

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS FOR CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

How did Georgia increase voluntary acceptance of service by 8 percentage points?

The Existing Process: Early Steps for Establishing a Child Support Order in Georgia

Custodial parent applies for support

Child support office mails notice to the person named as noncustodial parent, inviting him or her to the office

Goes to the child support office?



VOLUNTARY ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICE

Served by a sheriff or private process server at the parent's expense

The Intervention

1(a) Notice informed by behavioral science, mailed in an eye-catching envelope Envelope encourages opening. Notice redesigned to be simpler, support planning

redesigned to be simpler, support planning, and highlight the financial consequences of not taking action.

1(b) Calendar magnet

Magnet included with the notice for additional planning support.

2 Reminder notice mailed days before appointment

Additional prompt to prepare for the meeting with a short document list, a map, and whom to call with questions.

3 Enhanced in-person meeting

Specially trained staff members conduct meeting using a script and checklist to consistently incorporate procedural justice principles and complete key meeting components.

For more information, see *Dates and Deadlines: Behavioral Strategies to Increase Engagement in Child Support.*

This project is funded by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement in the Administration for Children and Families. Under contract to the State of Washington, MDRC leads the Technical Assistance and Evaluation team in collaboration with MEF Associates and the Center for Policy Research.





THE FINDINGS

Results from a Randomized Controlled Trial

Percentage of Noncustodial Parents with Service Completed in the Office



 ${\tt SOURCE: MDRC\ calculations\ based\ on\ data\ from\ the\ Georgia\ Division\ of\ Child\ Support\ Services.}$

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.