



**Anchorage, Alaska
September 24-28,
2017**

Texting in Everyday Business in Kansas Child Support Services



Text Messaging Begins in Kansas

- Kansas CSS was looking for ways to better communicate with people we serve.
- April 2016—Pilot with Contact Wireless
- Contact Wireless—Web-based text message service with blacklist
- Designed for short informative text messages by individual or group text



Why Use Texting?

- Roughly nine out of 10 Americans own a cell phone. (Pew Research)
- Nearly two-thirds of Americans own a smart phone. (Pew Research)
- Of those with smart phones, 98 percent send and receive text messages.
- Preferred method to communicate—text messaging



Contact Wireless

- Cost
- Options-bulk and individual texting
- Option to maintain a blacklist



Initial Set Up

- Bulk “welcome message” was sent to all CSS clients with a cell phone number in agency system
- Black List created—indicator field added in agency system to capture decision of client to receive text messages
- Call Center inquired each time client called and updated indicator as appropriate



Initial Set up Continued

- 25 accounts originally created with area codes based on regions of the state
- Based on volume of cases per region—number of telephone numbers assigned to regions
- Voicemail script created for each number—options to send text, speak to customer service rep, or website to check on or make payment
- Canned messages created for staff to use
- Policy around sending/messages
- Bulk messages sent monthly for those in arrears



Introductory/Opt-out Message

- Welcome to Kansas Child Support Service text messaging.
- Kansas Child Support Services will send messages for appointments and reminders.
- Kansas Child Support Services will NEVER request personal information via a text message. If you do not want to receive text messages from Kansas Child Support Services, reply with STOP.



Canned Text Messages

- Kansas CSS added canned text messages to each of the 25 accounts for use by field staff—below is example.
- Additional canned messages can be added at any time.
- Interview/appointment reminder
- Kansas CSS reminder—you have an interview/appointment scheduled on MM/DD/YY for TT:TT am/pm, at 1015 Tijeras NW, ABC, KS. Reply by text or call 888-757-2445 with questions or to reschedule your interview.



Other uses for Canned Messages

- Genetic testing
- Paperwork due
- Hearing date



TXTPage Plus-Dashboard



Welcome / TxtPage [Logout/Change User](#)

TAB 1 TAB 2

Demo1

Optional Device #:

Message:

You have 400 characters remaining.

Contact List:

Groups listed in bold

⬅ [Check All](#) / [Uncheck All](#)

Administration

[Contact Wireless](#), 5801 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110 Phone 505•888•9999 Fax 505•888•2609 | [CONTACT US](#)



Training for Staff

Training for staff included:

- Using TxtPage Plus System
- New indicator field on sgency system
- Text etiquette



Additional Ways Kansas CSS Uses Text Messaging

- Bulk Texting (sent by CSS Admin from query)
 - NCP payment reminders
 - Notice of possible driver's license restriction
 - Amnesty day invite for NCPs with bench warrants
 - Job fair promotion
 - New debit card information
- Individual (sent by field staff)
 - Requests for information/documents
 - Notice of impending non-cooperation penalty
 - Answer questions/provide status updates upon request



Legal

- No complaints or legal action against State since initiated
- White Paper developed by Kansas Department for Children and Families that approved



Research

- Kansas CSS working is with Betagov to perform randomized controlled trials of text messaging for genetic test appointments and court hearings.
- Research will provide data on effectiveness and how we can do better.
 - Planned start of trial is Sept. 1, 2017
 - Four-month text period
 - Four sites across Kansas

