the first day of the month following their entry into custody.
- **Non-Accrual:** For the duration of the incarceration, the monthly support obligation does not accrue. This prevents the growth of new arrears during the period of incarceration.
- **Oklahoma as the Issuing State (Controlling Order):** If Oklahoma issued the original child support order and retains "continuing exclusive jurisdiction" (CEJ), then Oklahoma's abatement law applies, even if the parent is incarcerated in another state.

The automatic abatement does not apply under specific circumstances, which are critical for agencies to verify.

- **Incarceration for Child Support Non-Payment:** The law does not apply if the incarceration is a result of civil contempt for failure to pay child support or a criminal charge of omission to provide child support.
- **Victim-Based Crime:** Abatement is not presumed if the incarceration is for a crime where the obligee or the child was a victim.
- **Demonstrated Ability to Pay:** The presumption of inability to pay can be rebutted if it is shown that the incarcerated parent has the means to pay, such as from assets, passive income, or other sources.
- **Oklahoma as the Enforcing State (Out-of-State Order):** If a child support order was issued by another state and the obligor is incarcerated in Oklahoma, Oklahoma's abatement law does not apply.

Oklahoma's law also provides a grace period upon the obligor's release, acknowledging the challenges of re-entry.

- **90-Day Grace Period:** The monthly child support obligation reverts to the pre-incarceration amount beginning the first day of the month that is 90 calendar days following the release from incarceration.
- This statutory grace period is designed to provide the parent with a window to find employment, secure housing, and stabilize their financial situation before the full support obligation resumes.

Payment processing

Payments are divided among a noncustodial parent's (NCP) eligible obligations based on a set of allocation rules. This allocation depends on whether the payment comes from an Income Withholding Order (IWO), an IRS collection, or a standard payment method.

If the NCP has multiple cases, a payment is typically split between them. The system prioritizes payments each month to current child support, cash medical support, and spousal support across all eligible obligations. Any remaining funds during the month are then distributed to past-due support.

Oklahoma Child Support Services (CSS) processes payments for non-IV-D cases through the Centralized Support Registry. Payments received from an IWO for a non-IV-D case are allocated using the IWO model, while all other payments for non-IV-D cases are allocated using the standard model.

The IWO model is used for payments collected through an Income Withholding Order. The model follows a two-step process to allocate funds:

1. First, the payment is prorated among all eligible obligations to cover the unpaid portion of current monthly child support, cash medical support, and spousal support.
2. Next, any remaining amount from the collection is prorated to pay off the monthly payment plan for past support.

The standard model is used for all payments that are not collected through an IWO or federal tax intercepts. The standard model follows a three-step process:

1. The payment is first prorated each month to cover the unpaid portion of current child support, cash medical support, and spousal support.
2. Next, any remaining funds received during the month are prorated to cover the unpaid portion of the monthly payment plan for past-due support.
3. Finally, any funds remaining after the first two steps are prorated to cover the unpaid total debt.

Future Payments: If an NCP makes a payment intended for a future month's current support, those funds are applied to the future month only if there are no outstanding past-due

balances on any of their cases. If past-due balances exist, the payment is applied to those arrears instead.

Overpayments: An overpayment is defined as a payment to a CP, NCP, or other entity to which they were not entitled. This can be a misdirected payment, an erroneous payment from a bad check, or a payment based on an incorrect arrearage balance. If an overpayment occurs, CSS must return the excess amount to the payor within 45 calendar days after the over-collection is discovered.

Change of “Payee”

In Oklahoma, when a legal custodial person (CP) gives up physical custody of a child to another CP, the Oklahoma Child Support Services (CSS) redirects current child support payments to the new CP. For Oklahoma Orders, no Court Order is required. The person who has physical custody of the child on the first day of the month is entitled to that month's support obligation.

For CSS to redirect payments, the CP who is relinquishing custody must inform CSS of the change. The new CP must also submit an application for child support services if one is required. If the legal CP dies and another individual who is not the obligor assumes custody, CSS will establish a new support order with the new CP as the obligee. Pending the new support order and an application (if required), CSS will redirect current payments to the new CP.

If a noncustodial parent (NCP) notifies CSS they now have physical custody, CSS staff will attempt to confirm this change with the CP of record. Verification can be obtained through documents like school records or affidavits if the CP is unavailable. CSS will only change the CP of record after receiving convincing verification of the custody change and will not do so if there are indications of kidnapping.

CSS will amend the "Order/Notice to Withhold Income for Child Support" to stop withholding current support if an NCP obtains physical custody of all the children covered by the order, or if the parents reunite. This is not done if there is any indication of parental kidnapping or involuntary relinquishment of custody.

In Oklahoma, several public assistance programs require recipients to cooperate with the Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) Child Support Services (CSS) program. This cooperation is necessary for establishing paternity, and for establishing, modifying, or enforcing a support order.

The types of cases that require cooperation are:

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** A CP receiving TANF benefits must cooperate with CSS and assign their rights to support to OKDHS. Failure to cooperate in a TANF case can result in a reduction of the family's cash assistance by 25% of the

TANF payment standard. However, this requirement does not apply to non-parent CPs, such as grandparents, who are receiving TANF benefits.

- Title IV-E Foster Care: CSS automatically initiates child support cases for certified Title IV-E foster care.
- Non-TANF SoonerCare (Medicaid): When a CP applies for non-TANF SoonerCare (Medicaid) for themselves and their children, they must assign their medical support rights to the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) and cooperate in establishing paternity and obtaining medical support unless an exception exists. CPs who apply for non-TANF SoonerCare for their children only are not required to cooperate. If a parent receiving non-TANF Medicaid benefits fails to cooperate with CSS, they may have their own Medicaid benefits removed from the case. There is no penalty for non-cooperation in child-only non-TANF SoonerCare cases because adults are not included.

Some exceptions to the cooperation requirement for non-TANF SoonerCare (Medicaid) include:

- Pregnant and postpartum women who are eligible for SoonerCare.
- Individuals receiving continued medical benefits.
- Individuals who have been granted "good cause" for not cooperating.

Recent changes of note

Computer System info and Status and Usage of Portal Communication Tools

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) Child Support Services (CSS) uses the Oklahoma Support Information System (OSIS) as its statewide automated data processing and information retrieval system.

EDE (Electronic Document Exchange): Oklahoma uses EDE to securely request, send and receive documents, orders, and UIFSA Transmittals with other states.

QUICK (Query Interstate Cases for Kids): Oklahoma utilizes both the financial and case activity modules of QUICK.

OCSS Communication Center: Oklahoma uses Communication Center to exchange messages and files with other states, employers, and tribes. This is particularly useful when other tools like CSENet or EDE are not available in the receiving state, as it minimizes the risk of inadvertently disclosing PII and FTI.

CSENet (Child Support Enforcement Network): Oklahoma uses CSENet within the legacy OSIS system as a communication tool for interstate cases. Oklahoma does not use it for sending or receiving UIFSA transmittals. While CSENet can be an effective tool, most Oklahoma

caseworkers will also communicate using Communication Center messages, EDE, email, and regular mail for important or time-sensitive matters.

Child support customers (clients) can access payment and case information through our Child Support Payment Inquiry System. To log in, clients use a unique 9-digit OKDHS Customer ID and a 6-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN). They can request a PIN or ID via email if they don't have one. This system is available 24/7 for automated payment inquiries. Clients can also make payments online through the SMART e-Pay service.

Child support caseworkers in Oklahoma use online tools (Microsoft Teams and email) and telephone for virtual administrative hearings and settlement conferences with child support customers (clients).

Intergovernmental problem-solving

The quickest way to get payment histories and orders depends on the case's status:

- If an active referral exists: Contact the Oklahoma caseworker directly at the local field office. Use secure methods like CSENet, Transmittal #2, or the Communication Center. The caseworker has direct access to the case file and its records.
- If there is no existing referral: Contact Oklahoma's Interstate Central Registry (ICR). Use a Transmittal #3 or Electronic Document Exchange (EDE) to submit your request for information.

For help with issues on an interstate case, there are multiple options:

- Direct Office Contact: For most case-specific issues, the fastest solution is to contact the assigned Oklahoma CSS District Office directly. The IRG lists each Oklahoma CSS District Office and their email address.
- Call the Oklahoma CARE line at 800-522-2922 and request to be transferred directly to the assigned caseworker. It may be necessary to leave a message and request a call back.
- If you already know the correct assigned caseworker, use the OCSS Communication Center and message directly to the assigned caseworker.
- Use a transmittal #2 and submit via EDE, fax, or mail to the assigned CSS Office.
- Centralized Resources: For more complex problems or questions about policy and procedure, use the Intergovernmental Reference Guide (IRG) found on the OCSS Child Support Portal. The IRG contains an extended directory of Oklahoma State Office personnel who can assist with specialized issues.