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## Memorandum

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**To: Potential Interested Vendor Parties–Child Support Enforcement Services**

**From: Richard A. Berry, Executive Director**

**Date: May 27, 2014**

**Re: Notice of Vendor Information Session**

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### **Background**

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS), Division of Field Operations (DFO) is notifying potentially interested parties of their intent to hold a Vendor Information Session regarding child support enforcement services.

MDHS is an organization dedicated to serving others throughout the State and seeks to promote integrity, self-development, outstanding program delivery and excellent customer service. The Agency also seeks to empower families being served to become self-sufficient and responsible for their future success.

The mission of child support enforcement services is to provide non-custodial parents (NCP) the ability to contribute to the support of their children by making regularly scheduled support payments, allowing the custodial parents (CP) to better provide for the needs of their children through regular, uninterrupted support.

The DFO child support enforcement program operates 84 offices in 82 counties within 13 regions of the State to ensure the availability of child support services to all eligible persons in the State of Mississippi. The regional map in Appendix A shows the volume of cases by county.

Specifically, the child support program is responsible for:

- Establishing paternity which includes a simple acknowledgement or a DNA test. The Child Support Enforcement Officer (CSEO) may assist or advise the family in this process. The State has a contract in place for genetic testing services.

- Establishing child support orders, including the pre and post hearing process and the modification of orders. By Mississippi law, this work is a legal function.
- Collecting child support from NCP's, including the process by which NCP's are located, identifying assets internally and externally, withholding income, and collaboration with other states. Today this work is done in the counties by the CSEO's.
- Receiving and disbursing child support payments through a centralized disbursement and receipts process. This work is a centralized function handled by the State through a recently awarded contract.
- Enforcing orders, both administrative and of the courts, intercepting IRS tax refunds, and facilitating the parental visitation process. This is a joint effort between the attorneys and the CSEO's.
- Addressing and resolving questions, concerns and complaints. There is a centralized call center with responsibility for taking incoming client calls. The CSEO's handle the follow-up activity to resolve the issues.

MDHS operates its program on a bifurcated basis, in which child support enforcement and legal services are handled by MDHS state staff located within each county. The Mississippi Enforcement Tracking of Support System (METSS) is the operating system utilized to collect and disburse child support payments. Further information on METSS is contained in Appendix B below. A parent or guardian initiates a child support case by visiting the appropriate MDHS county office, within one of the 13 regions throughout the State. Upon establishing paternity, the State child support enforcement staff inputs the child support order in METSS and refers the case to State legal staff, who then establish the amount of any child support and begin the legal process of establishing a legally binding child support order. Once an order is established and approved by the court, the order is set up for collections and disbursements through the Central Receipting and Disbursement Unit (CRDU). State child support enforcement and legal staff are also responsible for modifying child support orders when necessary as prescribed by Mississippi law.

**The key statistics in this area are:**

- MDHS' total budget for establishment and collection of child support: \$36 million
- Number of 2013 cases for which MDHS was to collect child support: 370,920
- Amount of child support collected and disbursed for 2013: \$334 million
- Number of MDHS child support attorneys: 60

- Number of State employees in county CSEO and supervisor positions: 300

### **Scope of the Vendor Information Session**

MDHS is currently undertaking an operational review of its entire child support program to determine the most cost effective way to operate the program in the future in order to ensure timely collections and to meet the mission thereby providing maximum value to children and families. As part of its review, MDHS is considering whether it should issue future Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for:

- State child support enforcement operations
- State legal services
- Call Center services
- Seamless service across all functional areas
- Child support product or solution

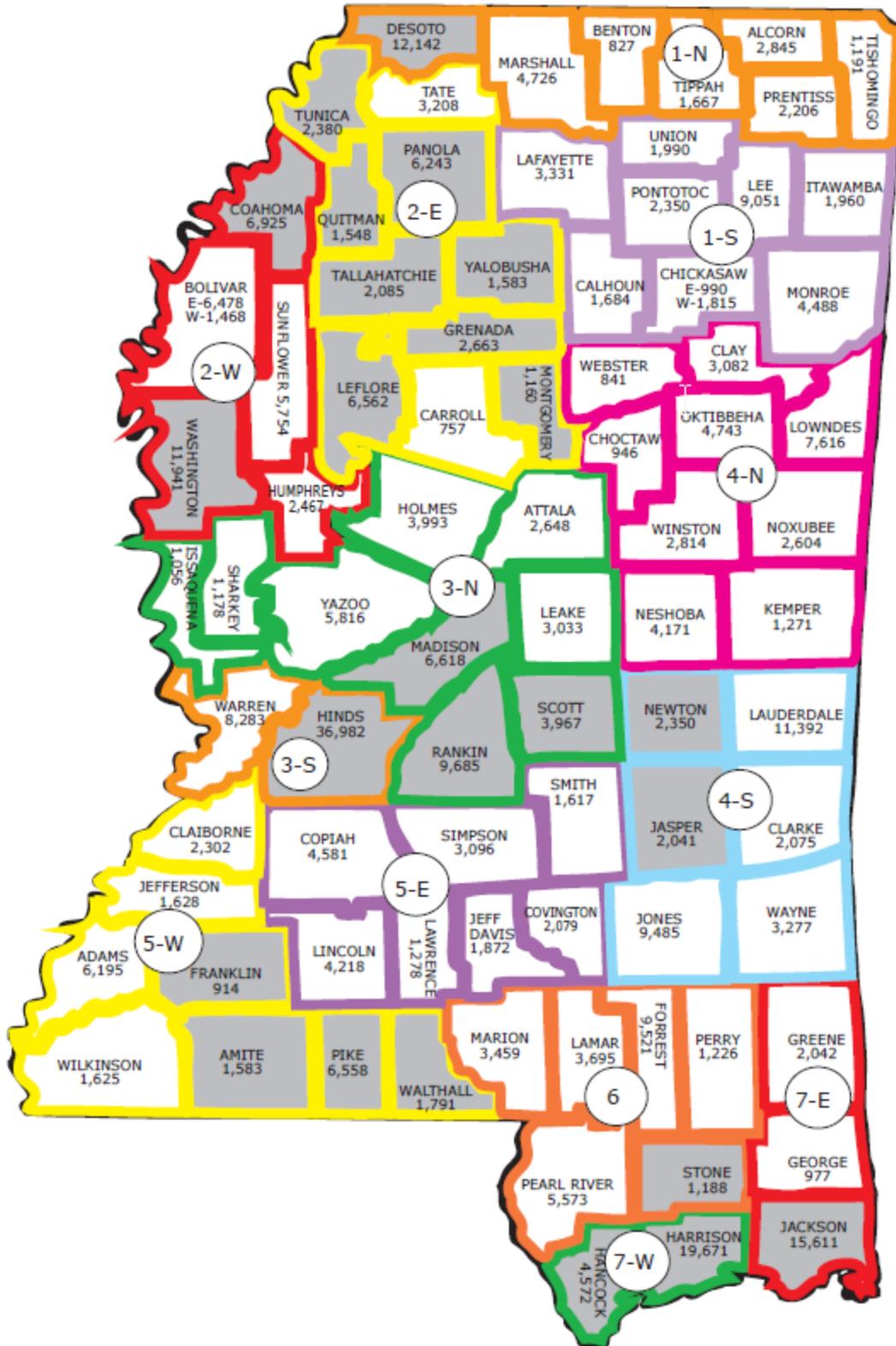
MDHS is looking for innovative ideas from the marketplace for any of the above child support services, products or solutions that could help MDHS improve its child support operations in general. Vendors will have the opportunity to learn more about MDHS operations and needs as well as have individual conversations with MDHS about vendor competencies and offerings.

**When:** July 9-10, 2014; 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

**Where:** Woolfolk State Office Building, 501 N. West St., Jackson, MS 39201.

**\*Questions must be submitted by 3:00 P.M. on Friday, June 6, 2014 to [john.davis@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:john.davis@mdhs.ms.gov)\***

## APPENDIX A CHILD SUPPORT CASELOAD/REGIONS



## **APPENDIX B**

### **METSS OVERVIEW**

METSS is an automated child support system that has been developed to support major performance enhancements for the Mississippi Division of Field Operations, child support enforcement services. These enhancements include support for:

- Compliance with child support enforcement functions requirements.
- Comprehensive automated accounting for and monitoring of all factors of child support services:
  - Case Initiation
  - Case Management
  - Financial Management
  - Enforcement
  - Reporting
  - Security and Privacy
- Prompt distribution of collections.
- Periodic review of support orders.
- Distribution of \$50 disregards within required time frames.
- Immediate wage withholding.
- Accurate data collection and reporting.
- Effective interfacing/integration with MAVERICS, the MDHS operating system for Economic Assistance.
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of daily operations by:
  - Eliminating the redundancy of manually derived data.
  - Reducing paper forms and the time needed to complete them.
  - Providing immediate access to case information.
  - Increasing uniform application of policy and procedures.
  - Providing the capability to handle mass policy changes and updates.
  - Facilitating the preparation of required reports.
  - Automating the IV-A referrals process.
  - Effectively exchanging information with other State agencies.

- Providing meaningful and accurate information for program planning and management.
- METSS is running on an IBM mainframe with the z/OS and was developed in Natural 4.2.2 and ADABAS 7.4.4.

Overall, METSS provides an automated tool for all child support enforcement staff, further enhancing their daily activities and advancing the agency closer to its stated objectives.