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Responses

Gavin Newsom
Mayor
Office of the Mayor
September 7, 2004

I am committed to finding innovative and effective ways to address the needs of persons released from custody, especially as it relates to preventing recidivism and homelessness. I am pleased to have assisted the Justice Tracking Information System (JUSTIS) advance their project to improve data sharing among local law enforcement agencies, through my legislation that created the Governing Council to oversee JUSTIS. I look forward to the implementation of that program next year. I am also proud of the recent Innovations in Government award received by the Sheriff's Department from the Kennedy School of Government for their Resolve to Stop the Violence Program. I will look for opportunities to further improve coordination with the Departments of Public Health and Human Services to address mental and physical health issues faced by persons leaving custody.

Michael Hennessey
Sheriff
Office of the Sheriff
July 28, 2005

This recommendation is directed at the Mayor; however, I agree that it is beneficial to determine the needs of individuals exiting the jails. Prisoners who participate in our post-release programs, specifically Five Keys Charter High School and Resolve to Stop the Violence, are queried and referred to appropriate social services.

Recommendation 2b: Develop a Computer Program to Track Recidivism

Develop a computer program to track recidivism of individuals entering and exiting the county jail system.

Response

Michael Hennessey
Sheriff
Office of the Sheriff
July 28, 2005

I agree with the recommendation that a computer system should be devised to track recidivism, however, I have concluded that until a national body, like the federal Department of Justice's National Institute of Corrections, provides direction and standards, the considerable investment of time and information technology expertise required to produce such a program would not be justified by the limited local use of the results. It is hoped that the jail management system currently being implemented will provide some useful recidivism information.

Recommendation 2c: Prioritize Services for Individuals Released From Jail

Prioritize services needed by individuals released from the county jails when planning for the homeless.

Response

Michael Hennessey
Sheriff
Office of the Sheriff
July 28, 2005

I agree with this recommendation and support the Department of Public Health's discharge planning efforts aimed at the homeless jail population.

Finding 3: Community-Based Programs Can Reduce Homelessness

Finding 3.1: The cost to the taxpayers of San Francisco as a result of the negative effects of homelessness is great.

Finding 3.2: It is estimated that 40% -60% of the homeless are individuals who have been in the county jails at least once, and frequently numerous times.

Finding 3.3: Determining the needs of this population and addressing those needs can reduce the number of homeless people.

Finding 3.4: Providing permanent, safe and sober, clean housing is a priority for these individuals. Without an address and at least a message telephone, seeking and obtaining employment is nearly impossible.

Finding 3.5: The current shelter system is unreliable and inadequate. Roaming the streets during the day, hoping for a shelter bed each night, is discouraging and demoralizing.

Finding 3.6: There is no accurate data available to track people entering and exiting the jails. Identifying this population would allow proper planning for their needs.

Finding 3.7: These individuals need short-term assistance upon release from custody to help them navigate the "system". Only the most determined are able to persevere in finding programs suited to their needs.

Finding 3.8: Most inmates expressed a desire for assistance from a mentor/sponsor for a short period.

Finding 3.9: Existing agencies frequently provide similar or identical services, rather than specializing in one service. As a result, most programs are spread too thinly and can only provide limited assistance.

Finding 3.10: There does not appear to be significant oversight of agencies receiving public dollars. The quality of services varies greatly.

Recommendation 3a: Create a Mentor Program to Assist Recently Released Inmates

A mentor/sponsor program should be created to assist this population for a limited period after they return to the community from the jails.

Responses

**Gavin Newsom
Mayor
Office of the Mayor
September 7, 2004**

As recommended by the Grand Jury, I welcome a review of best practices and other research that could be provided on the efficacy of mentorship or sponsorship programs for persons returning the community after leaving custody. The 10-Year Plan for Ending Chronic Homeless, commissioned by my Administration and released on June 30, 2004, includes a lengthy segment on reducing homelessness among persons released from custody. The plan calls for creating more supportive housing services for formerly incarcerated homeless San Franciscans, as well as increased SSI advocacy.

**Michael Hennessey
Sheriff
Office of the Sheriff
July 28, 2005**

I agree with the recommendation and would support and participate in a combined effort of the several City departments that deal with services to the homeless population. While the Sheriff's Department is currently funded to provide some mentoring services, such an effort specifically targeting homeless ex-offenders is not, to my knowledge, under discussion at this time.

Recommendation 3b: Audit Agencies Providing Services to the Homeless

An audit of all agencies currently charged with providing services to the homeless should be undertaken.

Responses

**Michael Hennessey
Sheriff
Office of the Sheriff
July 28, 2005**

This recommendation is not directed at the Sheriff's Department.

**Ed Harrington
Controller
Office of the Controller
July 29, 2005**

The recommendation has been implemented in part. In May 2002, this office issued a comprehensive performance audit of the City's system for delivering services to the homeless and

recommended how the City can improve its system for planning, delivering, and evaluating homeless services in San Francisco. As part of the City Services Auditor Division's audit plan, we will be conducting audits of organizations that receive funds from the City to provide various services. Agencies providing services to the homeless will be included as those subject to audit. The recommendation will require further analysis to identify the number of agencies specifically providing homeless services and identifying the priority for conducting these specific audits.

General Responses

Adele Destro
Assistant Clerk of the Board
Board of Supervisors
September 24, 2004

The following is a report on the 2003-2004 Civil Grand Jury Report, San Francisco Sheriff's Department: Incarceration and Beyond, in accordance with Penal Code Section 933 and Administrative Code Section 2.10.

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee held a hearing on Wednesday, September 22, 2004 on the Civil Grand Jury Report. Representatives from the Civil Grand Jury and the Sheriff's Department were present for the hearing. Per Jack McNulty, Civil Grand Jury Foreperson, a written response from the Sheriff's Department had not been received and requested to continue the matter. The hearing is continued until October 6, 2004.

Adele Destro
Assistant Clerk of the Board
Board of Supervisors
October 25, 2004

The following is a follow-up report on the 2003-2004 Civil Grand Jury Report, San Francisco Sheriff's Department: Incarceration and Beyond.

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee continued the hearing on Wednesday, October 6, 2004 on the Civil Grand Jury Report. Sheriff Mike Hennessey commended the Civil Grand Jury for its findings and recommendations. The Sheriff discussed the Five Keys Program High School for incarcerated juveniles, which is a Charter High School in county jails, and several of the programs that they have in jails that could be a resource after release. Sheriff Hennessey also pointed out due to budget reductions they are faced with a 15% reduction in jail programs. Public comment was heard and the matter was filed.

Adele Destro
Assistant Clerk of the Board
Board of Supervisors
June 29, 2005

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee held a hearing on Wednesday, September 22, 2004. Per Jack McNulty, Civil Grand Jury Foreperson, a written response from the Sheriff's Department had not been received and requested to continue the matter. The hearing was continued to October 6, 2004.

The Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee continued the hearing on Wednesday, October 6, 2004. Sheriff Mike Hennessey discussed the Five Keys Program High School for incarcerated juveniles, which is a Charter High School in county jails, and several of the programs that they have in jails that could be a resource after release. Sheriff Hennessey also pointed out due to budget reductions they are faced with a 15% reduction in jail programs. Public comment was heard and the matter was filed.

TERMS

Recidivism - habitual or chronic relapse, especially into crime or antisocial behavior

Misdemeanant - an individual found to have committed a misdemeanor

RSVP- Resolve to Stop the Violence Project

Roads to Recovery - an in-custody drug treatment for men

SISTER - an in-custody drug treatment for women

Civil Grand Jury Recommendations and Department Responses		Sheriff	Mayor	Office of the Controller
1a	The Mayor and Board of Supervisors should find in-custody programs at current or higher levels.	Agree	Agree	
2a	The Mayor's office should determine the needs of individuals exiting the jails to assist in formulating effective programs	Agree	Agree	
2b	Develop a computer program to track recidivism of individuals entering and exiting the county jail system.	Agree		
2c	Prioritize services needed by individuals released from the county jails when planning for the homeless.	Agree		
3a	A mentor/sponsor program should be created to assist this population for a limited period after they return to the community from the jails.	Agree	Agree	
3b	An audit of all agencies currently charged with providing services to the homeless should be undertaken.	Not Directed by Sheriff		Implemented in Part.

For each recommendation, the Civil Grand Jury did not require responses from all departments. The table only identifies those departments that responded to specific recommendations.

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CHAPTER 7

SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: PUTTING THE CHILDREN FIRST

BACKGROUND

Because of child support complaints from parents, custodial and non-custodial, the 2003-04 Civil Grand Jury investigated the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS).¹⁴ The Civil Grand Jury concluded that DCSS is such a successful and smooth-running operation that it has few suggestions for improvement. However, after touring another facility and after learning about the activities of other DCSS agencies in California, the Civil Grand Jury recommended some changes. The Civil Grand Jury's consensus is that providing even better accessibility would result in even better service to the city/county of San Francisco.

RESULTS

The Civil Grand Jury made nine recommendations and required responses from the following:

Board of Supervisors
Department of Child Support Services
Mayor

The table at the end of this chapter lists all the recommendations made by the Civil Grand Jury and summarizes department responses. The table only identifies those departments that specifically addressed a recommendation.

¹⁴ The terms and abbreviations used by the Civil Grand Jury appear at the end of the chapter.

Finding 1: The Department of Child Support Services Needs to Improve Its Communications About Its Role and Processes

Finding 1.1: There is confusion about whom DCSS represents and what is its role. There is a persistent misconception that DCSS and the Family Court represent the custodial parent. Though untrue, that notion encourages unintended adversarial relationship (or worse, escalates an already bad relationship) between the parents.

Finding 1.2: DCSS sometimes fails to explain completely the agency's systems and paperwork. It is possible that the client is unable to ask the question that would provide necessary information.

Finding 1.3: Although the agency has a wealth of informative literature describing what parents will encounter within the system, it isn't always readily available. Even when it is, some parents are just unwilling or unable to read it or to file it away for future reference

Finding 1.4: Several interviewed parents did not seem to understand the process even though they were in the middle of it.

Finding 1.5: With community assistance and in collaboration with local radio and television stations, Monterey County DCSS broadcasts informational 30-second advertisements in English and Spanish.

Finding 1.6: Contra Costa County has, with volunteer dollars and expertise, produced several videos that explain DCSS, the process of obtaining child support, and many ancillary services. These teaching videos are shown in translation when appropriate) on local television stations and at outreach gatherings.

General Responses to Findings

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Non-Custodial Parent Outreach

Although the majority of requests for the department's services come from custodial parents (CP) and not non-custodial parents (NP), it is a well-known misconception that the department is "custodial parent driven" and are only here to support the CP. The child support program at the federal, state and local level are working hard to reach out to NP's and change the minds about the program. Specifically, the child support program in San Francisco has initiated new procedures designed to improve customer service to NP's:

The NP no longer has to pay to file an Answer for Genetic Testing but may sign an Agreement in our office for free testing;

The NP no longer has to pay to file a Motion to Modify an Order; if the DCSS caseworker discovers the NP is in prison or on aid, the caseworker will automatically send a Stipulation modifying the order to the NP (without the need for the NP to file a Motion in court);

The NP may open a case against himself in order to begin paying child support;
We provide early notification to the NP advising him/her of our actions in order to eliminate the embarrassment of service of documents at the NP's home/place of business;

The state has implemented the Paternity Opportunity Program (POP) wherein the NP signs a form, which becomes a legal document that adjudicates parentage;

SF DCSS implemented the Non-Custodial Education and Training (NET) program designed to provide comprehensive with partnering programs to support NP's as they become job ready;

SF DCSS is partnering with the Family Law Facilitator to provide onsite assistance to our NPs with child support, visitation, and custody issues;

And finally SF DCSS continues to provide consistent outreach to all the communities of San Francisco as well as local correctional facilities in an effort to help increase understanding of the child support process through education and respond to NP concerns and frustrations with existing cases.

Radio and Television Advertisements

The department understands that pamphlets and handouts, though extremely important as a reference tool, should not be the only form of communication to our clients. San Francisco residents have a right to information through multi-media channels that takes into consideration language, culture, and dialect. The San Francisco Department of Child Support Services understands that and has implemented an aggressive plan to promote program information through multi-media sources. We are in our second year and well on our way. Here are some events coming up:

Television Infomercials

Thirty-second PSA infomercials carried on the following television stations: KPIX TV 5, UPN KBHK 44, Cable TV 12/Digital 8, KTSF TV 26, and ABC KGO TV 7, with a total viewers of over 5,000,000 in the Bay Area.

Video

San Francisco has, BETA & DVD, VHS tapes that cover in English & Spanish KTSF TV 26 taped one ½ hour forum show on child support services (Chinese)

Radio Shows

Spanish Question and Answers of child support services on AM/FM Radio, La Grande Radio Show, Monday to Fridays, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm
Chinese Radio FM 91.7 & Sing Tao Radio Am 1400, on child support services
Samoan Community Media collaboration is in the works

Collaborations in Printed Medias

Spanish magazine, Avance Magazine has a monthly child support article
Board of Supervisors Outreach Medias – (Afro-Am, Chinese, Spanish, Gay-lesbian) Asian Week, Bay Area Reporter, Chinese Press, Chinese Times, El Latino, El Mensajero, El Reportero, New Bayview News, and World Journal
Neighborhood News: Richmond Times, Sunset Beacon, Sun Reporter

Present and Future Collaborations

Muni Bus Stop Ad set for further review pending budget ability
 Posters, fliers, etc with libraries, churches, schools, community or city agencies
 Community based organizations - partnerships with many.

It should also be noted that an Internet Website will be available shortly for SFDCSS customers to access the latest information regarding their case status (e.g. billing/account information, latest payment, etc.)

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

The Department of Child Support Services (Department) respectfully submits its update on all recommendations described and delivered by the Civil Grand Jury as of July 7, 2004 in a report to the then Director Milton M. Hyams. The Department has taken all necessary and appropriate steps to implement the Civil Grand Jury recommendations based on the following findings and associated recommendations:

Findings	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6
Recommendations	1a	1b	1c			
Findings	2.1	2.2	2.3			
Recommendations	2a	2b				
Findings	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6
Recommendations	3a	3b	3c			

The Department has implemented new strategies in customer service to improve the participation of non-custodial parents (NCPs) in the child support program. The overall intent of the Enhanced Non-custodial Parent Involvement (EPIC) project has been to increase NCP participation in the support order establishment process. This program has specifically focused on the issues of notice to NCP's and the educational, cultural, and economic barriers that prevent or deter NCP's from participating in this process. In addition, the Department has expanded its collaboration with the San Francisco Unified Family Court and its Family Law Facilitator to assist in the employment of alternative measures that include increased outreach and client support that have encouraged low-income NCP's to actively participate in the process of establishing paternity and child support obligations.

1. The Department has developed new flyers, posters and scripts designed to inform and convince obligors to participate in their cases. These written materials use 7th grade English to foster better communication and have been translated into Spanish. Listed below are the written materials currently in use by the EPIC Project that were developed specifically for the NCP that is in 7th grade English or Spanish that is less formal and therefore less intimidating.

Flowchart

Clearly outlines the steps necessary to handle regular actions such as opening a case, paternity establishment, modifying an order, stipulation agreements, and closing a case.

“Come and Get It” Letter

The letter that is mailed to the NCP before service of process is attempted and is available in the Spanish language version.

Service Flyer

The flyer the EPIC staff is sending out with the Summons and Complaint and is available in the Spanish language version.

Status Conference Notice

This notice provides the NCP with another opportunity to participate in the establishment process, reminding the NCP of his right to genetic testing, and of the Department’s need for current financial information.

Post Default Letter

The Post-Default letter, which accompanies the copy of the Default Judgment mailed to the NCP.

The Department initiated proactive use of telephone outreach that promotes the early participation of NCPs in the establishment process. The NCP, from the privacy of their own home, are able to obtain important information about establishment procedures, the right to genetic testing, the guidelines used to calculate child support and the enforcement tools used by the Department for collection.

To establish the initial contact with the NCP staff also contacted various people such as the NCPs family members, the Custodial Party (CP) and the CPs attorneys e.g. Dependency Court appointed and private counsel. Telephone contact provides the NCP with clarification of all documents and identified the person calling as their specific contact throughout the process thereby establishing a relationship.

The EPIC collaborative partners (San Francisco Superior Court, Family Law Facilitator and SFDCSS) have agreed to schedule Child Support Default Status Conference Calendars on Tuesday afternoons. NCPs who have chosen not to contact the EPIC team to resolve the default because of anxiety or concerns are persuaded with written and personal contact to attend the Default Status Calendar session. EPIC Team staff will explain that the sessions are not binding and will reassure the NCP of an opportunity to participate in a more informative and less intimidating environment.

The project has proven very successful. Lessons learned will become new business practices for FY2006.

Recommendation 1a: Provide written materials explaining its in-take process.

Written materials (in translation when appropriate) to be presented and explained at in-take should include a flow chart outlining the process to be undertaken from start to finish. Specifics should describe all of the players in the process and their roles-especially including DCSS, their computer and phone systems, and all its divisions: in-take, DSOs, attorneys and the ombudsperson.

Responses

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Agree: The Department plans to develop a flow chart that clearly outlines the steps necessary to handle regular actions such as opening a case, paternity establishment, modifying an order, stipulation agreements, and closing a case. The flow chart will be translated into Spanish and Cantonese for improved understanding. The Department has also increased its request of outreach materials for FY2005 solely provided by the California Department of Child Support. The department is required to use only state-approved materials for outreach and reprints state documents at its own expense.

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

Agree/Implemented: The Department developed several flow charts that clearly outline the steps necessary to handle regular actions such as opening a case, paternity establishment, modifying an order, stipulation agreements, and closing a case. The flow charts will be translated into Spanish and Cantonese for improved understanding by the end of the August, 2005. The Department has also increased its request of outreach materials for FY2005 solely provided by the California Department of Child Support. The department is required to use only state-approved materials for outreach and reprints state documents at its own expense.

Recommendation 1b: Explain How the Family Court and Family Law Facilitator Can Be Used by Parents.

The role of the court and the Family Law Facilitator and how they can be accessed should be explained- especially if it appears that the parents will be unwilling or unable to stipulate a plan for child support.

Responses

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Agree: The Department plans to collaborate with the Family Law Facilitator to develop a pamphlet to be distributed through all branch offices.

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

Agree/Implemented: The Department is collaborating with the Family Law Facilitator through the Enhanced Parental Involvement Collaborative (EPIC) and has developed several

informational fliers which have been translated into Spanish and is distributed through all branch offices and the Family Court to non-custodial parents.

Recommendation 1c: Distribute Information to Community Agencies

Packet information should be reinforced by the use and distribution of posters, flyers and videos made available in libraries, churches, shops, hospitals and community agencies.

Responses

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Agree: The Department plans to produce posters, flyers, and videos based on existing state-approved materials to be made available to libraries, hospitals, community residents and community agencies where appropriate.

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

Agree/Implemented: The Department has produced plans to produce posters, flyers, and videos based on existing state-approved materials to be made available to libraries, hospitals, community residents and community agencies where appropriate.

Recommendation 1d: Produce Multilingual Educational Videos and Advertisements

SFDCSS should add to its long-range plan the production of multilingual educational videos and television and radio advertisements. By collaborating with other agencies and by accessing volunteer time, talent and dollars, DCSS can expand its services to clientele.

Finding 2: The Department of Child Support Services Does Not Prominently Display Printed Information

Finding 2.1: DCSS does not display leaflets prominently at in-take points and court offices.

Response to Finding

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Availability of Outreach Materials

The San Francisco Department of Child Support Services (SFDCSS) is required to use State produced and approved materials such the *START* Handbook only. State-produced materials have

been on back order. In the meantime, the department has sufficient resources to provide additional materials to clients through our branch offices, the Family Law Facilitator, and to our Child Support Officer stationed at the court for this very reason.

Finding 2.2: Some information (The *START Book*) is not always available to clients, the court, or the facilitator.

Finding 2.3: The presence of metal-detectors and armed deputies at the front door of the main DCSS facility give the agency a very uninviting and forbidding aspect.

Response to Findings

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Security at the Main Office

San Francisco is a highly diverse and compacted urban environment in comparison with Contra Costa. The socio-economic structure as well as the demographics varies in comparison. In addition, the Department's caseload has higher levels of domestic violence flagged cases than that of Contra Costa County. Many custodial parents fear retaliation from non-custodial parents when seeking services or visiting our offices. Staff concerns regarding safety have been raised in an effort to curtail possible issues from occurring the department provides security guard service with guards who mirror and are sensitive to the diversity of our clients. They act as the initial reception to the Department and are trained to be courteous, professional and supportive to all the Department visitors. The Department's use of the metal detectors is in line with security precautions taken by many City and County of San Francisco, as well as other State/Federal offices.

Recommendation 2a: Display Written Materials at All Offices

In an attractive and efficient manner. DCSS should set up, monitor and stock regularly display racks of written materials and handouts at all DCSS offices, law facilitators' offices and courtrooms.

Responses

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Agree: The Department has purchased and installed display racks in its main office, BVHP office, and Mission Office to be regularly stocked by the in-take supervisor. The Department plans to provide handout material to the law facilitators' office and the court for distribution through their offices. The Department's legal supervisor will be responsible for the regular distribution and re-ordering current materials.

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

Agree/Implemented: The Department has purchased and installed display racks in its main office, BVHP office, and Mission Office to be regularly stocked by the in-take supervisor. The Department plans to provide handout material to the law facilitators' office and the court for distribution through their offices. The Department's legal supervisor will be responsible for the regular distribution and re-ordering current materials.

Recommendation 2b: Improve the Appearance of Its Main Office

Re-arrange the main-office entry so that DCSS looks more like a sanctuary than a jail. {Pattern reception area after that of the Contra Costa County DCSS.}

Responses

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Agree: The Department has begun minor work through a work order with DPW to paint the lobby area install new magazine and pamphlet racks and purchased new furniture. In addition, the Department plans to renovate the children's play area to include educational books, games and toys.

Karen M. Roye
Director
Department of Child Support Services
June 27, 2005

Agree/Implemented: The Department has completed minor work through a work order with DPW who painted the lobby area, installed new carpeting, and installed new magazine and pamphlet racks. The Department also purchased new furniture.

Finding 3: The Department of Child Support Services Should Improve Its Case Management Procedures

Finding 3.1: Although DCSS staff maintains that calls are handled personally and promptly, parents insist that this is not the case.

Finding 3.2: More than 50 calls made to DCSS by members of this committee on every day of the week and at various times of the day were not answered in person.

Response to Finding

Karen M. Roye
Assistant Director
Department of Child Support Services
July 23, 2004

Fifty Calls Unanswered

In addition to twelve (12) CSO's assigned to phone calls every day for a caseload of 27,000, the Department has an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System that handles overflow calls. If both CSO's assigned to phone duty that day are on the line, the system paths callers to an interactive menu that allows the caller to automatically access information such as latest payment, current billing status, office hours/location, etc. In addition, the caller is allowed to leave a voicemail message for the Team handling his/her case. It is the Department policy that voicemails left before 2:00 PM will be answered by close of business the same day. Voicemails left after 2:00 PM will be answered by noon of the next business day.

Of the 22 customer service complaints regarding lack of response or slow response:

- 3 complaints were regarding customers not receiving a response to their phone calls on the same day.
- 2 complaints were regarding a delay in the return of tax intercepts.
- 3 complaints were from customers from other counties complaining about lack of response or action from their own jurisdiction.
- 1 complaint was about the LCSA not promptly serving a Notice to Withhold on the employer upon receipt of the information.
- 2 complaints were from another county regarding their request for documentation not being promptly responded to.
- 1 complaint was from a custodial party that wanted LCSA to collect child support from an unemployed non-custodial parent.
- 2 complaints were about the time that it took to calendar cases to be heard in court
- 3 complaints were about the time that it took to process and receive a court order after the hearing was held
- 2 complaints were about the delay in billing the child support account after the reopening of the case.
- 1 complaint was about LCSA's slow response in crediting a payment to a customer's account. (This was ordered by another county's court during a custody hearing).
- 1 complaint was about the LCSA's slow in petitioning another state for child support.
- 1 complaint was about the LCSA's slow response to a customer's request in sending information to her EW.

CONCLUSION:

3 out of 22 complaints were related the LCSA not returning the customer's call on the same day. The response to the customer depended on a 3rd party contact.

Finding 3.3: Of 179 complaints filed with the ombudsperson in 2003, lack of response to phone calls or slow response numbered 22. A visit to Contra Costa and observation of their full-time phone team of 8 or more operators gave the CGJ insight into how an efficient phone system could work for SFDCSS.